



# 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 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.

## More than Peach

Bellen Woodard (Author), Fanny Liem (Illustrator)

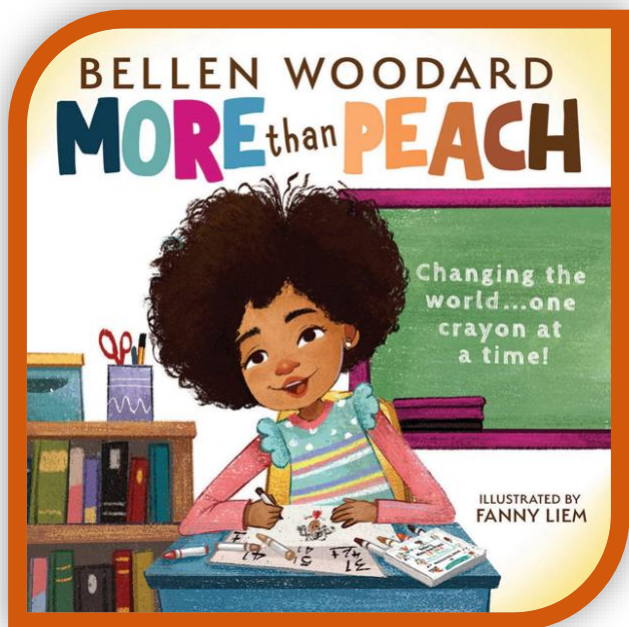
When Bellen Woodard's classmates referred to "the skin-color" crayon in a school and classroom she had always loved, she knew just how important it was that everyone understood that "skin can be any number of beautiful colors." Bellen created the More Than Peach Project and crayons with every single 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.

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

## Key Words

Discuss and define these words with children prior to reading the book. Rather than focus on students' retention of all the words, make sure they understand the words enough to follow the story and remind students of the words' meanings as they come up in the book. You can also post the words and point out

to students when they appear in the story. For definitions that are differentiated for young children, see ADL's [Education Glossary Terms](#).

- |             |             |           |              |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| ■ beautiful | ■ curious   | ■ minds   | ■ shades     |
| ■ bother    | ■ disappear | ■ mirror  | ■ skin tones |
| ■ brilliant | ■ echo      | ■ plan    | ■ spark      |
| ■ busyness  | ■ gazing    | ■ puzzles | ■ team       |
| ■ celebrate | ■ gently    | ■ reflect | ■ understand |
| ■ community | ■ idea      | ■ reply   |              |
| ■ confused  | ■ language  | ■ rippled |              |

## Discussion Questions

Before reading the book aloud, ask some or all of these pre-reading questions:

- Who do you see on the cover of the book? Who do you think the child 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 (in the word “peach”)? What clues do the letters give you about what the book might be about?
- What do you think the book might be about?

As you read the book aloud, ask a few discussion questions periodically throughout reading to check for comprehension and keep the students engaged. Below are some sample questions that correlate to specific page numbers.

- What is Bellen's family busy doing? (Page 5)
- What color crayon does Bellen's mom suggest she use? (Page 17)
- How is Bellen changing the language? (Page 23)

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

- What happens in the story?
- 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 Bellen might feel more included?
- How does that make Bellen feel? What do Bellen's teacher and friends think about the term “skin-color” crayon?
- What happens when Bellen talks with her mom about the skin-color crayon? What idea does Bellen come up with?
- What happens when Bellen changes the language and asks, “Which one? Skin can be any number of beautiful colors.”
- How does Bellen's new language “ripple through the school?”

- How do Bellen's ideas about crayons and skin-color go beyond her school? How does Bellen make a difference in her school, community and world?
- Have you ever thought about something you felt was unfair that you wanted to change? Please explain.
- What thoughts and feelings came up for you as you read the book?
- Can you relate to Bellen and her story? Why or why not?
- Have you ever felt not included (or excluded) because of who you are or your identity? What happened and how did you feel?
- What did you learn by reading this book?
- In the book, what do you think is Bellen's message about skin color and other aspects of our identity?
- What do you think the sub-title of the book, "changing the world one crayon at a time," means?
- What do you think Bellen Woodard (the author) is trying to say with this book?

## Extension Activities

Below are activities for students that can extend learning from the book.

### 1. Favorite or Memorable Scene

Ask students: *What was your favorite, or your most memorable, scene or part of the book?* With students, brainstorm a list of scenes from the book that students liked or found impactful or memorable (e.g., when Bellen wakes up in the morning, when Bellen's friend asks for the "skin-color" crayon, when Bellen talks with her mom about the "skin-color" crayon, when Bellen asks, "which one?" instead of just passing a crayon, when Bellen is making a speech at the end). After compiling a list of scenes, have students select a favorite or memorable scene. Then have them turn and talk with someone sitting nearby and share what scene in the book was their favorite, most memorable or impactful and why. Based on their selected scene, have students draw the scene and write a few pieces of dialogue and/or thoughts of the people featured in their drawing. If most of the scenes of the book are covered by their illustrations, create a new book with all of the students' drawings together or display them in order on the bulletin board. You could also have them act out some of the scenes. If you do act out the scenes, be mindful not to act out a scene that may be upsetting or harmful to children.

### 2. Identity and Representation

In the book, Bellen notices that when students ask for a crayon to draw their skin-color, they just ask for one called "skin-color," rather than asking for the specific color of their skin. Ask students: *Do the children in Bellen's classroom have the same skin color? Do the children in our school (or community or society) have the same color skin? How do you think Bellen felt when everyone assumes that "skin-color" means peach? In what way does this make her feel "disincluded" or not included? Why should everyone have a crayon that matches their skin color?* Explain that having items (like a crayon) that reflect your skin color is sometimes called "representation," which means you see yourself reflected in those items and media (books, movies, TV shows, games, toys, etc.) Explain/elicite that seeing parts of our identity (like skin color and also race, religion, gender, family structure, etc.) that look like us or reflect who we are is important. Representation helps people feel valued, important and good about themselves and aspects of their identity and can lead to feeling more able and empowered to follow their dreams, pursue their interests and passions. If you haven't already 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.” Invite students to identify two of three aspects of their identity (define identity as “the qualities, beliefs, etc. that make a particular person or group different from others”) and then have them create a drawing or collage that highlights these parts of their identity. After creating and sharing the drawings, engage them in a discussion about the extent to which they see those aspects of identity reflected in books, movies, games, toys, etc.

### 3. Get to Know Bellen Woodard

Ask students: *What did you learn about Bellen Woodard by reading the book?* If you haven't already done so, read the back of book together to learn more. Ask students: *What other questions do you have about Bellen Woodard? What more do you want to know about Bellen and More than Peach?* Have students engage in learning more about Bellen by visiting her website and by reading her social media posts on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). After learning more about Bellen, have students share aloud in the large group (or divide students into small groups of 4-5) discuss with each other what they learned about Bellen. Culminate the project by inviting students to write Bellen a letter (which they can send through the [contact page](#) on her website), which can include what they learned about her, what they like and admire about her and what more they want to know. Another option is to have students make a short video with their thoughts about Bellen and her “More than Peach” crayon campaign.

### 4. Making a Difference

Ask students: *What was Bellen's experience like with the crayons? What did she want to change and how did she change it? What did Bellen do for herself and others and what did she do in the larger community and society?* Read some/all the back matter of the book (on pages 36-40) where Bellen talks about asking kids 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 students to think about other things they think are 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. Brainstorm a list of ideas that they come up with and then have each student select one and write a persuasive letter (to their parents, school, a company, an elected official like their mayor, member of Congress or President) about what they think is unfair, why it is unfair, and how to make things better. If time permits, have students engage in social action projects (either individually or as a class) and take the steps to carry out and implement those projects. An alternative is to have students write a persuasive letter together as a class, or draw a picture of the change they hope to see.

## ADL Resources

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

### Curriculum Resources

Diverse Books Matter, [www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/diverse-books-matter](http://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/diverse-books-matter).

Dolls Are Us, [www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/dolls-are-us](http://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/dolls-are-us).

Identity, Hair and Seeing Myself, [www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/identity-hair-and-seeing-myself](http://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/identity-hair-and-seeing-myself).

What “Draw-A-Scientist” Reveals about Gender Stereotypes, [www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/what-draw-scientist-reveals-about-gender-stereotypes](http://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/what-draw-scientist-reveals-about-gender-stereotypes).

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

### Diversity in Media and Why Visibility Matters

[www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/diversity-media-and-why-visibility-matters](http://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/diversity-media-and-why-visibility-matters)

Talk with your family about the importance of diverse representations and visibility in the media.

### How Can I Help Children Appreciate Diversity?

[www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/how-can-i-help-children-appreciate-diversity](http://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/how-can-i-help-children-appreciate-diversity)

This early childhood frequently asked question explains how you can help children embrace differences by exposing them to diversity as early as possible.

### 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](http://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.

### Why We Need Diverse Books

[www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/why-we-need-diverse-books](http://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/why-we-need-diverse-books)

There has been a lot of attention paid to the diversity of children's books, shining a light on the lack of diversity and amplifying the need for more children's and young adult literature that reflects our multicultural society. This resource helps you engage children in conversations about importance of diversity in books.

## 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](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1586)

Race & Racism, [www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1580](http://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1580)