“Let's Talk Race”

Racial Literacy Toolkits
Salt Lake City Public Library
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Who We Are
Our Team

Charlene
Parent, writer, project manager, children’s programs

Diana
Parent, educator, DSRT, equity and org development

Lindsey
Library Manager, former Children’s Librarian

Nancy
Adult Services Coordinator, EDI Council co-chair
02
Why Talk Race?
“To be effective, researchers have found, conversations about race have to be explicit, in unmistakable terms that children understand.”

— Po Bronson & Ashley Merryman, *NurtureShock*
What Does Racial Literacy mean?

Racial Literacy aims to:

- Promote positive racial awareness development in children
- Recognize, address, and counter different forms of everyday racism
Two Key Concepts

Be Color BRAVE
A “colorblind” approach falsely suggests that a person’s race does not impact their lives.

Own Our Mistakes
Anyone can make racist mistakes. If this happens, acknowledge the harm and try to repair it.
Libraries can help!

**Critical Literacies**
View racial literacy like reading, writing, and numeracy

**Fill the Gaps**
Access to resources and information that may not be available in schools or at home
“In a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”

—Angela Y. Davis
03
Kit Development
Our Goals

Support
Learn concepts about racism and reflect on our own lives

Encourage
Provide opportunities for conversations

Affirm
We all have a part to play in social justice
Three Types of Toolkits

- **Babies and Toddlers**
  - Noticing physical differences

- **Elementary Students**
  - Deeper exploration of racism

- **Preschoolers**
  - “Fair vs. unfair”
What Are in the Kits?

Kits are available in physical and electronic form.

- Caregiver’s Guide
- Selection of picture books
- Discussion guides for each book
- Glossary of key terms
- Toys and manipulatives in physical kits
- Video recordings of selected books in electronic kits
Pre-K Toolkit Manipulatives
Developing the Kits, Part 1

Proposal
Emailed Children's Service Coordinator

Team
Majority POC, mix of parents, librarians, & educators

Approval
Green light from Executive Team

Logistics
Met with Coordinator to discuss costs, timeline, process
Developing the Kits, Part 2

**Book Selection**
Each member submitted 3-5 books for consideration

**Caregiver Guide**
Each member submitted ideas, one wrote the guide

**Discussion Guides and Videos**
Each member wrote 1-2 guides and recorded read-aloud videos

**Manipulatives**
Each member submitted 3-5 ideas, one coordinated with Technical Services
Book Selection

**Time**
Each member read between 10-15 books per kit.

**YouTube**
We used YouTube read-alouds to vet books.

**#ownvoices**
We chose books written by people with lived experience of the topic.

**Balance**
Include books on challenging topics AND joy and empowerment.

**Diversity**
Include a variety of racial and ethnic perspectives.

**Book Talk**
Select books as a team. Listen to other perspectives.
Pre-K Toolkit
Book Selections
The Guides

Let's Talk Race
Pre-K Toolkit

Who is this guide for?

What do you mean by race?

It's easy to get lost when thinking about race.

Understand the diversity of race and identity when thinking together.

It makes us think of the unique experiences of the people.

What is identity?

It's a complex concept that encompasses many different factors.

We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga

The Cherokee people have a lot of customs and traditions they are grateful for. What are you grateful for? Are you grateful for any of the same things listed in the story?

Discussion Questions:

1. This story has words in a different language: Cherokee. Why do you think it was important to use Cherokee words in this story?

2. What do you notice about the author's perspective in these words?

A Kids Book About Racism

Written by Jordan Mather

Topics for Conversation:

1. What do you notice about the words “this,” “that,” “white,” and “green”? (They are printed in a black color.) If you held the book up in the light, how does it compare to the other colors in the book? Do you know what race they are?

2. What do you notice about the word “small” (It is a very small size on a black page). What do you think it feels like to feel small? Do you think it’s fair that people can feel small because of their race?

Discussion Questions:

1. You can think of a book, a song, a joke, a question, or a fact or a belief. Can you think of an example of a book or a song that made you feel different?

2. If you think of two people who are different, what makes them different?

3. How can you make a social difference even if you don’t feel that’s something you could do to make it right?
Developing the Kits, Part 3

Edits & Feedback
Everyone edited guides, and the EDI Council provided feedback

Online
Children’s Services Coordinator uploaded to Biblioboard

Marketing
Several avenues through which Marketing advertised kits

Formatting
One or two members placed text into templates

Physical Kits
One member worked with Technical Services to complete the bags
Designing the Guides

**Canva**
Free, easier to use

**Adobe InDesign**
Paid, more complex, aligns with Library branding

**BOTH**
Inclusive, neutral design
Average Cost: $95–$180 Per Kit

Books
Each kit included 5-7 titles

Manipulatives
And 2-3 manipulatives

Staff Time
Each member worked 1-4 hours a week

EDI Consultant
Market rates are often $150-200 per hour
Resources, Part 1

The Conscious Kid
- Book lists
- Glossary
- Key concepts

Embrace Race
- Talking about race with kids
- Choosing “good” picture books
- Reading with a race-conscious lens

Diverse Book Finder
- Steps for using picture books to talk about race
- Collection development tool
Resources, Part 2

Jessica Anne Bratt
- How to talk about race in storytimes
- Librarian resources
- Webinar

NurtureShock
- “Even Babies Discriminate” explains why parent education is key

Great Blogs
- Hijabi Librarians
- American Indians in Children’s Literature
- Latinxs in Kid Lit
Moving Forward

**Other Languages**
Providing support for different communities.

**Other Age Groups**
Teen Services working on similar kits.

**Maintenance**
Lost or damaged items.

**Updating**
Refreshing book selection.
Thanks

Do you have any questions?

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