

TheChildren'sAgenda

Anti-Racism Children's Book List: Addressing the Rising Anti-Semitism & Islamophobia through Reading

Purpose:

1. To combat the rising Islamophobia and anti-Semitism by promoting empathy, understanding and respect through literature.
2. Education is a powerful tool for change. We advocate for education because we recognize its role in fostering inclusivity and advancing equity within our communities.
3. Reading literature written by impacted members of directly impacted communities affirms our commitment to sharing and hearing people's stories.

Outcomes:

1. **Active Advocacy:** Individuals will be inspired to take action against anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination in their communities and beyond. They will also be inspired to learn about anti-racism and increase involvement in TCA efforts.
2. **Increased Awareness:** Parents will gain a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism as well as their impacts on children and societies.
3. **Empathy and Compassion:** Children will develop empathy towards those affected by discrimination, recognizing the humanity and dignity of all individuals.
4. **Critical Thinking:** Participants will learn to critically analyze media, societal narratives, and personal beliefs, fostering a more nuanced understanding of complex issues related to identity, diversity, and prejudice.
5. **Cultural Appreciation:** Readers will develop an appreciation for the richness of cultural diversity by learning how it contributes to our shared humanity.
6. **Inclusive Communities:** Communities will come together through open dialogue, understanding, and respect, fostering an inclusive learning environment for children and families.

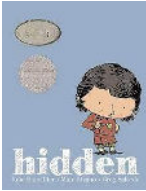
We invite all those committed to combating racism and discrimination to join us in this journey of learning, growth, and advocacy through the power of literature. By educating ourselves, each other, and our children we can take collective action against Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

"Once you learn to read you will be forever free"- Fredrick Douglass

Note: The books listed here are not endorsed by The Children's Agenda but are offered as potential resources to families.

Recommended Books for Children/Youth

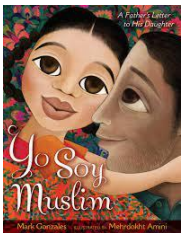
- ***Hidden: A Child's Story of the Holocaust* by Loïc Dauvillier**



In this gentle, poetic young graphic novel, Dounia, a grandmother, tells her granddaughter the story even her son has never heard: how, as a young Jewish girl in Paris, she was hidden away from the Nazis by a series of neighbors and friends who risked their lives to keep her alive when her parents had been taken to concentration camps.

Hidden ends on a tender note, with Dounia and her mother rediscovering each other as World War II ends . . . and a young girl in present-day France becoming closer to her grandmother, who can finally, after all those years, tell her story. With words by Loïc Dauvillier and art by Marc Lizano and Greg Salsedo, this picture book-style comic for young readers is a touching read.

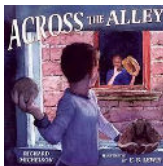
- ***Yo Soy Muslim* by Mark Gonzales**



From Muslim and Latino poet Mark Gonzales comes a touching and lyrical picture book about a parent who encourages their child to find joy and pride in all aspects of their multicultural identity.

Written as a letter from a father to his daughter, *Yo Soy Muslim* is a celebration of social harmony and multicultural identities. The vivid and elegant verse, accompanied by magical and vibrant illustrations, highlights the diversity of the Muslim community as well as Indigenous identity. A literary journey of discovery and wonder, *Yo Soy Muslim* is sure to inspire adults and children alike.

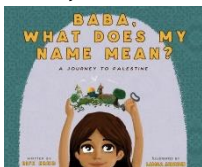
- ***Across the Alley* by Richard Michelson**



Abe and Willie live across the alley from each other. Willie is Black and Abe is Jewish, and during the day, they don't talk. But at night they open their windows and are best friends. Willie shows Abe how to throw a real big-league slider, and Abe gives Willie his violin to try out. Then one night, Abe's grandfather catches them—will Abe and Willie have the courage to cross the alley and reveal their friendship during the day?

Like the bestselling *The Other Side*, E. B. Lewis's striking, atmospheric watercolors bring to life a moving story of baseball and music, and how two young people try to bridge the divide of prejudice.

- ***Baba, What Does My Name Mean? A Journey to Palestine* by Rifk Ebeid**



When Saamidah, a young Palestinian refugee, is asked by her friends what her name means, she isn't quite sure what to say. She turns to her baba for some answers - but what she gets is an adventure beyond her wildest dreams. Join Saamidah on a lyrical journey, with dazzling illustrations, that brings to life her beloved homeland and celebrates the richness of her cultural heritage and the determination to return.

- ***Red and Green and Blue and White* by Lee Wind**

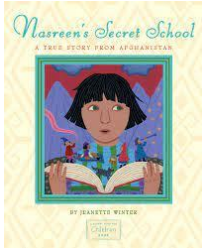


Inspired by a true story, this is a tale of a community that banded together to spread light. It's a holiday season that both Isaac, whose family is Jewish, and Teresa, whose family is Christian, have looked forward to for months! They've been counting the days, playing in the snow, making cookies, drawing (Teresa) and writing poems (Isaac). They enjoy all the things they share, as well as the things that make them different.

But when Isaac's window is smashed in the middle of the night, it seems like maybe not everyone appreciates "difference."

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- **Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan by Jeanette Winter**

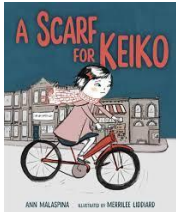


Renowned picture book creator Jeanette Winter tells the story of a young girl in Afghanistan who attends a secret school for girls.

Young Nasreen has not spoken a word to anyone since her parents disappeared. In despair, her grandmother risks everything to enroll Nasreen in a secret school for girls. Will a devoted teacher, a new friend, and the worlds she discovers in books be enough to draw Nasreen out of her shell of sadness?

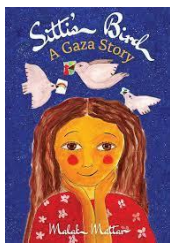
Based on a true story from Afghanistan, this inspiring book will touch readers deeply as it affirms both the life-changing power of education and the healing power of love.

- **A Scarf for Keiko by Ann Malaspina**



This story is set in 1942, with Sam – a young Jewish boy – and Keiko, his Japanese American friend from school whose family is sent away to an internment camp. A discussion around the Shabbat table, helps Sam consider his fears and doubts, and find common humanity with Keiko.

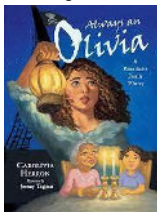
- **Sitti's Bird - A Gaza Story by Malak Mattar**



A sensitive and heart warming story of how a little girl in Gaza finds strength and hope through her painting. *Sitti's Bird* is a unique children's picture book, written and illustrated by Palestinian artist, Malak Mattar, reflecting her experiences of childhood in Palestine. Malak is a little girl who lives in Gaza with her parents. She goes to school, plays in the ocean, and visits Sitti's house on Fridays. One day while she is in school, bombings begin. She spends the next 50 days at home with her parents worrying and feeling scared, until one day she picks up her paintbrush ...

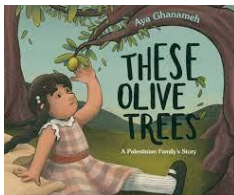
Sitti's Bird: A Gaza Story is a unique children's picture book, written and illustrated by Palestinian artist, Malak Mattar. Reflecting her experiences of childhood in occupied Palestine, Malak's story brings warmth and wonder to children as it tells of her rebirth as an artist during the 2014 airstrikes on Gaza. It is the story of a young girl whose love for her family and discovery of art help her channel her fears and overcome traumas that few of us can imagine—traumas shared by countless children in Gaza and around the world.

- **Always an Olivia by Carolivia Herron**



An elderly black grandmother passes on the story of the family's Jewish origins to her young granddaughter, Carol Olivia. As family members flee the Spanish Inquisition, are kidnapped by pirates and eventually sail to America, one daughter in each generation is given the name Olivia, from the Hebrew Shulamit meaning "peace," to honor the Jewish part of their ancestry. Critically-acclaimed author Carolivia Herron (*Nappy Hair*) shares this engaging, multicultural tale is based on her own family's heritage.

- **These Olive Trees by Aya Ghanameh**



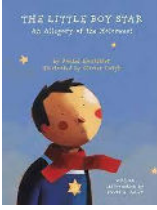
The story of a Palestinian family's ties to the land, and how one young girl finds a way to care for her home, even as she says goodbye.

It's 1967 in Nablus, Palestine. Oraib loves the olive trees that grow outside the refugee camp where she lives. Each harvest, she and her mama pick the small fruits and she eagerly *stomp stomp stomps* on them to release their golden oil. Olives have always tied her family to the land, as Oraib learns from the stories Mama tells of a home before war.

But war has come to their door once more, forcing them to flee. Even as her family is uprooted, Oraib

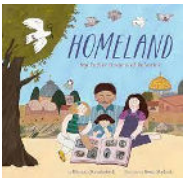
makes a solemn promise to her beloved olive trees. She will see to it that their legacy lives on for generations to come. Debut author-illustrator Aya Ghanameh boldly paints a tale of bitterness, hope, and the power of believing in a free and thriving future.3/19/2024

- ***The Little Boy Star: An Allegory of the Holocaust* by Rachel Hausfater**



A young Jewish boy is given a star to wear. At first he is proud of the decoration, but soon finds the star overshadowing him--no one sees the boy, only the star. Lonely, frightened, and helpless, he watches as other star-wearers are led away into the night. This affecting allegory, rich with symbolism, educates children about the events of the Holocaust in a way that young minds can easily grasp. Told in simple, poetic language, the book offers a tender message of tolerance and inner strength. Little Boy Star includes an introduction by David A. Adler, author of *A Picture Book of Anne Frank* and other critically acclaimed children's books on the Holocaust. Olivier Latyk's haunting illustrations underscore the poignant theme.

- ***Homeland: My Father Dream of Palestine* by Hannah Moushabeck**



A father and his daughters may not be able to return home . . . but they can celebrate stories of their homeland!

As bedtime approaches, three young girls eagerly await the return of their father who tells them stories of a faraway homeland—Palestine. Through their father's memories, the Old City of Jerusalem comes to life: the sounds of juice vendors beating rhythms with brass cups, the smell of argileh drifting through windows, and the sight of doves flapping their wings toward home. These daughters of the diaspora feel love for a place they have never been, a home they cannot visit. But, as their father's story comes to an end, they know that through his memories, they will always return. A Palestinian family celebrates the stories of their homeland in this moving autobiographical picture book debut by Hannah Moushabeck. With heartfelt illustrations by Reem Madooh, this story is a love letter to home, to family, and to the persisting hope of people that transcends borders.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE: There are so many people who long to return to their homelands but are unable to. This story will resonate with immigrant families and refugees of all ethnicities and origins, as well as anyone who yearns for home.