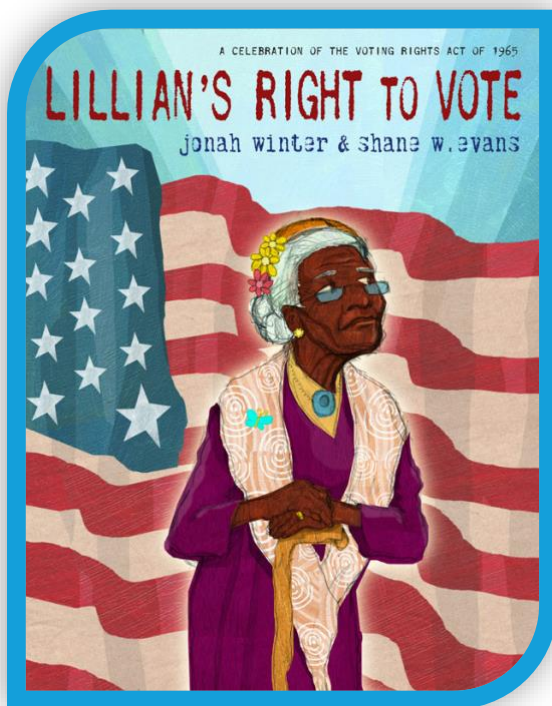




# Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

**About the Book of the Month Parent/Family Discussion Guide:** This collection of featured books is from Books Matter: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in education programs of [A World of Difference® Institute](#), ADL's international anti-bias education and diversity training provider. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



## Lillian's Right to Vote

Jonah Winter (Author) and Shane W. Evans (Illustrator)

ISBN: 978-0385390286

Publisher: Schwartz & Wade

Year Published: 2015

Age Range: 5–9

### Book Themes

Voting rights, Civil Rights Movement, Race and Racism, Activism

### About the Book

An elderly African American woman, on her way to vote, remembers her family's tumultuous voting history. As Lillian makes a "long haul up a steep hill" to her polling place, she sees more than trees and sky—she sees her family's history. She sees the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment and her great-grandfather voting for the first time. She sees her parents trying to register to vote. And she sees herself marching in a protest from Selma to Montgomery. This book recalls the battle for civil rights in the U.S. in an account of one woman's fierce determination to make it up the hill and make her voice heard.

## Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book along with your child or your child reads it on their own and you discuss it later, use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remember not to judge their responses and to listen thoughtfully and engage in a give-and-take that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What happens in the story?
- Through watching what happened to her ancestors, what does Lillian learn about voting rights?
- Why do you think Lillian is climbing up a hill?
- Why are some people allowed to vote and others are not?
- How do you think you would feel if you were unable to vote?
- Is there something you are not able to do that you think is unfair or unjust?
- What are some of the feelings expressed by Lillian's ancestors throughout the book? How do you know how they feel?
- Why did protestors march from Selma to Montgomery, AL?
- Why do you think voting is important?
- What do you think is the overall message of the book?

## Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

### 1. Understanding Our History

In the book, Lillian traces the history of voting and civil rights through the history of her family and ancestors. Ask your child about and point out the parts of the book where Lillian talks about different relatives (great-great grandparents, etc.) and how they were able to vote or not. Talk about your own family's history and what you can learn about their history that reflects on the history of the U.S. or their country of origin (be mindful that for a variety of reasons, sometimes this information about family history is not known). You can also talk about how February is Black History Month, which is an annual celebration of the history, culture, accomplishments and contributions of African-American people. Let your child know that one reason a month is dedicated to commemorating African American history and culture is because sometimes African-American people are excluded from our history and accomplishments because of bias and discrimination; this is also true for other themed months such as Hispanic Heritage Month History and Women's History Month. Learning about the history of voting rights for African-American people is one example of focusing on African American history during the month.

### 2. Voting Rights

Talk with your child about what it means to vote. Share with them some of the times and places where you have voted in elections and how you felt about it. If they don't know what voting is, you can explain that voting is when each person gets to have a say (i.e., express their opinion) about something that is important to them; their vote is counted and makes a difference in the final decision. Most children have experienced some kind of voting in school (e.g., student council, class

voting about pizza or ice cream party) and you can talk with them about how they felt when they voted. You can also discuss how they might feel if others were allowed to vote about something or someone, but they were not able to simply because of a part of their identity. You can also talk with them about the history of voting rights for African-American people, which is illustrated throughout the book and a summary is included in the “Author’s Note” on pages 32-33.

### 3. Activism

Talk with your child about the actions people take when they feel that something is unfair or unjust. You can introduce the concept of activism by explaining that it is when people get involved in different kinds of activities to change something they think is unfair or unjust. Remind them about the part of the book (pages 20-25) where a large group of people engaged in a protest march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to fight for the right to vote for African-American people, which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act. Explain that that is activism and most of the civil rights that were achieved during that time were because of activism—people deciding it was important to do something. Share with your child situations or times when you have engaged in activism and talk about something you might do together about an issue you care about. Convey the message that when we see something unfair, unjust or inhumane—whether it’s something small in our school/community or on a larger scale like voting rights—we can do something about it.

### Other Books You May Like

*28 Days: Moments in Black History that Changed the World* by Charles R. Smith,

[www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/28-days-moments-in-black-history-that-changed-the](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/28-days-moments-in-black-history-that-changed-the)

*Child of the Civil Rights Movement* by Paula Young Shelton, [www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/child-of-the-civil-rights-movement](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/child-of-the-civil-rights-movement)

*When Thunder Comes: Poems for Civil Rights Leaders* by J. Patrick Lewis,

[www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/when-thunder-comes-poems-for-civil-rights-leaders](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/childrens-literature/when-thunder-comes-poems-for-civil-rights-leaders)

### ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on people, identity and culture.

#### Curriculum Resources

10 Ideas for Teaching Black History Month, [www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/10-ideas-for-teaching-black-history-month](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/10-ideas-for-teaching-black-history-month).

The Selma to Montgomery March for Voting Rights, [www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/the-selma-to-montgomery-march-for-voting-rights](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/the-selma-to-montgomery-march-for-voting-rights)

Who Am I? Identity Poems, [www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-am-i-identity-poems](http://www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/who-am-i-identity-poems)

## Websites

### 10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in-activism](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in-activism)

A list of ideas for bringing social activism into the classroom and outside of the school walls. These strategies can be acted upon individually, organized together as a group and young people can join with a larger effort that is taking place locally or nationally.

### Black History Month

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/black-history-month](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/black-history-month)

A list of lesson plans and resources to help you teach about black history in your classroom.

### Civil Rights Movement

[www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/civil-rights-movement](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/backgrounders/civil-rights-movement)

Provides historical background information, resources and pictures about the Civil Rights Movement.

### Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/parent-family-and-caregiver-resources](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/parent-family-and-caregiver-resources)

Strategies, tips, guiding principles and resources to help parents, family members and caregivers impart values and principles to the children in their lives.

### The Question Corner: Early Childhood FAQs

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/question-corner](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/question-corner)

A collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members interested in promoting respect for diversity among young children.

### Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk)

Provides the tools parents and family members need to engage their families in conversations about important news stories and other timely discussions about societal and world events. Includes discussion guides containing a topic summary, questions to start the conversation and dig deeper, ideas for taking action and additional resources.

## Children's Books

Below are links to lists of recommended anti-bias and multicultural books for the indicated category.

People Identity & Culture: Black, African American, Caribbean, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[205\]=205](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[205]=205)

Social Justice: Civil Rights, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[232\]=232](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[232]=232)

Race & Racism: [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?childrens-lit-select-all-8=1&tid\[217\]=217&tid\[218\]=218&tid\[219\]=219&tid\[220\]=220&tid\[221\]=221](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?childrens-lit-select-all-8=1&tid[217]=217&tid[218]=218&tid[219]=219&tid[220]=220&tid[221]=221)