# CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO SUPPORT CONVERSATIONS ON RACE, RACISM AND RESISTANCE

# All Are Welcome 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. **Ages 4-8** 

## **Be Kind** by Pat Zietlow Miller

When Tanisha spills grape juice all over her new dress, her classmate wants to make her feel better, wondering: What does it mean to be kind? From asking the new girl to play to standing up for someone being bullied, this moving story explores what kindness is, and how any act, big or small, can make a difference—or at least help a friend. **Ages 3-6** 

# Coretta Scott by Ntozake Shange

Walking many miles to school in the dusty road, young Coretta knew, too well, the unfairness of life in the segregated south. A yearning for equality began to grow. Together with Martin Luther King, Jr., she gave birth to a vision and a journey—with dreams of freedom for all. This extraordinary union of poetic text by Ntozake Shange and monumental artwork by Kadir Nelson captures the movement for civil rights in the United States and honors its most elegant inspiration, Coretta Scott. **Ages 4–8** 

# The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael López

A heartening book about finding courage to connect, even when you feel scared and alone. Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael López's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway. **Ages 4–8** 

Gordon Parks: How the Photographer Captured Black and White America by Carole Boston Weatherford His white teacher tells her all-Black class, "You'll all wind up porters and waiters". What did she know? Gordon Parks is most famous for being the first Black director in Hollywood. He and others were treated differently because of the color of their skin. Gordon wanted to take a stand against the racism he observed. With his camera in hand, he found a way. Told through lyrical verse and atmospheric art, this is the story of how, with a single photograph, a self-taught artist got America to take notice. Ages 4–8

## **Hands 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. 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. **Ages 4-7** 

## I Am Enough by Grace Byers

This gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another comes from Empire actor and activist Grace Byers and talented newcomer artist Keturah A. Bobo. We are all here for a purpose. We are more than enough. We just need to believe it. **Ages 4-8** 

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## I'm Gonna Push Through by Jasmyn Wright

Based on the Push Through movement that inspires kids worldwide, this is an empowering, energetic, and all-inclusive picture book that celebrates resilience in the face of adversity. **Ages 4-8** 

# I'm New Here by Anne Sibley O'Brien

Three students are immigrants from Guatemala, Korea, and Somalia and have trouble speaking, writing, and sharing ideas in English in their new American elementary school. Through self-determination and with encouragement from their peers and teachers, the students learn to feel confident and comfortable in their new school without losing a sense of their home country, language, and identity. **Ages 5-8** 

## In the Footsteps of Crazy Horse by Joseph Marshall III and James Mark Yellowhawk

Jimmy McClean is a Lakota boy—though you wouldn't guess it by his name: his father is part white and part Lakota, and his mother is Lakota. When he embarks on a journey with his grandfather, Nyles High Eagle, he learns more and more about his Lakota heritage—in particular, the story of Crazy Horse, one of the most important figures in Lakota and American history. Through his grandfather's tales about the famous warrior, Jimmy learns more about his Lakota heritage and, ultimately, himself. **Ages 10+** 

## Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Pena

Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don't own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn't he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them. **Ages 4-6** 

# The Legendary Miss Lena Horne by Carole Boston Weatherford

Celebrate the life of Lena Horne, the pioneering African American actress and civil rights activist, with this inspiring and powerful picture book from award-winning author Carole Boston Weatherford. **Ages 4–8** 

## Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson and Frank Morrison

In 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, thousands of African American children volunteered to march for their civil rights after hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak. They protested the laws that kept black people separate from white people. Facing fear, hate, and danger, these children used their voices to change the world. Frank Morrison's emotive oil-on-canvas paintings bring this historical event to life, while Monica Clark-Robinson's moving and poetic words document this remarkable time. **Ages 6-9** 

## Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus and sparked a boycott that changed America. Harriet Tubman helped hundreds of enslaved people escape the South on the Underground Railroad. The lives of ten Black women activists are featured in an incredible story about courage in the face of oppression; about the challenges and triumphs of the battle for civil rights; and about speaking out for what you believe in — even when it feels like no one is listening. **Ages 6–9** 

## **Lift As You Climb** by Patricia Hruby Powell

Long before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, Ella Baker worked to lift others up by fighting racial injustice and empowering poor African Americans to stand up for their rights. **Ages 4-8** 

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## Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison

An important book for all ages, Little Leaders educates and inspires as it relates true stories of forty trailblazing Black women in American history. Among these biographies, readers will find heroes, role models, and everyday women who did extraordinary things — bold women whose actions and beliefs contributed to making the world better for generations of girls and women to come. The leaders in this book may be little, but they all did something big and amazing, inspiring generations to come. **Ages 8-12** 

Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford
Carole Boston Weatherford depicts Harriet Tubman's initial escape from slavery and her mission to lead
others to freedom as divinely inspired, and achieved by steadfast faith and prayer. The twinkling
star encourages Tubman: "My mind is made up. Tomorrow, I flee." A foreword introduces
the concept of slavery for children and an author's note includes a brief biography of
Tubman. Ages 5–8

## My Hair is a Garden by Cozbi A. Cabrera

After a day of being taunted by classmates about her unruly hair, Mackenzie can't take any more and she seeks guidance from her wise and comforting neighbor, Miss Tillie. Using the beautiful garden in the backyard as a metaphor, Miss Tillie shows Mackenzie that maintaining healthy hair is not a chore nor is it something to fear. Most importantly, Mackenzie learns that natural Black hair is beautiful. Ages 5–8

# The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi

Unhei is preparing for her first day of school. The kids make fun of her name and offer to help her find a new name. This is a story of honoring each other's names and speaking them correctly. **Ages 5-9** 

## Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness by Anastasia Higginbotham

A young boy hears about a police shooting of a black person in the news. When he wants answers from the adults around him, he's told that color doesn't matter. The child already senses how his whiteness protects him in his everyday actions. **Ages 9-12** 

## Our Favorite Day of the Year by A. E. All

In this charming story of friendship and celebrating differences, young readers can discover how entering a new friendship with an open mind and sharing parts of yourself brings people together. **Ages 4-8** 

## The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson

When Candice finds a letter in an old attic in Lambert, South Carolina, she isn't sure she should read it. It's addressed to her grandmother, who left the town in shame. But the letter describes a young woman. An injustice that happened decades ago. A mystery enfolding its writer. And the fortune that awaits the person who solves the puzzle. **Ages 10+** 

## Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis by Jabari Asim

When John is put in charge of the family farm's flock of chickens, he discovers that they make a wonderful congregation! Celebrating ingenuity and dreaming big, this inspirational story includes an author's note about John Lewis, who grew up to be a member of the Freedom Riders; chairman of the Student

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Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; demonstrator on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama; and Georgia congressman, who is still an activist today. **Ages 4–8** 

# Rosa by Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Bryan Collier

Fifty years after her refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, city bus, Rosa Parks is still one of the most important figures in the American civil rights movement. This tribute to Rosa Parks is a celebration of her courageous action and the events that followed. **Ages 4-8** 

# Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library by Carole Boston Weatherford

In luminous paintings and arresting poems, two of children's literature's top African-American scholars track Arturo Schomburg's quest to correct history. When Schomburg's collection became so big it began to overflow his house, he turned to the New York Public Library, where he created and curated a collection that was the cornerstone of a new Negro Division. A century later, his groundbreaking collection, known as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, has become a beacon to scholars all over the world. **Ages 9–12** 

Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatiuh Almost 10 years before Brown v. Board of Education, Sylvia Mendez and her parents helped end school segregation in California. Mendez, an American citizen of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, was denied enrollment to a "whites only" school. Her parents took action by organizing the Latino community and filing a lawsuit in federal district court. Their success eventually brought an end to the era of segregated education in California. Ages 6–9

# **Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up By Sitting Down** by Andrea Davis Pinkney

This picture book is a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the momentous Woolworth's lunch counter sit-in, when four college students staged a peaceful protest that became a defining moment in the struggle for racial equality and the growing civil rights movement. Andrea Davis Pinkney uses poetic, powerful prose to tell the story of these four young men, who followed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words of peaceful protest and dared to sit at the "whites only" Woolworth's lunch counter. **Ages 7–10** 

## **Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride** by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Born into slavery, Belle had to endure the cruelty of several masters before she escaped to freedom. But she knew she wouldn't really be free unless she was helping to end injustice. That's when she changed her name to Sojourner and began traveling across the country, demanding equal rights for Black people and for women. Many people weren't ready for her message, but Sojourner was brave, and her truth was powerful. **Ages 5–9** 

**Something Happened in Our Town** by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins, and Ann Hazzard

Something Happened in Our Town follows two families — one white, one Black — as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community. The story aims to answer children's questions about such traumatic events, and to help children identify and counter racial injustice in their own lives. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers with guidelines for discussing race and racism with children, child-friendly definitions, and sample dialogues. Ages 4–8

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## **Sulwe** by Lupita Nyong'o

When Tanisha spills grape juice all over her new dress, her classmate wants to make her feel better, wondering: What does it mean to be kind? From asking the new girl to play to standing up for someone being bullied, this moving story explores what kindness is, and how any act, big or small, can make a difference—or at least help a friend. Ages

4-8

## Thank you, Omu by Oge Mora

Everyone in the neighborhood dreams of a taste of Omu's delicious stew! One by one, they follow their noses toward the scrumptious scent. And one by one, Omu offers a portion of her meal. Soon the pot is empty. Has she been so generous that she has nothing left for herself? Debut author-illustrator Oge Mora brings to life a heartwarming story of sharing and community. **Ages 4-8** 

## You Matter by Christian Robinson

Young readers will be drawn into the luminous illustrations inviting them to engage with the world in a new way and see how everyone is connected, and that everyone matters. **Ages 4-8** 

**Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement** by Carole Boston Weatherford

Despite fierce prejudice and abuse, even being beaten to within an inch of her life, Fannie Lou Hamer was a champion of civil rights from the 1950s until her death in 1977. Voice of Freedom celebrates Fannie Lou Hamer's life and legacy with a message of hope, determination, and strength. **Ages 9–12** 

# We Came to America by Faith Ringgold

From the Native Americans who first called this land their home, to the millions of people who have flocked to its shores ever since, America is a country rich in diversity. Some of our ancestors were driven by dreams and hope. 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. **Ages 5-8** 

#### When We Were Alone by David A. Robertson

When a young girl helps tend to her grandmother's garden, she begins to notice things that make her curious. Why does her grandmother have long braided hair and beautifully colored clothing? Why does she speak another language and spend so much time with her family? When We Were Alone is a story about a difficult time in history and, ultimately, one of resilience, empowerment and strength. **Ages 4–8**