

First Parish in Lincoln

Presents

Food for Thought

A monthly dinner and conversation

Courageous Conversations: Talking to Children about Race

Co-hosted by the METCO Coordinating Committee and the First Parish in Lincoln

Resources for Further Exploration

Podcasts and Online

- *Today's Podcast:* NPR Talking Race with Young Children...
<https://www.npr.org/2019/04/24/716700866/talking-race-with-young-children>
hosted by Cory Turner and Anya Kamenetz
 - Social Justice Books... <https://socialjusticebooks.org/about/>
 - Embrace Race <https://www.embracerace.org/resources>
 - Anti-Defamation League (ADL)<https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?page=1>
 - Common Sense Media <https://www.common Sense Media.org/>
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Books For Children

Pre-K, K, 1 & 2

- **Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters**, John Steptoe
A Caldecott Honor and Reading Rainbow book, this memorable retelling of Cinderella is perfect for introducing children to the fairy tale as well as the history, culture, and geography of the African nation of Zimbabwe.
- **All the Colors We Are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color**, Kate Kissinger
Kissinger has written a book that deals with skin color in a straightforward, scientifically accurate, child-friendly manner.

1-5th grade

- **Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice**, Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins & Ann Hazzard
The story follows two families—one White and one Black—as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community.
- **Lillian's Right to Vote**, Jonah Winter
An elderly African American woman, on her way to vote, remembers her family's tumultuous voting history.

Middle School

- **This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality**, Jo Anne Allen Boyce, Debbie Levy
In 1956, one year before federal troops escorted the Little Rock 9 into Central High School, fourteen year old Jo Ann Allen was one of twelve African-American students who broke the color barrier and integrated Clinton High School in Tennessee. This novel in verse is the heartbreaking and relatable story of her four months thrust into the national spotlight and as a trailblazer in history.
- **Reaching for the Moon: The Autobiography of NASA Mathematician**, Katherine Johnson
The inspiring autobiography of NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson, who helped launch Apollo 11.

Movies

***And the Children Shall Lead*, 9+**

Direct and sensitive, this tween-friendly take on how the civil rights movement turned the South upside down in the 1960s is both direct enough to hold tweens' attention and important enough to be good family viewing.

Conversation starter: What would you do if you were faced with the same situation as the kids in the movie? Can you think of examples that show how race still affects the way people are treated today?

***Hidden Figures*, 10+**

The true story of three brilliant African American women who worked at NASA in the 1950s and '60s offers a realistic look at the racial tensions of the civil rights era, plus tons of positive messages about integrity, perseverance, teamwork, and communication.

Conversation starter: How do the lessons from the civil rights movement apply today? How far have we come? How are people still discriminated against?

***Souder*, 12+**

Based on the Newberry Award-winning novel by William H. Armstrong, one of the key themes of this coming-of-age drama is the power of education reading to help overcome a deeply rooted racist society.

Conversation starter: Why are the types of books the main character is given by white and African American teachers so different? What does the boy need to overcome to pursue his dream of learning?

***The Great Debaters*, 13+**

Denzel Washington stars in this inspirational fact-based drama about a debate team that overcomes severe prejudice on the way to national fame. Expect unvarnished discussions and representations of 1930s racism, including a brutal lynching scene.

Conversation starter: Does seeing racism and prejudice portrayed in a historical setting make it any easier to watch? Why, or why not?

***The Hate U Give*, 13+**

Like the award-winning book it's based on, this drama about a black teen named Starr Carter (Amandla Stenberg) who witnesses the fatal police shooting of a close friend deals frankly and powerfully with race and racism.

Conversation starter: One character in the movie says that "white folks want diversity but not too much diversity" -- what do you think she means? Do you agree?

***Selma*, 13+**

Despite some historically accurate violence and occasional strong language, this drama about revered civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is powerful and educational, with fabulous performances, a gripping script, and important subject matter.

Conversation starter: What are the differences between a protest and a riot? How are protests typically shown on TV or in the movies? What about riots?

***The Color Purple*, 14+**

This intense drama based on Alice Walker's award-winning novel deals with serious themes (including incest and abuse), but it will open mature teens' eyes to the difficulties that women -- especially black women -- experienced in the early 20th century.

Conversation starter: How have times have changed for women since the era in which the story takes place? Has anything remained the same? Why are the challenges faced by women of color different from those faced by white women?

***Mudbound*, 15+**

Following two Mississippi families -- one white, one black -- who live through and after World War II, this drama based on Hillary Jordan's novel paints a harrowing portrait of the Jim Crow South, inviting in-depth conversation about subjects that are as relevant today as they were decades ago.

Conversation starter: Do you think showing disturbing violence helps audiences more fully comprehend the African American experience? Why, or why not?

***13th*, 16+**

Director Ava DuVernay's provocative, challenging documentary about the racial issues confronting contemporary America isn't for the faint of heart, but mature viewers will find it both educational and a call to action to take a stand against racial injustice.

Conversation starter: What surprised you most about our country's treatment of African American citizens over its long history?