



Book of the Month

Presented by ADL's Education Division

About the Book of the Month: 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 educators, adult family members and other caregivers of children, reading the books listed on this site with your children and incorporating them into instruction are excellent ways to talk about these important concepts at home and in the classroom.

The Hate U Give

Angie Thomas (Author)

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban private prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

ISBN: 978-0062498533

Publisher: Balzer + Bray

Year Published: 2017

Age Range: 14 and up

Book Themes

Criminal justice inequities, Stereotypes, Activism, Using your voice, Media bias, Friendship



Key Words

Discuss and define these words with students prior to reading the book and remind them of the meanings as they come up in the book. See ADL's [Glossary of Education Terms](#).

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| ▪ accountability | ▪ exploited | ▪ interrogation | ▪ prophesy |
| ▪ acknowledge | ▪ grand jury | ▪ invisible | ▪ protest |
| ▪ activism | ▪ harassing | ▪ irate | ▪ riot |
| ▪ belittle | ▪ implicit bias | ▪ justice | ▪ sanctuary |
| ▪ code-switch | ▪ insinuating | ▪ mutilated | ▪ sensitive |
| ▪ cultural | ▪ instinctively | ▪ opportunities | ▪ stereotypical |
| ▪ decency | ▪ institutional | ▪ oppressed | ▪ understatement |
| ▪ empowered | ▪ interracial | ▪ police reform | ▪ witness |

Discussion Questions

If the students read the book in small groups or as a whole class, ask discussion questions throughout their reading in order to check comprehension and engage them on a deeper level. Some of these questions can also be used as writing prompts. When students have finished the book, choose from these questions to guide a group discussion:

- What is the book about?
- When you first looked at the book's title and cover, what did you think it might be about?
- What does it mean when Starr refers to different "versions" of herself? Why does she need to be a different "version" of Starr in different settings, and why does she say "I have to keep them separate?" Is this something you can relate to, and if so, how?
- What positive assets and challenges does Starr experience as one of the few black students at Williamson?
- Starr suggests that Williamson hosts a roundtable discussion about Khalil's death, but the principal/head of school, Dr. Davis, feels it's unnecessary. Why do you think Dr. Davis feels that way? What would you do if you were the principal in this situation?
- What did Starr's parents teach her to do when confronted by a police officer? Why did they have this conversation with her? Why might some parents need to have this conversation and some do not?
- After Khalil's death, how does Starr react when police officers? Why? How does her reaction change over the course of the story?
- How does Starr react to seeing Officer Cruise's father's interview on TV? Why does she respond this way?
- In what ways does Starr identify with the show *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*?
- What parts of Khalil's life are shared in the news media, on social media and in conversations throughout the book? How does this affect the way different characters perceive his death?

- In what ways might the news media and social media have gotten the story wrong? Was one more reliable in some situations than others, and if so, how?
- Starr's mother asks the detectives if they are putting Khalil and Starr on trial. In what ways was Khalil "put on trial" throughout the story? Why do you think this happens? Do you see this reflected in any recent events?
- What images of Garden Heights are shown on the news? What story do these images tell people who don't live there about the community and the people who do live there? How is this different than the perspective of people who live in Garden Heights?
- Why does Starr feel that it's okay for her to call Garden Heights a ghetto but not okay for others to do so? Are there other names or words that some people can use and others can't? Please explain.
- What is Ms. Ofrah's role in the story? Why do you think the author included her?
- When does Starr doubt her relationship with Chris? How does their relationship evolve over the course of the story?
- What happens when some Williamson students decide to stage a protest about Khalil's death? What are different characters' reactions (including Starr's) and why does Starr decide not to participate? What would you do if something similar happened at your school?
- What are some of the stereotypes characters hold towards others in the book and how these stereotypes either dispelled throughout the story?
- What is the "trap of the white standard" that Seven mentions? How have you seen examples of this in real life?
- What do you think Starr's intent is behind her starting a new Tumblr blog called "The Khalil I Know"?
- What incidents cause a rift between Hailey and Starr? How does each character react? Why?
- Starr says to Hailey, "You can say something racist and not be a racist." What does this mean? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- What is the "minority alliance" that Starr and Maya form and why do they feel the need to do it?
- What is the significance of the title "The Hate U Give" and Tupac's interpretation of the phrase "Thug Life"?
- Why does Maverick teach his children about the Black Panthers and Nat Turner? What message does he want them to learn about African American history?
- Maverick says that the people of Garden Heights live in "a system designed against us." Who is the "us" in that statement? What examples from the story support this statement? What examples from current events or history support this statement for communities like Garden Heights?
- The death of Emmett Till is a significant historical event for Starr. What do you know about Emmett Till, and why do you think the author referenced Till multiple times in the story?
- When does Starr have difficulty using her voice? When does Starr feel confident using her voice? What events cause her to feel more confidence using her voice? What theme does the author portray through Starr's evolution?
- What was the outcome of the investigation into Khalil's death? Were you surprised? How did it make you feel? Why do you think the author chose this ending?

- What does this book have to do with current events and the public conversation around police-involved deaths of unarmed Black and Latino men? What do you already know about these issues and what more do you want to know?
- At the end of the book, Starr says that her commitment is beyond Khalil and then lists names of several others to whom she is committed. Do you recognize any of the names and what do they have in common?
- What are the examples of institutional bias/racism throughout the book (institutional bias “includes the policies and practices that are supported by power and authority in institutions and that benefit some and disadvantage others”)?
- What parts/passages of the book were most meaningful or important to you? Why?
- What are the overall themes and messages of the book?

Extension Activities

Below are activities that you can do with students in order to extend the learning from the book.

1. One Story, Many Roles

Display the different roles played in incident of bias and bullying (aggressor, ally, bystander and target) and ask students to define the terms. After eliciting student definitions, define the terms as follows:

Aggressor: Someone who says or does something harmful or malicious to another person intentionally and unprovoked.

Ally: Someone who speaks out on behalf of someone else or takes actions that are supportive of someone else.

Bystander: Someone who sees something happening and does not say or do anything.

Target: Someone against whom mistreatment is directed.

Remind the students that a lot of behavior that took place in the book was negative and hurtful and to different levels of seriousness. Ask students: *When did we see characters acting in these roles? What were the incidents?* Record a list of the incidents in the story. These could include the Garden Disciples approaching Starr and Seven on the playground or Hailey telling Starr that Khalil's death was inevitable and would have died regardless. Divide students into small groups and have each group select (or be assigned) an event from the story; it is fine for more than one group to have the same event. Distribute a four-quadrant graphic organizer (or have students create one) with each section labeled as target, bystander, aggressor and ally. Ask students to discuss the incident and identify which characters played each of the particular roles. Encourage students to explain how (words, actions) the character played a particular role and consider if a character played multiple roles. Bring the class back together and ask each group to share each character involved in the incidents and record a list on the board/smart board of the characters and the role(s) they play. Ask the class what they notice about the list and if it goes unnoticed, point out that different characters play multiple roles throughout the story. To internalize the lessons from the story, close the discussion by asking students to reflect in writing or in small group discussion how bystanders eventually did or could have acted as allies in the book.

2. Stereotypes and Bias in the Media

Media plays an important role in the story. Ask students: *What forms of media, including social media, were used in the story?* Generate a class list or a web. Ask students to identify both the creator and the consumer of content for each form or channel of media. For example, the television interviews are produced by broadcasting stations (creator) and they are watched by almost everyone (consumer). Twitter and Tumblr content is created by many different characters and consumed mostly by friends and family members but can also be consumed by others who don't know the creators.

Ask students: *How do different forms of media portray different stories about Khalil and his death? How is Khalil portrayed? What stereotypes are conveyed?* Students may conclude that certain media portray Khalil in a negative way and imply that his death is justified, while others portray Khalil in a positive way and indicate that his death is unjust.

Tell students that they're going to imagine what messages certain characters would share in the media. Divide students into pairs and have each pair select a different character. Encourage students to take on characters from the story with whom they may disagree for an additional challenge. Ask students: *What media would this character use to convey their message about the events in the book? What would they say? How would they reinforce or break down stereotypes?* Then ask the pairs to choose a form of media—speech, rap song, news article, television interview, Twitter or Tumblr feed. Each pair should create a presentation of that character's fictional media message. For example, a pair of students portraying Ms. Ofrah might choose to write a short speech about the grand jury's decision; another pair might create Hailey's Tumblr feed and select popular memes or gifs that may intentionally or unintentionally uphold negative stereotypes. Give students time in or out of class to work on the project and then present their media in class.

3. Research Project: Victims of Police-Involved Deaths

At the end of the book on page 443, Starr says, "It would be easy to quit if it was just about me, Khalil, that night and that cop." She then lists names including, "Aiyana, Trayvon, Eric" etc. Read the names aloud and ask students if they know any of the people on the list. For each person whose name they know, ask students to share what they know about them. Explain that these are all people who have been impacted by police brutality, police misconduct (including situations resulting in death) and/or shootings. Starr adds, "The messed up part? There are so many more." Ask students if they know other people who fit into this category.

Use the thirteen names (below) and others they have added and have students engage in research projects about these individuals, all of whom have been impacted by police-involved deaths. In the book, the author only includes their first names but their last names are included here so students can do research. Have students work alone or in pairs and try to cover all of the people listed below.

- Oscar Grant
- Eric Garner
- Freddie Gray
- Aiyana Stanley-Jones
- Tamir Rice
- Alton Sterling
- Trayvon Martin
- John Crawford
- Philando Castile
- Rekia Boyd
- Ezell Ford
- Michael Brown
- Sandra Bland

In their research, have students respond to some or all of the following questions:

- What happened?

- What were the circumstances around the person's death?
- How did the community and nation respond (or not respond)?
- How did news media and social media portray the person and their death?
- What are your thoughts and opinions about the case?
- How was the case handled?
- How do you think it should have been handled?
- What were the outcomes of the case and do you think it was fair?
- What was done and what should have been done in your view?
- What impact did the person's death have on others?

Explain that after conducting their research, they will choose a format in which to organize and present their research: (1) research paper, (2) PowerPoint or similar slide presentation, (3) photo essay, (4) poem, song or spoken word, or (5) timeline/infographic. To learn more about and provide additional resources for students, see some of the lesson plans included in ADL's [Teaching about Racism, Violence, Inequity and the Criminal Justice System](#) (below) as well as [Black Lives Matter](#) and [Campaign Zero](#) and [New York Times' Police Brutality, Misconduct and Shootings](#).

4. The Power of Music and Poetry

Many characters in *The Hate U Give* make reference Tupac Shakur and other rap, hip hop and soul artists and their music. Brainstorm with students the artists referenced in the story including Tupac Shakur, Kendrick Lamar, Will Smith, J. Cole, Marvin Gaye, Beyoncé, Jay-Z and Drake. Then share and read aloud the poem written by Tupac Shakur, "[The Rose that Grew from Concrete](#)." Identify the theme of the poem and help students make the connection to the events in *The Hate U Give*; Maverick himself is a rose that grew from concrete in many ways, a parallel that is further enhanced by the fact that he tends to his garden of roses frequently throughout the story. Ask students which other characters serve as "roses that grew from concrete." The list could include DeVante, Starr, Seven, and others. Brainstorm other themes and lessons conveyed in the book, including those listed earlier in the guide. Then have students write a poem of their own (or a short hip hop verse) that reflects one of the key themes from *The Hate U Give*.

ADL Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on experiences with race and racism, racial disparities in policing and activism.

Curriculum Resources

Black Lives Matter: From Hashtag to Movement, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/black-lives-matter-from-hashtag-to-movement.

Experiences with Race and Racism, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/experiences-with-race-and-racism.

Exploring Solutions to Address Racial Disparity Concerns, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/exploring-solutions-to-address-racial-disparity-concerns.

Social Justice Poetry, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/social-justice-poetry.

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/what-is-the-school-to-prison-pipeline

When Perception and Reality Collide: Implicit Bias and Race, www.adl.org/education/educator-resources/lesson-plans/when-perception-and-reality-collide-implicit-bias-race.

Websites

10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

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.

Anti-Bias Education

www.adl.org/what-we-do/promote-respect/anti-bias

Provides training program offerings for pre-K through 12th grade school communities—educators, administrators, youth and families—which focus on the development of an inclusive culture and respectful school climate by addressing issues of bias and bullying.

Be An Ally: Six Simple Ways

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/be-an-ally-six-simple-ways

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying.

Helping Students Make Sense of News Stories about Bias and Injustice

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/helping-students-make-sense-of-news-stories-about-bias-and

Provides suggestions, strategies and resources to help make discussions about national news stories that involve incidents of bias and injustice rich and productive for students.

Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/race-talk-engaging-young-people-in-conversations-about

Provides strategies and advice for talking with young people about race and racism.

School-to-Prison Pipeline Infographic

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/be-an-ally-six-simple-ways

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying.

Table Talk: School Discipline and the School-to-Prison Pipeline

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/school-to-prison-pipeline

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about incidents of harsh school discipline. See also the School-to-Prison Pipeline infographic at

www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/school-to-prison-pipeline-infographic-11x14.pdf.

Teaching about Racism, Violence, Inequality and the Criminal Justice System

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/teaching-about-racism-violence-inequity-and-the-criminal

Anti-bias resources and strategies to help you discuss with your youth incidents during the past several years of police officers involved in the deaths of African-American and Latino males and a biased justice system.

Children's Books

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

Race & Racism, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?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?tid[217]=217&tid[218]=218&tid[219]=219&tid[220]=220&tid[221]=221)

Social Justice, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid\[231\]=231&tid\[232\]=232&tid\[233\]=233&tid\[234\]=234&tid\[235\]=235&tid\[236\]=236&tid\[237\]=237](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?tid[231]=231&tid[232]=232&tid[233]=233&tid[234]=234&tid[235]=235&tid[236]=236&tid[237]=237)