

Exploring Race in Teen Literature

Abdel-Fattah, Randa. **Lines We Cross.** (TEEN ABDEL)

Michael's parents are leaders of a new anti-immigrant political party called Aussie Values which is trying to halt the flood of refugees from the Middle East; Mina fled Afghanistan with her family ten years ago, and just wants to concentrate on fitting in and getting into college--but the mutual attraction they feel demands that they come to terms with their family's concerns and decide where they stand in the ugly anti-Muslim politics of the time.

Acevedo, Elizabeth. **The Poet X: a novel.** (TEEN ACEVE)

Novel-in-verse by an award-winning slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo, about Afro-Latina Xiomara Batista who turns to journaling poetry.

Alexander, Kwame. **Swing.** (TEEN ALEXA)

When America is not so beautiful, or right, or just, it can be hard to know what to do. Best friends Walt and Noah decide to use their voices to grow more good in the world, but first they've got to find cool.

Brown, Echo. **Black Girl Unlimited: the remarkable story of a teenage wizard.** (TEEN BROWN)

Echo Brown is a wizard from the East Side of Cleveland, where apartments are small and parents suffer addiction to the white rocks. Yet there is magic everywhere. Every day Echo travels between worlds, attending a rich white school on the West Side. But there are dangers to leaving behind the pace that made you.

Caldwell, Patrice. **A phoenix first must burn: sixteen stories of black girl magic, resistance, and hope.** (TEEN)

Black girls, including gender non-conforming individuals, star in this collection of sixteen stories of fantasy, science fiction, and magic.

Colbert, Brandy. **The Revolution of Birdie Randolph.** (TEEN COLBE)

Sixteen-year-old Dove "Birdie" Randolph's close bond with her parents is threatened by a family secret, and by hiding her relationship with Booker, who has been in juvenile detention.

Coles, Jay. **Tyler Johnson Was Here.** (TEEN COLE)

When Marvin Johnson's twin brother, Tyler, is shot and killed by a police officer, Marvin must fight injustice to learn the true meaning of freedom

Courtney, Nadine Jolie. **All American Muslim Girl.** (TEEN COURT)

Sixteen-year-old Allie, aged seven when she knew her family was different and feared, struggles to claim her Muslim and Arabic heritage while finding her place as an American teenager.

Gilbert, Kelly Loy. **Picture Us in the Light.** (TEEN GILBE)

Danny Cheng, a Chinese-American teen, grapples with a dangerous revelation about his parents' past, his plans for the future, and his feelings for his best friend, Harry Wong.

Gill, Joel Christian. **Fights: one boy's triumph over violence.** (741.597 GILL)

What happens when everything in the world around you wants to fight and all you want is to be a kid? *Fights: One Boy's Triumph Over Violence* is the visceral and deeply affecting memoir of Joel Christian Gill, chronicling his youth and coming of age as a poor Black child in a chaotic southern landscape of rough city streets and foreboding backwoods during the crack cocaine boom of the 1980s. Propelled into a world filled with uncertainty and desperation, young Joel is pushed toward using violence to solve his problems by everyone and everything around him. But fighting doesn't always yield the best results for a confused and sensitive kid who yearns for a better, more fulfilling life than the one he was born into.

Leatherdale, Mary Beth. **#NotYourPrincess: voices of Native American women.** (971.004 NOT)

Whether looking back to a troubled past or welcoming a hopeful future, the powerful voices of Indigenous women across North America resound in this book. In the same style as the best-selling *Dreaming in Indian*, *#Not Your Princess* presents an eclectic collection of poems, essays, interviews, and art that combine to express the experience of being a Native woman.

Lewis, John. **March: Books 1-3.** (741.597 LEWIS)

March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement.

Mafi, Tahereh. **A Very Large Expanse of Sea.** (TEEN MAFI)

It's 2002, a year after 9/11. It's an extremely turbulent time politically, but especially so for someone like Shirin, a sixteen-year-old Muslim girl who's tired of being stereotyped. Shirin is never surprised by how horrible people can be. She's tired of the rude stares, the degrading comments--even the physical violence--she endures as a result of her race, her religion, and the hijab she wears every day. So she's built up protective walls and refuses to let anyone close enough to hurt her.

Magoon, Kekla. **How It Went Down.** (TEEN MAGOO)

When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson is shot to death, his community is thrown into an uproar because Tariq was black and the shooter, Jack Franklin, is white, and in the aftermath everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events agree.

Medina, Tony. **I Am Alfonso Jones.** (TEEN GN MEDIN)

The ghost of fifteen-year-old Alfonso Jones travels in a New York subway car full of the living and the dead, watching his family and friends fight for justice after he is killed by an off-duty police officer while buying a suit in a Midtown department store.

Méndez, Matt. **Barely Missing Everything.** (TEEN MENDE)

Three Mexican-Americans--Juan, JD, and Fabi--each try to overcome their individual struggles as they all grapple with how to make a better life for themselves when it seems like brown lives don't matter.

Morris, Brittney. **Slay.** (TEEN MORRI)

An honors student at Jefferson Academy, seventeen-year-old Keira enjoys developing and playing Slay, a secret, multiplayer online role-playing game celebrating black culture, until the two worlds collide.

Morrow, Bethany C. **Take the Mic: fictional stories of everyday resistance.** (TEEN TAKE)

A young adult anthology featuring fictional stories of everyday resistance. You might be the kind of person who stands up to online trolls. Or who marches to protest injustice. Perhaps you are #DisabledAndCute and dancing around your living room, alive and proud. Or perhaps you are the trans mentor that you wish you had when you were younger. Maybe you call out false allies, or stand up to loved ones. Maybe you speak your truth and drop the mic, or maybe you take it with you when you leave.

Myers, Walter Dean. **Monster.** (TEEN MYERS)

While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken.

Pérez, Ashley Hope. **Out of Darkness.** (TEEN PEREZ)

Loosely based on a school explosion that took place in New London, Texas in 1937, this is the story of two teenagers: Naomi, who is Mexican, and Wash, who is black, and their dealings with race, segregation, love, and the forces that destroy people.

Reynolds, Jason. **All American Boys.** (TEEN REYNO)

When sixteen-year-old Rashad is mistakenly accused of stealing, classmate Quinn witnesses his brutal beating at the hands of a police officer who happens to be the older brother of his best friend. Told through Rashad and Quinn's alternating viewpoints.

Shabazz, Ilyasah. **X: a novel.** (TEEN SHABA)

Malcolm Little's parents have always told him that he can achieve anything, but from what he can tell, that's a pack of lies--after all, his father's been murdered, his mother's been taken away, and his dreams of becoming a lawyer have gotten him laughed out of school. There's no point in trying, he figures, and lured by the nightlife of Boston and New York, he escapes into a world of fancy suits, jazz, girls, and reefer. But Malcolm's efforts to leave the past behind lead him into increasingly dangerous territory. Deep down, he knows that the freedom he's found is only an illusion--and that he can't run forever. X follows Malcolm from his childhood to his imprisonment for theft at age twenty, when he found the faith that would lead him to forge a new path and command a voice that still resonates today.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich. **Hearts Unbroken.** (TEEN SMITH)

When Louise Wolfe's boyfriend mocks and disrespects Native people in front of her, she breaks things off and dumps him over e-mail. She'd rather spend her senior year with her family and friends and working on the school newspaper. The editors pair her up with Joey Kairouz, an ambitious new photojournalist, and in no time the paper's staff find themselves with a major story to cover: the school musical director's inclusive approach to casting *The Wizard of Oz* has been provoking backlash in their mostly white, middle-class Kansas town. As tensions mount at school, so does a romance between Lou and Joey. But 'dating while Native' can be difficult. In trying to protect her own heart, will Lou break Joey's?

Stone, Nic. **Dear Martin.** (TEEN STONE)

Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.

Sugiura, Misa. **This Time Will Be Different.** (TEEN SUGIU)

Katsuyamas never quit -- but seventeen-year-old CJ doesn't even know where to start. She's never lived up to her mom's type A ambition, and she's perfectly happy just helping her aunt, Hannah, at their family's flower shop. She doesn't buy into Hannah's romantic ideas about flowers and their hidden meanings, but when it comes to arranging the perfect bouquet, CJ discovers a knack she never knew she had. A skill she might even be proud of. Then her mom decides to sell the shop -- to the family who swindled CJ's grandparents when thousands of Japanese Americans were sent to internment camps during WWII. Soon a rift threatens to splinter CJ's family, friends, and their entire Northern California community; and for the first time, CJ has found something she wants to fight for.

Takei, George. **They Called Us Enemy.** (741.597 TAKEI)

A stunning graphic memoir recounting actor/author/activist George Takei's childhood imprisoned within American concentration camps during World War II. Experience the forces that shaped an American icon -- and America itself -- in this gripping tale of courage, country, loyalty, and love. George Takei has captured hearts and minds worldwide with his captivating stage presence and outspoken commitment to equal rights.

Talley, Robin. **Lies We Tell Ourselves.** (TEEN TALLE)

In 1959 Virginia, Sarah, a black student who is one of the first to attend a newly integrated school, forces Linda, a white integration opponent's daughter, to confront harsh truths when they work together on a school project.

Thomas, Angie. **The Hate You Give.** (TEEN THOMA)

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer.

Thomas, Angie. **On the Come Up.** (TEEN THOMA)

When sixteen-year-old Bri, an aspiring rapper, pours her anger and frustration into her first song, she finds herself at the center of a controversy.

Watson, Renée. **Piecing Me Together.** (TEEN WATSO)

Tired of being singled out at her mostly-white private school as someone who needs support, high school junior Jade would rather participate in the school's amazing Study Abroad program than join Women to Women, a mentorship program for at-risk girls.

Watson, Renée. **This Side of Home.** (TEEN WATSO)

Twins Nikki and Maya Younger always agreed on most things, but as they head into their senior year they react differently to the gentrification of their Portland, Oregon, neighborhood and the new--white--family that moves in after their best friend and her mother are evicted.

Zoboi, Ibi Aanu. **American Street.** (TEEN ZOBOI)

When Fabiola's mother is detained upon their arrival to the United States, Fabiola must navigate her loud American cousins, the grittiness of Detroit's west side, a new school, and a surprising romance all on her own.

Zoboi, Ibi Aanu. **Black enough :stories of being young & black in America.** (TEEN BLACK)

A collection of short stories explore what it is like to be young and black, centering on the experiences of black teenagers and emphasizing that one person's experiences, reality, and personal identity are different than someone else.

Non-Fiction

Anderson, Gayle. **We are not yet equal: understanding our racial divide.** (323.119 ANDER)

This ... young adult adaptation brings her ideas to a new audience. When America achieves milestones of progress toward full and equal black participation in democracy, the systemic response is a consistent racist backlash that rolls back those wins

Guo, Winona. **Tell me who you are: sharing our stories of race, culture, and identity.** (305.8 GUO)

In this deeply inspiring book, Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi recount their experiences talking to people about race and identity on a cross-country tour of the United States. Determined to ignite a substantive discussion about racism, these two young women deferred college admission for a year to travel to all fifty states, conducting hundreds of interviews that uncover how racism plays out in this country every day, and often in unexpected ways.

Jewell, Tiffany. **This Book is Anti-Racist.** (NEW ADULT)

This book is written for the young person who doesn't know how to speak up to the racist adults in their life. For the 14 year old who sees injustice at school and isn't able to understand the role racism plays in separating them from their friends. For the kid who spends years trying to fit into the dominant culture and loses themselves for a little while. It's for all of the Black and Brown children who have been harmed (physically and emotionally) because no one stood up for them or they couldn't stand up for themselves; because the colour of their skin, the texture of their hair, their names made white folk feel scared and threatened. It is written so children and young adults will feel empowered to stand up to the adults who continue to close doors in their faces. This book will give them the language and ability to understand racism and a drive to undo it. In short, it is for everyone.

Kendi, Ibram X., Reynolds, Jason. **Stamped: racism, antiracism, and you.** (NEW ADULT)

A history of racist and antiracist ideas in America, from their roots in Europe until today, adapted from the National Book Award winner Stamped from the Beginning.