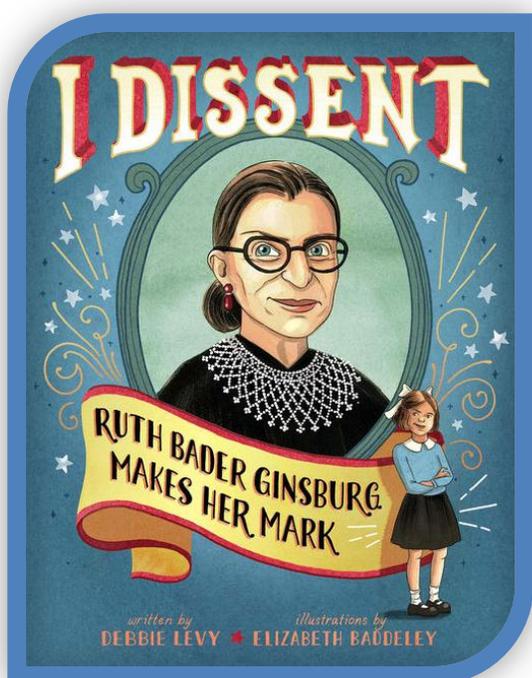




# Book of the Month

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.



## I Dissent

Debbie Levy (Author), Elizabeth Baddeley (Illustrator)

ISBN: 978-1481465595

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

Year Published: 2016

Age Range: 6–10

## Book Themes

Gender, Sexism, Women's history, Dissent, Social justice

## About the Book

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has spent a lifetime disagreeing: disagreeing with inequality, arguing against unfair treatment, and standing up for what's right for people everywhere. This biographical picture book about the Notorious RBG, tells the justice's story through the lens of her many famous dissents or disagreements.

## Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book aloud or children read 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?
- What do you think about Ruth Bader Ginsburg as a person? How would you describe her?
- What kinds of prejudice does Ruth experience as a child and do you think those biases are still present in life now?
- What was it like for Ruth to be a young girl in the 1940s and as a college and law school student in the 1950s?
- Do you know what “dissent” means (define as a difference of opinion, sometimes stated publicly)? In what ways did Ruth dissent? Have you ever dissented on an issue of injustice or prejudice? What happened?
- How does Ruth Bader Ginsburg stand up for justice? How do you think she felt when she did that?
- In what ways have you stood up to bias or injustice or wanted to? How did that feel?
- In what ways did Ruth Bader Ginsburg break barriers and make history? Are there other women you can think of in history or present day who have broken barriers?
- What was special and unique about Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s friendship with Antonin Scalia? Do you have any good friends that you disagree with about a lot of things?
- What was the 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. Stereotypes and Sexism

The book and Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s life illustrate the sexism and gender stereotypes Ruth experienced when she was growing up. Ask your child to describe ways in which prejudice and sexism existed in Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s life and the world. Define **stereotype** as the false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way and define **prejudice** as judging or having an idea about someone or a group of people before you actually know them. Talk with your child about how stereotypes of women (or any group of people) are unfair and harmful because they are generalizations and don’t apply to everyone in that group and also because they limit the experiences people have and the dreams and desires they have for their lives. You can share an example of toys and gender and how society tells us that girls should play with certain toys (e.g. dolls, strollers) and boys should play with different kinds of toys (e.g. superheroes, trucks) but this places limitations on boys and girls. Remind your child about how Ruth, throughout her life, got the message that girls weren’t supposed to do certain things (take shop, go to college, go to law school, etc.) because of societal expectations. However, she didn’t listen to that and followed her own ideas and dreams.

### 2. Disagreement and Dissent

A major theme of the book is how Ruth Bader Ginsburg dissents, which means she expresses a difference of opinion, sometimes stated publicly. Elicit from your child all the ways in the book that

Ruth dissents (writing with her left hand, not liking sewing and cooking, attending college when not many girls did, going to law school, standing before the Supreme Court fighting for the equal treatment of women, dissenting on important Supreme Court cases about unfair treatment of women, African Americans, immigrants, etc.). Explain that Ruth disagreed and dissented but she does so with respect. Talk to your child about your own experiences with dissent/disagreement and ask them when they have dissented, seen others disagree, or a time they wanted to express a disagreement but didn't feel comfortable doing so. Talk about why and what they could do to feel more comfortable and strong in expressing their dissent. Stress the importance of expressing one's beliefs and standing up for what you believe in.

### 3. Women Who Broke Barriers

You may want to read the back of the book to learn more about Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Ask your child what "barriers" Ruth Bader Ginsburg had to face and break. Remind them that she was the first Jewish woman Supreme Court Justice and only the second woman appointed to the Supreme Court. Ask if they can think of any other women in history or modern times who have broken barriers or made history; these can be women in sports, politics, entertainment, the arts, etc. You may want to learn more about women who have broken barriers by doing online research or reading books together. One modern day example is Hillary Clinton who was the first woman ever to run for President on a major party ticket. Talk with your child about the importance of breaking barriers and how difficult those barriers can be to break because of sexism and stereotypes people have about women. Explain that it is important we work hard to dispel stereotypes and encourage all people to express themselves, explore their interests and follow their dreams regardless of sexism and stereotypes.

### Other Books You May Like

*Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream* by Crystal Hubbard,

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/catching-the-moon-the-story-of-a-young-girls-baseball-dream.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/catching-the-moon-the-story-of-a-young-girls-baseball-dream.html)

*Hillary Rodham Clinton: Some Girls are Born to Lead* by Michelle Markel, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/hillary-rodham-clinton-some-girls-born-to-lead.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/hillary-rodham-clinton-some-girls-born-to-lead.html)

*Little Melba and Her Big Trombone* by Katheryn Russell-Brown, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/little-melba-and-her-big.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/little-melba-and-her-big.html)

*Sonia Sotomayor: A Judge Grows in the Bronx* by Jonah Winter, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/sonia-sotomayor-a-judge.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/books/sonia-sotomayor-a-judge.html)

### ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on gender, sexism and social justice.

#### Curriculum Resources

"Mo'Ne Davis and Gender Stereotypes," *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/mone-davis-and-gender-stereotypes.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/mone-davis-and-gender-stereotypes.html).

"Social Justice Poetry," *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/social-justice-poetry.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/social-justice-poetry.html)

“Stereotypes of Girls and Women in the Media,” *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/stereotypes-of-girls-and-women-in-the-media.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/stereotypes-of-girls-and-women-in-the-media.html).

“Toys and Gender,” *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/toys-and-gender.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/toys-and-gender.html)

“Who Am I? Identity Poems,” *Current Events Classroom*, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/who-am-i-identity-poems.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/lesson-plans/c/who-am-i-identity-poems.html).

### Websites

#### 10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/10-ways-youth-can-engage-in.html)

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/education-outreach/anti-bias-education](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education)

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.

#### Definitions Related to Bias, Injustice and Bullying: For Educators, Parents and Family Members of Elementary Age Children

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/definitions-related-to-bias-injustice-bullying.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/curriculum-resources/c/definitions-related-to-bias-injustice-bullying.html)

Definitions for words relating to bias, diversity, bullying and social justice concepts written for elementary-age children.

#### Parent, Family and Caregiver Resources

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/parent-family-and-caregivers.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/anti-bias-education/c/parent-family-and-caregivers.html)

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

[www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/early-childhood/c/the-question-corner.html)

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. See “[How Can I Prevent Gender Bias in Young Children?](#)”

### Children's Books

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

Gender and Sexism, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/gender-sexism.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/gender-sexism.html)

Social Justice, [www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice.html](http://www.adl.org/education-outreach/books-matter/social-justice.html)