TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT SKIN COLOR: NOTES FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

* DISPELLING THE COLOR BLIND MYTH
* GETTING PAST THE SILENCE
* GOALS OF ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION RELATED TO SKIN COLOR LEARNINGS WITH BOOKS AND ACTIVITIES TO GO WITH EACH ONE

1. EVERY CHILD FEEL POSITIVE ABOUT THEIR OWN SPECIAL COLOR OF SKIN
2. LEARN THAT PEOPLE COME IN MANY SHADES OF BROWN
3. LEARN CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT WHAT IS FAIR AND UNFAIR
4. KNOW ABOUT AND BECOME PART OF THE LONG HISTORY OF RESISTENCE TO RACISM

**Children’s Books about Racial Identity, skin color**

Books, S. B. (2011). *My Face Book.* Cambridge: Star Bright Books.

This is a very simple board book with diverse faces with one word feelings associated. The book can be ordered in multiple linguistic choices. Older infants and toddlers.

Cole, H. (2005). *Am I a Color Too?* Bellevue: Illumination Arts Publishing Co.

This book is a gorgeously illustrated portrayal of a child's questions about their multi-racial identity. Younger preschoolers through the early grades.

Diggs, T. (2011). *Chocolate Me!* New York: Feiwel and Friends.

Diggs, T. (2015). *Mixed Me!* New York: Feiwel and Friends.

These two books by Taye Diggs are useful for beginner conversations about skin color, being treated unfairly because of the color of your skin (*Chocolate Me*) and biracial identity (*Mixed Me*). Younger preschoolers.

Hamanaka, S. (1994). *All the Colors of the Earth.* Morrow and Co.

This book has beautiful language and illustrations to explore a variety of skin colors and hair. All ages.

hooks, b. (2004). *Skin Again.* Jump at the Sun Hyperion Books for Children.

This book is fun to read because it has great rhythm. Kindergarten through early grade school.

Iyengar, M. M. (2009). *Tan to Tamarind: poems about the color brown.* San Francisco: Children's Book Press.

After doing lots of skin color poetry writing with children, this book was wonderful to find. Lovely illustrations and words that help children to hear the beauty of all shades of brown. Would be great to read to children if they are writing skin color poetry, too. All ages.

Katz, K. (1999). *The Color of Us.* New York: Henry Holt and Company.

This books presents illustrations for skin colors with associations to lots of different kinds of food. Children have fun with the food associations at the preschool level. The cartoonish characterizations of people can promote stereotypes, so you should also use books or photos of real people with a variety of skin tones. All ages.

Kissinger, K. (2014). *All The Colors We Are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color.* Minneapolis: Redleaf Press.

This is the 20th anniversary edition of the children's book that I wrote. It is a science book that explains to children how we get our skin color. This book is helpful for children ages three and up and has activities to help explain the key concepts. It is available in both English and Spanish. Preschool and older.

Rotner, S. (2009) *Shades of People.* New York: Holiday House.

This is a wonderful book for all ages with real photographs of children with a wide variety of skin tones. Minimal text. All ages.

Tyler, M. (2005). *The Skin You Live In.* Chicago: Chicago Children's Museum.

This book is a real tongue twister and my very favorite one to read to children and adults. It is packed with rhyming and ideas of differences and fairness. Again, be sure to use it in conjunction with other books that has images of real people to counter the cartoonish images. Preschool and older.

Woodson, J. (2001). *The Other Side.* New York: G.P. Putman's Sons.

This book is the only one in this section that I would call a story book. The story helps to represent the barriers that sometimes exist due to skin color differences. The children in the story work together to knock down barriers. I read it often at the start of classes or workshops for teachers because it so beautifully represents the work we are doing together. Preschool and older.