

# *This Book Is Anti-Racist* Family Discussion Guide

## Written by Tiffany Jewell



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Illustrations by Aurélia Durand

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"This book is a gift to our future." —Jarrett J. Krosoczka, National Book Award Finalist and author of *Hey Kiddo*

"*This Book Is Anti-Racist* is bold in its honesty, and brilliant in its illustrative breakdown of an essential vocabulary on race and identity. It has renewed us to keep up the fight." —Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi, student activists, authors of *Tell Me Who You Are: Sharing Our Stories of Race, Culture, and Identity*, and co-founders of Choose.org

### About the author:

Tiffany Jewell is a Black biracial writer and Anti-Racist Montessori educator and consultant. She spends her time baking bread and macarons, building LEGOS, watching British detective shows, and dreaming up how she can dismantle white supremacy. Tiffany currently lives in Western Massachusetts (on the occupied land of the Wabanaki and the Nipmuck) with her two young activists, her partner, and a turtle she's had since she was nine. This is her first book for children and young adults. Find her on social media: @tiffanymjewell and at <https://anti-biasmontessori.com/>



Photo by James Azar Salem

### About the illustrator:

Aurélia Durand is a French illustrator based in Paris. Her work is dedicated to representing people of color in society, and she uses bold art as a vivid demonstration. "I use vibrant colors and joyful music to spread good vibes to talk about diversity and open a conversation about why it matters to include more color in our society." She wants to create more nuanced illustrative stories by portraying women of color standing proudly and fiercely. Her work has been featured in advertising campaigns, galleries, and editorial magazines. Her clients include Apple, Refinery29, and Facebook. She shares her work online on different platforms, mainly Instagram, where she posts daily illustrations, live paintings, and animations. Find her on Instagram: @4ur3lia.



Photo by Aurélia Durand

### How to use this guide with the learners in your family:

Like the book, the *This Book Is Anti-Racist* Family Discussion Guide is the beginning of a journey in lifelong anti-racism work. I offer up suggestions and activities I've used with readers over the years and look forward to hearing from you about how you're using the book in your community. Use the hashtags #ThisBookIsAntiRacist and #AntiRacistYouth to share how you're supporting your readers and community members (including yourself) in anti-racism!

## Family activity: gallery walk

Download and print the three poster images:

Click on the image to download the poster



"We All Deserve":  
<https://quartokno.ws/TBIAR1>



"My History":  
<https://quartokno.ws/TBIAR2>



"You Have the":  
<https://quartokno.ws/TBIAR3>

Hang the poster up in your home or gather around a table, on the floor, wherever there's room and you're comfortable. (If you have young ones, provide them with paper and colored pencils, markers, etc. so they can draw their own responses!) Maybe your family will create their own poster to hang up and share out!

## Some discussion questions:

- What do the words mean to them?
- What do they want to know more about?
- What do they notice about the illustrations?

You may ask guiding questions or ask family members to just respond. I like using sticky notes because they offer kids a chance to share freely and (sometimes) anonymously. Once everyone has had time to look and respond, you may sit in a circle and ask family members if anyone would like to share their thoughts and responses and if there are any questions.

The posters provide a nice introduction to the book. You may also want to share some of Aurélie's other artwork that can be found on her website. <https://aurelia-studio.com/>

## Section one: waking up: understanding and growing into my identities

During this first section of the book, readers will be introduced to a lot of [new] words and language around identity and oppression. They will also spend a lot of time, at the end of each chapter, working on understanding their own identities. Everyone works and processes at their own pace. Providing time and space for all the members in your family and the folx you're doing this with is invaluable.

### Activity: co-creating definitions

Co-create collective definitions with your family. Some of the words that will appear in this section of *This Book Is Anti-Racist* are as follows:

Identity	Race	Racism	Oppression
Dominant culture	Ethnicity	Biases	Anti-Racism
Institutions	Privilege	Stereotypes	Anti-Bias
Society	History	Discrimination	

You may offer another gallery walk, but this time it's with the words. Write each word on a piece of paper (any paper will do) and hang them on the fridge, around the room, place them on a table or on the floor! Again, give everyone sticky notes and ask them, "What do you know about these words?" or, "What does this mean to you?"

Before you dive into this work, you will need to be able to have courageous conversations in your home. This takes practice and starts with truly listening to your children.

★ "Essential."—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred Review

★ "A necessary primer on antiracist thinking." —*Publishers Weekly*, Starred Review

★ "Visually exciting and well-crafted." —*School Library Journal*, Starred Review



## Section two: opening the window: making sense of the world

In this section of the book, readers will be introduced to some of the history of racism and anti-racism and will begin to make sense of the world they live in.

### Activity: co-creating definitions continued

Co-create collective definitions with your family. Some of the words that will appear in this section of *This Book Is Anti-Racist* are as follows:

Prejudice

Colonization

Microaggression

Assimilate

Internalized racism

### Activity: we are our history

This is a good time to pause with *This Book Is Anti-Racist* and provide time and space for kids to build a greater understanding of the depth of racism. In our home we have time to research. We read books together, explore archives, and watch documentaries! We then use our shared knowledge to understand the history of racism and resistance. Sometimes this looks like building out a timeline of Anti-Racism and sometimes it looks like telling our stories at bedtime.

Add resources to your home library so young readers may explore and expand this history. There are many many book lists available, please make sure you are vetting who is creating these lists. For example: If you want to know which books to add to your home about Black history, make sure the list is created by someone in the Black community. The books listed below are just a start. They are geared towards older children and adults. We often turn to <http://hereweeread.com/> and <https://www.theconsciouskid.org/>.

### Some of my favorite books to start with are:

- *Tell Me Who You Are* by Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi
- *A Different Mirror for Young People: A History of Multicultural America* by Ronald Takaki; Adapted by Rebecca Stefoff
- *An Indigenous People's History of the United States for Young People* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz; Adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese
- *An African American and Latinx History of the United States* by Paul Ortiz
- *A Queer History of the United States for Young People* by Michael Bronski; Adapted by Richie Chevat
- *A Young People's History of the United States: Columbus to the War On Terror* by Howard Zinn; Contributor-Rebecca Stefoff
- *Just Mercy (Adapted for Young People): A True Story of the Fight for Justice* by Bryan Stevenson
- *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
- *Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become A Good Ancestor* by Layla F. Saad



## Activity: acknowledging anti-racist heroes

Share the image below of some BIPoC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) activists who are a part of our history and of folx who have worked to move us forward into anti-racism. Share photos of these people, listen to audio of them, watch videos of them speaking, and read their words. Keep them present in your home as you continue through this journey.



Work with your children to create a list of young activists and change-makers. Highlight these folx as you build; share with your kids that they don't have to wait until their adult years to take action and disrupt. [Amplifier Art](https://amplifierart.com/) is a great free resource where you can access art and information to further this knowledge.

## Section three: choosing my path: taking action and responding to racism

### Activity: interrupt with comics

Building from Chapter 12 titled *Interrupt!* create a comic together that shows how your family can stand up against oppression. What are all of your superpowers? How will you use them? Write a skit, a song, a story. Create together. Share with each other, family members and friends!



### Activity: build a collective toolbox

As a family, find/draw/write about what you could bring in your toolbox. What will you bring to work together to disrupt and stand up? Imagine you have an anti-racist toolbox that you carry with you. What's in it and why? Here are some things I have in mine:

- A notebook and a pen so I can write down observations, thoughts, etc.
- Photos of family and friends to ground me and keep me connected with those I trust and love.
- Chocolate and almonds for quick energy.
- A reusable water bottle because I need to stay hydrated.
- Tiger Balm is in there. When I get stressed the tension builds in my shoulders and neck. It hurts. The Tiger Balm helps to ease that pain.
- I always have a book or two to read and make sure they're by BIPOC authors and folx living outside the imaginary box.
- Information about my rights in English and Spanish.
- My phone (charged) so I can easily connect with others and take photos and videos.

### Writing assignment: check in with yourself

Pause and check in with yourself, your family, and your children and encourage your kids to take a moment to pause and check in with themselves too. Ask: What action are we comfortable taking? What have we done? What can we do? What action are we willing to do that goes beyond our usual comfort level? What do we need in order to lean into our discomfort with these actions? What kind of support do we want and need? (And from whom?)

### Discussion and role play: calling in/out

After reading Chapter 14, practice calling-in and calling-out. Ask your family:

- What are some situations when we may need to call someone/something out? What are some situations where we may need to call someone in? What is the difference?
- Who has the power in this situation, the person we are calling in/out, or us? (If you have the power in this situation, consider calling them in.)
- Are we calling out a person or systemic behavior? (If it's calling out systemic behavior or an institution, call them out.)
- How much energy and emotional labor are we able to share right now? (If you don't have the energy or aren't willing to put in the emotional labor it takes to educate someone and work with them to change, consider calling them in with someone who can take on the work you are not able to do. I have a friend who helps me out when I don't have the capacity to educate white people on racial oppression. This is the work of the whole family!)



## Section four: holding the door open: working in solidarity against racism

### Discussion: asking the big questions

Discuss the following questions with your family:

- What does solidarity look like, feel like, taste like, smell like, and sound like?
- What is white supremacy culture?
  - \*For older readers: Read about the [characteristics of white supremacy culture](#) from Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones. Work with readers to identify where this exists in their communities.
  - How can and will we hold the door open without falling into savorism? Who will we leave the door open for?
  - Read *Anti-Racist Youth* by Amelia Allen Sherwood aloud and discuss: What affirms you? What challenges you?
- Is there a poem or song that keeps you motivated and grounded?
- When will we each listen, and when will you interrupt?
- What privileges does our family hold? How can we use our privilege to disrupt racism?
- How will we listen so that are really and truly hearing what is being said? How will the older folx in the family honor the voices of the younger members? (And vice versa!)

To keep this work going with your family and community consider hosting an Anti-Racist Book Club. Follow the hashtags #AntiRacistBookClub, #DisruptTexts, and #TheBookChat for more suggestions and conversations about books that support young learners' growing consciousness.

For an in-depth guide for classrooms/academic spaces, download my free anti-racism curriculum and educator guide on my website: <https://anti-biasmontessori.com/>

Some suggested reads for students aged 10-15:

- *The Boy at The Back of the Class* by Onjali Rauf
- *Indian No More* by Charlene Willing McManis and Traci Sorell
- *Watch Us Rise* by Renée Watson and Ellen Hagan
- *Say Her Name* by Zetta Elliott
- *Pet* by Akwaeke Emezi
- *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo
- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei
- *American Street* by Ibi Zoboi
- *Pride* by Ibi Zoboi
- *Color Outside the Lines* Edited by Sangu Mandanna