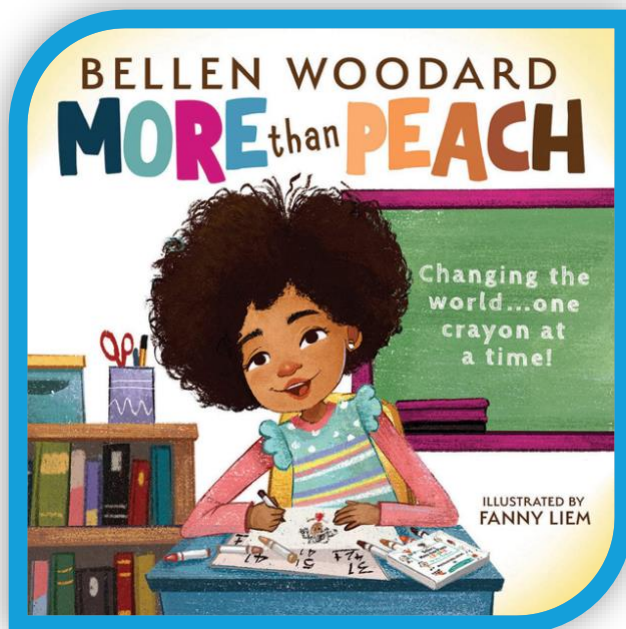




Monthly Featured Book

Presented by ADL's Education Department

About the Monthly Featured Book: 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.



More than Peach

Bellen Woodard (Author), Fanny Liem (Illustrator)

ISBN: 9781338809275

Publisher: Scholastic, Inc.

Year Published: 2022

Age Range: 5-8

Book Themes

Diversity, Identity, Importance of Language/Words, Representation, Inclusiveness, Making a Difference

About the Book

When Bellen Woodard's classmates referred to "the skin-color" crayon in a school and classroom she had always loved, she knew just how important it was that everyone understood that "skin can be any number of beautiful colors." Bellen created the More Than Peach Project and crayons with every single child in mind to transform the crayon industry and grow the way we see our world. And Bellen has done just that! The book includes back matter about working to improve your community just like Bellen.

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 conversation that helps them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

Before reading the book aloud and while looking at the cover, ask these pre-reading questions:

- Who do you think the child on the cover is?
- What is the title of the book and what do you think it means?
- What do you notice about the letters in the title? What clues do the letters give you about what the book might be about?

After reading the book aloud, ask some or all of the following questions:

- What happens in the story?
- As we read the book, what were you thinking and feeling?
- How does Bellen feel when her classmates talk about the “skin-color” crayon? Why does she feel this way? Have you ever heard the term skin-color to describe a crayon?
- How does the “skin-color” crayon question make Bellen feel “disincluded” or excluded? What are some ways she can feel more included?
- Have you ever felt not included (or excluded) because of who you are or your identity? What happened and how did you feel?
- Why is it important that we see parts of identity reflected in items (like crayons) and other parts of our lives (like games, books, movies, TV shows, toys, etc.)?
- What happens when Bellen changes the language about the crayons and asks, “Which one? Skin can be any number of beautiful colors.”
- Can you relate to Bellen’s story? How so?
- How did you feel when the book ended?
- Why do you think Bellen Woodard wrote this book?

Talking Points

Below are some important considerations that will make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

1. Identity and Representation

Talk to your child about what happened in the book when Bellen notices that students in the class ask for the “skin-color” crayon (which they assume is peach) and not the specific skin-color they are looking for. Explain that in this case, having a crayon that reflects your skin color is sometimes called “representation.” This means that you see or recognize yourself in items (like crayons), other items and media (books, movies, TV shows, games, toys, etc.). Ask your child how Bellen felt when her classmates used the word “skin-color” to refer to the peach crayon and how that is not Bellen’s skin-color. When we see parts of our identity (like skin color) that look like us or reflect, we feel valued and good about ourselves. When we don’t see ourselves reflected in what we see around us, that can make us feel “disincluded” (or excluded) and not valued or important. If you haven’t read the back pages of the book on pages 36-40, share more of Bellen’s story and how she created crayons that reflect different skin colors and complexions and “getting multicultural crayons in the hands of all students.” Ask your child the ways in which they see themselves and their identity (skin color, race, gender, religion, family structure, etc.) reflected in what they see around them, and the ways in which they don’t. Invite their ideas as to how, as Bellen did, make more inclusive.

2. Importance of Words and Language

Together, re-read pages 20-25 and ask your child what happens on those pages. Elicit from your child that Bellen changes how she responds when someone asks her to pass the “skin-color” crayon. Instead, Bellen asks, “Which one? Skin can be any number of beautiful colors.” In this way, Bellen changes the language to reflect that skin-color is not only peach; it can be a variety of colors. She continues to ask that question and notices that her teacher begins to use the same language too. Ask your child how changing the words and language changed her teachers’ and the other students’ thinking. Explain that the words we use and how we use them is important. What we say and how we say it can have an impact on people and society. Ask your child how Bellen felt when they assumed “skin-color” meant peach and how when she changed the words, she felt more included and valued. Share your own experiences with the importance of words and language and ask your child if they can think of any examples of how words matter. You can also brainstorm ideas for making language more inclusive, both in school, in the media and in society in general.

3. Making a Difference in My World

Talk with your child about one of the main themes of the book: making a difference. Ask your child to reflect on what Bellen wanted to change in her classroom, what she did, and how she did it. Read some/all the back matter of the book (pages 36-40) where you learn more about how Bellen went beyond her classroom and is making a difference in her community and world by creating crayons that reflect different skin colors and complexions. Writing this book and having others read it will also make a difference because it will help them think differently about diversity and representation. Also in the back of the book, Bellen encourages asking children what they want to change and how to “lift our voice” and start a drive. Explain that sometimes when people find things to be wrong, unfair and unjust, they do something about it. Ask your child is there’s something they think is unfair or unjust, or something they want to change to make their world better. This can be in school, their community or the country or world. Remind them that Bellen thought it was unfair that that her classmates thought “skin-color” was the color peach when she knew it was not. You can also share examples from your life where you thought something was unfair or unjust and you did something about it.

Other Books You May Like



Firebird by Misty Copeland, www.adl.org/firebird



Grace for President by Kelly DiPucchio, www.adl.org/grace-president



Parker Looks Up by Parker Curry and Jessica Curry, www.adl.org/parker-looks-extraordinary-moment



Your Name is a Song by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow, www.adl.org/your-name-song

ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and resources on identity, diversity and representation.

Websites

6 Ways to Be an Ally

www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/6-ways-to-be-an-ally-en-espanol

Some simple things a student can do to be an ally to targets of name-calling and bullying. (Also in Spanish.)

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.

The Question Corner: Early Childhood FAQs

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. See [Why Is It Important to Teach Young Children to Appreciate Diversity?](#)

Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events

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. See [Diversity in Media and Why Visibility Matters](#), [Dolls and Diversity](#) and [Why We Need Diverse Books](#).

When it Comes to Bias, We Must Prioritize Impact Over Intent

www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/when-it-comes-bias-we-must-prioritize-impact-over-intent

A teaching tool that explores the difference and disconnect between intent and impact and why "impact" should be prioritized.

Children's Books

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

People, Identity & Culture, www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1586