



February is Black History Month! The ESJ committee would like to share some resources, ideas, and facts to be read to the class or school to celebrate Black History Month.

Books: The books below are linked to a summary. The grade levels are what are suggested by the book publishers, these can of course be adapted to a wide range of learners and grade.

The Colors of Us by Karen Katz (K-3)

Lovely by Jessica Hong (K-3)

Last Stop On Market Street by Matt de la Pena (K-3)

Antiracist Baby Board Book by Ibram X Kendi (K-3)

Woke Baby by Mahogany L. Browne (K-3)

Our Skin: A First Conversation About Race by M. Madison & J. Ralli ((K-3)

Dream Big Little One by Vashti Harrison (K-3)

Follow Your Dreams Little One by Vashti Harrison (K-3)

A Is for All the Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book by Anna Forgeson Hindley (K-4)

Find Out About: Standing Up to Racism: A lift-the-flap board book about standing together by Dr Pragya Agarwal (K-3)

An ABC of Equality by Chana G. Ewing (K-4)

Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice by M. Celano, M. Collins & A. Hazzard (K-4)

Hair like Mine Latatisha Perry (K-4)

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles (K-4)

Let's Talk About Race by Julius Lester (K-6)

Little Leaders: Exceptional Men in Black History by Vashti Harrison (K-8)

Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison (K-8)

Stamped (For Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You by J. Reynolds & I.X. Kendi (2-6)

Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman (K-4)

A Place Inside of Me: A Poem to Heal the Heart by Zetta Elliott (K-4)

If A Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks by Faith Ringgold (K-4)

A Good Kind of Trouble by Lisa Moore Ramée (3-8)

Something to Say by Lisa Moore Ramée (3-8)

It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah (5-8)

Have I Ever Told You Black Lives Matter by Shani King (5-8)

Nelson Mandela: The Authorized Comic Book by The Nelson Mandela Foundation (5-8)

This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do The Work by Tiffany Jewell (5-12)

Kneel by Candace Buford (7-12)

The Hate U Give by Angi Thomas (9-12)

X: A Novel by Ilyasah Shabazz (9-12)

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by J. Reynolds & I.X. Kendi (9-12)

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou (9-12)

Electronic links and websites:

Community Voices: Canadian Black History Virtual Field Trip (** Please note time and date) February 9 2-2:45 (5-6) <https://manitobamuseum.ca/event/community-voices-black-history-in-canada-virtual-field-trip-feb-9> (click to register)

Black History and Anti-Racism in Canada – Manitoba Education

<https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/multic/bhm.html>

ETFO 365 Black Canadian History Curriculum and Calendar – this site contains multiple full lesson plans for all grade levels with assessments and worksheets (some links are dead but most are working) <https://www.etfo.ca/resources/classroom-resources/365-black-canadian-curriculum/365-black-canadian-curriculum-34d475930fc96a7121246be5c24e8be2> (K-12)

Kayak Black History Month

<https://f.hubspotusercontent20.net/hubfs/5071474/BSCA/Blog/Kayak%20Black%20History%20Magazine.pdf> (Grade 3+)

Black art and artists to inspire kids <http://oscaw.com/black-art-artists-to-inspire-kids> (all grade levels)

The Secret Life of Canada: Province of Jamaica Podcast

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/secretlifeofcanada/teaching-guide-the-secret-life-of-the-province-of-jamaica-1.5256878> (Grade 5+)

Heritage Minute: Viola Desmond <https://youtu.be/ie0xWYRSX7Y> (K-12)

Heritage Minute: Richard Pinpoint <https://youtu.be/UQyPXOHvwEc> (Grade 3+)

Heritage Minute: Oscar Peterson <https://youtu.be/7cdXEhR9dd4> (K-12)

Heritage Minute: Jackie Robinson <https://youtu.be/Rt9ZENZbe5w> (K-12)

Black Parents talk to kids about the police <https://youtu.be/coryt8lZ-DE> (K-6)

Black History Month Facts

Feel free to use these Black History Month facts in morning announcements for the school or within your classes. Many of these facts are USA focused but also have many diverse perspective and often intersect with other groups that are marginalized. If you are searching for a list that includes more Canadian facts please see the ETFO Black History In Canada document [https://tce-](https://tce-live2.s3.amazonaws.com/media/studyguides/EN%20BlackHistory%20Digital.pdf)

[live2.s3.amazonaws.com/media/studyguides/EN BlackHistory Digital.pdf](https://tce-live2.s3.amazonaws.com/media/studyguides/EN BlackHistory Digital.pdf)

1. Black History Month was begun in 1915 by Harvard historian Carter Woodson, who is sometimes referred to as The Father of Black History. He lobbied for a program that would encourage the study of African-American history, and dedicated his career to this mission.
2. In January of this year, writer and poet Maya Angelou became the first Black woman to have her likeness depicted on an American quarter. Angelou's landmark 1968 memoir *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* was one of the first autobiographies by a 20th century Black woman to reach a wide general readership.
3. In spite of white-centric western films, one in four cowboys was Black. In fact, the Lone Ranger was based on Bass Reeves, an escaped slave who became a Deputy U.S. Marshall.
4. The character of Betty Boop was inspired by Black jazz singer Helen Kane, who was known for scatting "boop-boop-a-doop" in songs during her Broadway performances.
5. Martin Luther King Jr's assassination coincided with Maya Angelou's birthday. After this heinous act, Angelou stopped celebrating her birthday. However, she did send flowers to King's wife Coretta Scott King every year on that date until Mrs. King passed away in 2006.
6. In Canada and the US, Black History month is celebrated in February. However, in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Netherlands they honour it during the month of October.
7. Every year, Black History Month has a different theme. Last year the theme was "The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity." This year's theme is "Black Health and Wellness."

8. James McCune Smith was the first African American to hold a medical degree and the first African American to run a pharmacy. Because no American university would admit him, he travelled to Scotland to earn his degree from the University of Glasgow.
9. Long before Barack Obama became the first Black president of the United States, George Edwin Taylor ran for president in 1904.
10. You know that Michelle Obama was the first Black first lady, but did you know that this Harvard-educated lawyer wrote an autobiography that became the best-selling book of 2018 and the second-best-selling book of 2019?
11. Alice Dunnigan was the first female African American White House correspondent in a time when the nation was still largely segregated. She endured many indignities, including going three years straight without President Dwight Eisenhower calling on her for a single question. The dry spell was broken when JFK called on her only eight minutes into his first press conference. Today, Dunnigan is considered a groundbreaker in the field of journalism.
12. June 19th is also called Juneteenth. The name is a mash-up of the month and the date: June + nineteenth. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day Union General Gordon Granger and 1800 federal troops arrived in Galveston Texas to take over the state and enforce Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth became a federal holiday in the United States in 2021.
13. Singer and music producer Sylvia Robinson was dubbed Hip Hop's First Godmother by Billboard magazine. Robinson produced the first-ever commercially successful rap record, *Rapper's Delight* by The Sugarhill Gang, in 1979. In 2014 the record was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.
14. Stevie Wonder is not only the first Black artist to win a Grammy for Album of the Year for 1973's *Innervisions*, but the first and only musician to win Album of the Year with three consecutive studio albums.
15. Muhammad Ali is known as the greatest boxer of all time. As a child, he was refused an autograph by his boxing idol, Sugar Ray Robinson. When Ali became a prizefighter, he vowed to never deny an autograph request, a promise he honored throughout his career.
16. Before becoming a professional musician, Chuck Berry studied to be a hairdresser.

17. When African American neurosurgeon Ben Carson was a child, his mother required him to read two library books a week and give her written reports, even though she was barely literate. She would then take the papers and pretend to carefully review them, placing a checkmark at the top of the page to show her approval. The assignments inspired Carson's eventual love of reading and learning.
18. Ralph Ellison was the first African American writer to win the National Book Award for his novel *Invisible Man*. Before he wrote the acclaimed novel, he served as a cook in the Merchant Marines during World War II.
19. Famed guitarist Jimi Hendrix was known by close friends and family members simply as "Buster."
20. Rapper Jay-Z reportedly developed his stage name as a reference to the New York's J/Z subway lines, which have a stop in his Brooklyn neighborhood.
21. Before he became an NBA legend, Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team.
22. In her early life, Coretta Scott King was as well known for her singing and violin playing as she was for her civil rights activism. The young soprano won a fellowship to the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, the city where she met future husband Martin Luther King Jr.
23. African American fashion designer Ann Lowe designed the wedding dress of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, the bride of future President John F. Kennedy.
24. Barack Obama has won two Grammy Awards. He was first honored in 2005 for the audio version of his memoir, *Dreams from My Father* (best spoken word album), and received his second Grammy (in the same category) in 2007 for his political work, *The Audacity of Hope*.
25. Before he became a baseball legend, Jackie Robinson played football for the Honolulu Bears. He had an older brother, Matthew, who won a silver medal in the 200-meter dash at the 1936 Olympics.
26. Ray Charles Robinson, a musical genius and pioneer in blending gospel and the blues, shortened his name to Ray Charles to prevent confusion with the great boxer Sugar Ray Robinson. Ray Charles began losing his sight at an early age and was completely blind by the time he was 7, but never relied upon a cane or guide

dog. He was one of the first inductees into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at its inaugural ceremony in 1986.

27. Upon her death in 2003, singer Nina Simone's ashes were spread across the continent of Africa, per her last request.
28. The mother of rapper and producer Kanye West was an English professor before switching careers to serve as her son's manager.
29. Billy Dee Williams is probably best known for his iconic role as Lando Calrissian in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. But "Dee" is not Williams' real middle name! The "Dee" in his name is short for his real middle name, "December."
30. During the 1930s, painter Charles Alston founded the 306 group, which convened in his studio space and provided support and apprenticeship for African American artists, including Langston Hughes; sculptor Augusta Savage; and mixed-media visionary Romare Bearden.
31. Rebecca Lee Crumpler, the first Black woman in the United States to qualify as a doctor, opened her own medical clinic in Boston, and dedicated herself to treating women and children who lived in poverty. She treated patients regardless of their ability to pay and often took no money for her work.
32. A teenager named Claudette Colvin got arrested in 1955 for refusing to give up her bus seat for a white woman. Some local civil rights leaders saw the event as a chance to highlight the city's unfair bus policy, but decided that Colvin was too young to represent the struggle. Still, Colvin's act inspired Rosa Parks to do the same thing nine months later—and Parks' arrest sparked one of the biggest civil rights campaigns of all time.
33. These days, Whoopi Goldberg is known as the moderator on *The View*, but she is a pioneer in her own right. Goldberg became the second Black woman to win the Best Supporting Actress Oscar and the first Black actress to be nominated in both the Supporting and Best Actress categories. In 2000, Goldberg won a Tony Award for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, thus becoming the first Black EGOT recipient (EGOT is an acronym for Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony).
34. In 2002, Halle Berry became the first Black woman to win an Academy Award for Best Actress.

35. In January of this year, Puerto Rican-born actress and activist MJ Rodriguez became the first black trans woman to win a Golden Globe award for her role in the television show *Pose*.
36. Toni Morrison was the first Black woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993. She is most famous for her novel *Beloved*.
37. Best known for his lengthy essays, James Baldwin was a champion and leading voice of the American civil rights movement. As one of the few openly gay Black activists of this era, he fought for LGBTQ+ rights alongside the rights of African Americans.
38. Commonly considered the "foremost Black woman in sci-fi literature," Octavia Butler, the author of *Bloodchild* and other popular science-fiction books, was the first sci-fi writer to ever get a MacArthur Foundation fellowship. Her books contain radical visions of race and power. Her life's work had a huge impact—not only on her genre but in the way she encouraged and mentored young science fiction writers of color.