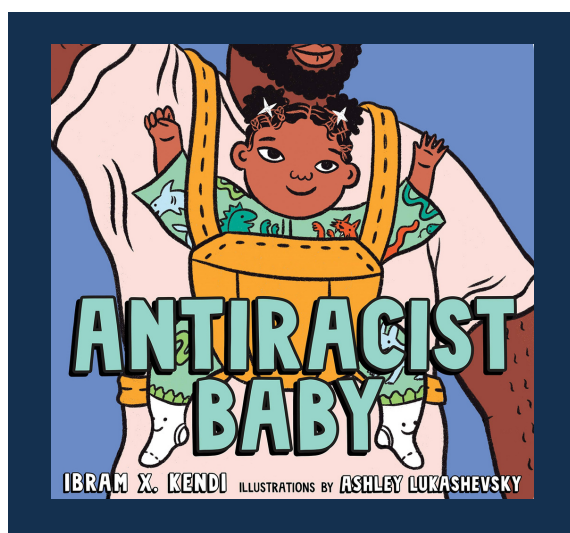


# Reading Guide for Building an Anti-Racist Classroom

## *Antiracist Baby* By: Ibram X. Kendi

This book provides simple steps to becoming antiracist and promoting activism in our daily actions. Of the nine simple steps the book emphasizes, each of these points are designed to guide *Antiracist Baby* on the journey to becoming anti-racist. We are all learning, and by grounding these principles within your classroom, we can follow the lead of *Antiracist Baby* to grow, learn and teach our students how to become better allies for social justice, and work towards dismantling systemic racial oppression. This book is useful for framing critical conversations and holds all readers accountable to forming a just and equitable society.



[Read Aloud Can Be Accessed Here](#)

## How to Read this Book

**Suggested Grades:** While the author intended this book to be used for early-elementary grades, this book can be used in junior or intermediate classrooms as well. This guide focuses mainly on **grades 2-3**, however what is also included are additional prompts and resources to extend activities beyond early-primary.

**Themes:** Equity, Social Justice, Anti-Racism

**Subjects:** Literacy and Social Studies, (This book can be used as an overall teaching or review of anti-racism)

**When To Introduce This Book:** Throughout the book *Antiracist Baby*, the author Ibram X. Kendi offers nine suggestions for becoming antiracist. In the spirit of his book, this guide offers nine strategies to extend each point in the story with either discussion prompts, lesson extensions or activities to bring into your classroom. Rather than reading this book as a stand alone, try reading the book with pauses to allow time for the steps and activities included in this guide. Pair steps 1-9 in the book with the matching reading sequence outlined in this guide.

## Considerations for Teachers

Before engaging in anti-racist work with your students, take some time to reflect and consider:

1. How you have been socialized to understand our own racial identity and the racial identity of others
2. What is your understanding of racist practices & policies and how do they serve to function in our lives?
3. Examining your social position: how do you possess power and privilege? [[See: Flower Power activity](#)].
4. Developing language around race, racism, and [anti-racism](#)



# Pre Reading



- Listen to author's note. Discuss and explain the selected words **race**, **racism**, and **anti-racist** before you begin.
- Start with a **think, pair, share** and then open a class discussion.
- Next, **examine** cover art and think: what does it mean to be anti-racist?
- Finally, **discuss**: what does “race” mean? What is racism? What does “racist” mean? What is culture?
- For older students: Examine key differences between **bullying**, **prejudice**, **stereotypes**, and **discrimination**. How can these things manifest in the form of racism?



## Guided Reading Sequence

1

### Open your eyes to all skin colours

To teach children how to be anti-racist, we need to acknowledge and see colour! Specifically how it functions to create divisiveness in our society. Try some of these activities with your students to help them "open their eyes" to race. Some favourites include "Different Images of Beauty," "Family Colours," "Art and Racial Justice," and "It's Okay to Feel Different."

### Use your words to talk about race

2

Give students the tools and vocabulary to talk about race. Be sure you have a range of descriptive, positive words to identify race, starting with your own, e.g., Colours of Me.

Have a discussion to ponder: what is the difference between racism and bullying? What do you do if you witness someone acting racist or being racially insensitive? How can we act as allies and demonstrate antiracism according to the book? Give students an opportunity to journal about their reactions and make a safe space to facilitate discussion.

3

### Point at policies as the problem, Not people

*For early primary students:* Help students recognize their own bill of rights. Think about what rights all students should have to create a safe and inclusive school. Should we all have the same rights and freedoms? Use this activity to foster racial justice within your school community.

*For elementary and junior students:* In social studies, look at historical and contemporary Canadian policies and examine how they support or work to remove racist ideas. Discuss: What is a law? What is a bill? Who has power vs. who is silenced? How is policy part of the problem and what can we do to give more power to people who have been historically oppressed and marginalized?

### Shout, There's Nothing Wrong With The People

4

Debunk myths and shut down stereotypes when you hear them. Give students the tools and language to do the same in their own interactions. Try Dissolving Stereotypes and unpack common stereotypes we may have heard before. Explain why stereotypes are harmful and ask students to brainstorm how they can act as allies when they hear them. Check out Learning For Justice's public learning plan about stereotypes and their learning plan on The Language of Identity, Difference, Discrimination and Inclusion

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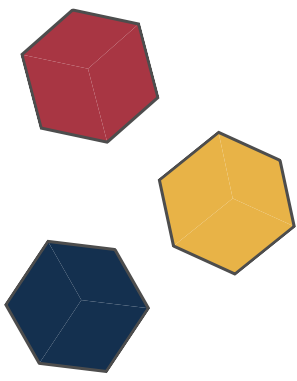
### Celebrate all our differences

Send inclusive messaging and uplift cultural diversity in your class. Examine cultures around the world and include lessons like Schools Around the World and the Colour of Us. Consider looking at the Educator's Toolkit on More Than Peach Project for even more ideas about celebrating difference and promoting equity amongst students of different racial identities.



6

## Knock down the stack of cultural blocks



Use resources that reflect the rich diversity of your community and represent ALL students! Give students space to bring their cultural identity to school by sharing their heritage in a number of ways. Show and share activities where students can bring special artifacts from home are a great and inclusive way to give your students space to share, and will extend a platform for community building to welcome all cultures within your classroom.

## Confess when being racist

7

Part of making a change means taking accountability. Invite students to understand the value of telling the truth and being honest and bring role play into the classroom with sentence starters to practice navigating racial discussions. For role play activity find black line master here. While this work is incredibly important, you must remember to maintain a safe and trauma informed space. We must not single out a student to speak about issues related to their identity/ies. Students have the right to choose how and when they share and teach others about their experiences with racism.

8

## Grow to be antiracist

This point of the book is about growing and changing and the importance of curiosity and learning. Anti-racist lessons should most certainly not be a one-off. This is a great time in the book to encourage students to ask questions and share their wonders so that they can learn, grow and change! Continue the ongoing practice of anti-racism in your classroom by persisting through uncomfortable conversations, participating in social justice activism, supporting Black authors and content creators and uplifting BIPOC experiences within the classroom.



## Believe we shall overcome racism

9

Change starts with YOU! Continue to use anti-racism tools, talk about race in your classroom, discuss privilege with students and set attainable goals to enact transformative change for racial justice within and beyond your school community!

## Important Disclaimer

These discussion points can be shared with students up to grade 6, and sometimes even beyond. Again, although *Antiracist Baby* is a picture book and seems geared towards the primary grades, the messages in *Antiracist Baby* would definitely create rich discussions with older students. You could use these prompts to facilitate anti-racist discussions in your intermediate/junior grades, or even use this book as a 'minds on' for high school students. There really is so much you can do with this incredible book! If reading with older students, try pairing the book with a pledge for racial justice and allyship with your class. Look at #DisruptTexts for more inspiration about how to bring social justice to your junior, intermediate or secondary classroom.



***"Antiracist Baby is bred, not born. Antiracist Baby is raised to make society transform"***