



Reading to End Racism of Boulder Readers' Guidelines

Hello, Reader! Thank you for your interest in reading to a class.

Getting Started

The Reader training in which you will participate helps all of us deepen our understanding of how to work with students about ending racism. In addition, please read the following important Guidelines. They will answer some of your questions and help make the day a success.

- Along with this information, you should have a schedule for your reading day and directions to the school.
- If you need a book, story or poem to read, please ask the school librarian, your RERB Council contact, or Carrie Malde: 303- 442-3628 for assistance.
- It is essential to prepare in advance your personal story, your reading selection, possible activities and definitions listed below.
- Please arrive at the school 10 minutes early and report to the main office, and then to the Reading to End Racism Boulder table for your packet of feedback materials.
- If you would like to observe another Reader please contact the RERB Greeter at the RERB table.

Your Reading Session

The classroom reading consists of four parts:

Introduction: *The first* step is dedicated to introducing yourself and the program by writing your name and "Reading to End Racism Boulder" on the board. Ask your class what they think racism means and record their answers. Share a personal story about yourself and integrate how you have learned to deal with racism in your life.

Reading: *The second* part is dedicated to reading aloud a selection of literature that will provide insight about racism.

Discussion: *The third* part is for discussion to help your class understand the definition of racism and, most importantly, generate ideas on *how they can help end prejudice and racism*. It may be helpful to write students' responses on the board. Be sure to leave enough time for this discussion and keep it age-appropriate. The teacher who is present can help you keep track of your allotted time. (See below for helpful discussion questions). As you close, revisit their definitions of racism, ask if there is anything they would change, and summarize key points by asking them what they have learned.

Feedback: *The fourth and final* step is to distribute, explain and collect the feedback forms. Allow ten minutes for them to complete the form. Be sure to praise the students and thank them for their courage in talking about racism. If they are interested in talking more about the topic, ask them to request more discussion time with their teacher.

Be prepared to read the feedback questions with the students and make sure they understand the feedback rating system of "1" to "5." (K-2 students do not complete feedback forms).

The following are some definitions of key concepts for your personal use, below them, simple definitions for your use in the classroom, and questions that will help stimulate discussion.

Definitions for Readers

There are many definitions of the following terms. We offer these for your consideration and contemplation as you prepare for your class presentation. You will find definitions more suitable for your students listed below.

Prejudice: An attitude, opinion or feeling formed without adequate prior knowledge, thought, or reason. Prejudice can be for or against any person, group, sex, or object. Prejudice thinking is frequently based on stereotypes.

Racism: Race prejudice *plus* the back-up of institutional power used to the advantage of one race/ethnicity and to subordinate other races or ethnic groups. The critical concept differentiating racism from prejudice is the "back-up of institutional power." Racism involves having the power to carry out systematic discriminatory practices through the implicit or explicit cooperation of societal institutions of our society. For example, a police officer who arrests people of color more frequently than Anglo people in similar situations, a store owner who has people of color followed when they come into their store, and a waitress who ignores people of color when they wait to be served.

Institutional Racism: Institutional arrangements of a society used to benefit a particular race/ethnicity at the expense of other races or ethnicities. Institutional racism can be intentional or unintentional. When one race/ethnicity dominates the major institutions of a society, that race/ethnicity has the power to impose its prejudice to the detriment of other races or ethnicities. Institutions have great power to reward and penalize such as excluding people of color from positions of control and leadership. Institutions reward by providing career opportunities for some people and foreclosing them from others, and by the way they distribute social goods. Institutions determine who receives training and skills, medical care, formal education; who can exert political influence; who receives moral support, and self respect, productive employment, fair treatment by the law, decent housing, self confidence and the promise for a secure future for self and children.

Examples of institutional racism would be when businesses are allowed to dump toxic waste in neighborhoods of color, when judges sentence people of color more harshly than Anglos, and when schools offer preferential admissions procedures to Anglos.

Definitions for Students

Prejudice: When someone is being pre-judged or discriminated against based on incomplete or inaccurate knowledge. Prejudice thinking is frequently based on stereotypes.

Race/Ethnicity: Any one of the groups into which the world's population can be divided on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin color, or distinctive cultural traits.

Racism: Any attitude, action or institutional structure that systematically treats people or a group of people as though they were lesser because of their race or ethnicity. For example, a sales person or waitress who ignores a person of color waiting to be served and a policeman who is more brutal to people of color than to Anglos.

Institutions: *(This term is only appropriate for third grade and up)* Relatively stable social and economic arrangements and practices through which collective actions are taken. Examples of institutions are government, business, unions, schools, churches, courts, police, restaurants. *For lower elementary, these examples may be more helpful:* recreation centers, stores, churches, restaurants, etc.

Institutional Racism: When practices of an institution benefit the people in power and withhold rights from others based on their race or ethnicity. Examples of institutional racism would be when businesses are allowed to dump toxic waste in neighborhoods of color, judges sentence people of color more harshly than Anglos, and schools do not accept qualified student of color.

Possible Questions for Discussion:

(Hints: Modify to fit the age of your group, be sure to begin with prejudice before you address racism, and use questions that fit the context of the story that you read).

- What is prejudice? What is racism?
- Have you ever seen examples of racist behavior?
- Do you make friends with people who are of culturally different from you? If not, how might you do that?
- What do you know about your ancestors?
- How do you think people feel when they are targets of racism?
- How do you think people feel when they are being racist?
- If name-calling happens at your school, in your class, in the hallway, or on the playground, what can you do about it?
- If you hear jokes about people because of their race, what have you done about it? What can you do about it?
- What else can YOU DO to help end racism?

Possible Activities

(see page 5)

Definitions for Young Children (K-1)

It is key to use the children's language to bridge into new vocabulary, with a focus on the term "racism".

Racism: When somebody is being mean or unfair to someone else because of the way they look, or the color of their skin, or distinctive cultural traits, e.g. language clothes, food, behaviors.

Possible Questions for Discussion with Young Children:

- What is racism?
- Have you ever seen someone being mean, or unfair to someone else because of the way that they look, or the color of their skin, or the way they act? Tell us about what happened.
- How do you think that boy or girl felt?
- Why do you think that person was being mean or unfair (being racist)?
- If you see someone being unfair (racist) what can you do about it?

Reading to End Racism of Boulder Literacy Strategies for Readers

Using literacy strategies can help students gain a deeper understanding of your reading. Use any of the following suggested questions as you find them appropriate.

1. Some general strategies to consider:

- Consider the age or ability of your group.
- Remember to incorporate the children's comments and questions into your discussion.
- Ask your own wondering questions as a way of showing how an accomplished Reader processes while reading.

2. Suggested questions before reading:

- What are we doing today?
- Why do you think we are doing this?
- Have you ever heard the word "racism"? What do you think it means?

Show the cover of the book (or mention the title if there is not a picture).

- What do you think this story is about?
- Listen for when you think racism is taking place in the story.
- Listen for supporters or allies who stood up in the story.

3. Suggested questions during the reading:

- What do you think is going to happen next?
- How do you think _____ is feeling?

4. Suggested questions after the reading:

- How did this story make you feel?
- What questions do you have?
- Did this story remind you of anything you know about? What? When? Why?
- Did this story remind you of other books that you have heard or read?

(If the story is about a previous time)

- How have things changed?
- What still needs to change?

(If the story is an excerpt)

- What do you think led up to this?
- What do you think happened next?

5. Other Brief Tips

Pair Share: After your reading, try grouping students in pairs to answer a question or prediction based on the text. This will engage each student in the process. You can use some of their responses in discussion when they report back to the class.

Drawing: Suggest that the students draw their feelings or a character in the literature during the reading or as a follow-up activity.

See the Activities packets for additional possible ideas to use with your student