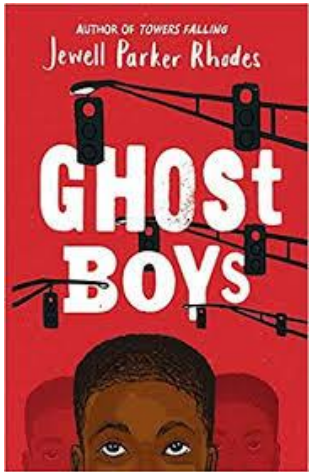


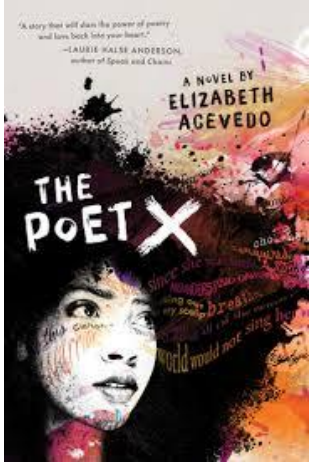
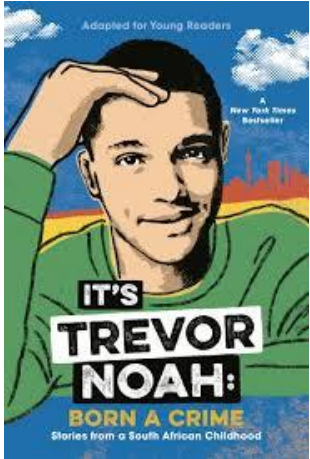
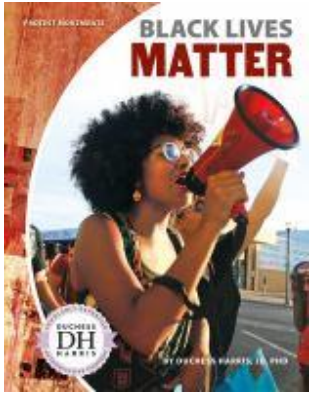
Social Justice and the Power of Words

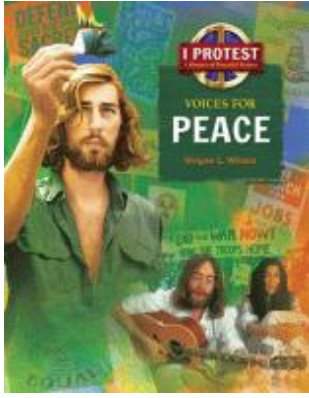
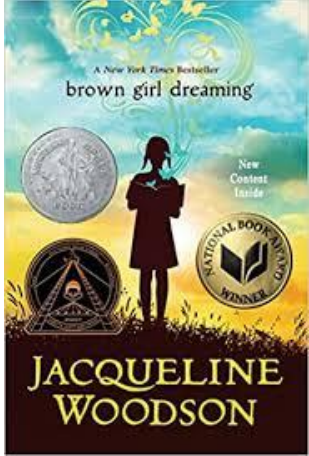
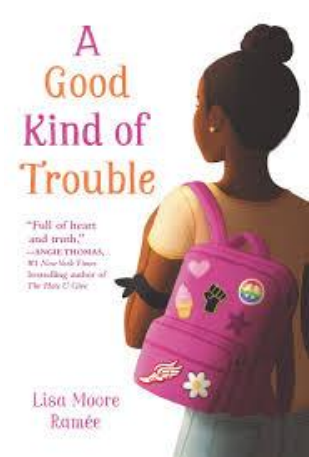
Like so many of us, we are having difficulty with the heartbreaking and senseless death of George Floyd and the events surrounding his death. You may also be feeling sad, scared, angry, confused and/or alone. We've listed some books available in MackinVia that might help us process what we're feeling, inspire calls to action, and explain complex issues like racism. Just know that **we are here for you.**



Several books are marked as approved for 8th grade and up or with parent permission due to mature content. Please ask an adult before reading those titles.


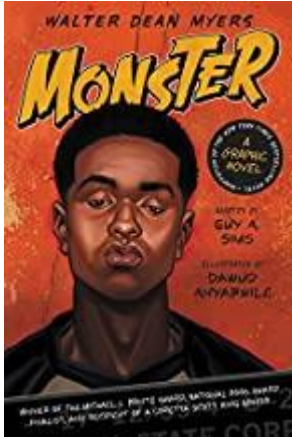
Title/ Author/ Book Format	Image	Description
<p>Ghost Boys</p> <p>Rhodes, Jewell Parker</p> <p>Audiobook</p>	 The book cover for 'Ghost Boys' by Jewell Parker Rhodes features a red background. At the top, it says 'AUTHOR OF TOWERS FALLING' and 'Jewell Parker Rhodes'. The title 'GHOST BOYS' is written in large, white, distressed letters. Below the title is an illustration of a young Black boy's face, with his eyes looking forward. The background of the illustration shows traffic lights and a street scene.	<p>Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot and killed by a police officer who thought that his toy gun was a real one. As a ghost, he sees how his killing is devastating his family and community. Soon he meets the ghost of Emmett Till, who helps Jerome understand what happened to him and how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. He also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who is having a hard time coming to terms with her father's actions.</p>

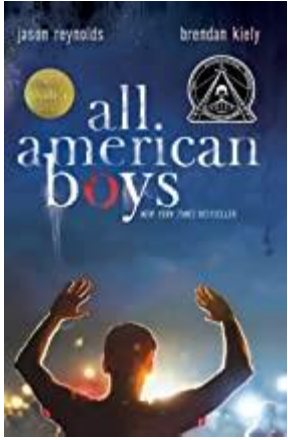
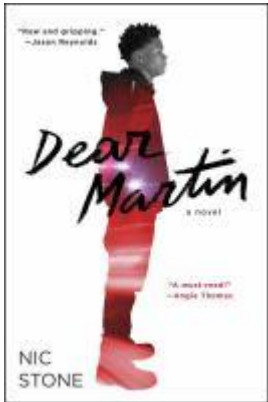
<p>Front Desk</p> <p>Yang, Kelly</p> <p>Audiobook</p>		<p>Mia Tang and her immigrant parents are not exactly living the American dream since moving here from China--they live in the Calivista Motel, and Mia must tend to its guests. Her parents, meanwhile, have been hiding illegal immigrants in the motel's empty rooms, risking the wrath of the owner, Mr. Yao. On the personal life front, Mia wants to become a writer, but her mother is being very discouraging because she is better at math and English is not her first language. No matter what, however, Mia vows to follow her dreams.</p>
<p>The Watsons go to Birmingham-- 1963</p> <p>Curtis, Christopher Paul</p> <p>Audiobook</p>		<p>The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963.</p>
<p>Posted</p> <p>Anderson, John David</p> <p>Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>After cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost, Deedee, Wolf, and Bench decide to start communicating with each other through sticky-notes, replacing text messages. It quickly catches on in the rest of the school, but for every nice note there is a mean, bullying one. Then, when new girl Rose sits down at Frost's lunch table,</p>

		<p>her presence threatens to unravel Frost's circle of friends, and the sticky-note war escalates.</p>
<p>The Poet X Acevedo, Elizabeth Multi-user - E-book</p>		<p>Xiomara Batista is a teenage girl living in Harlem who's learned to use her fists to send messages. When she's invited to join her school's poetry club, she knows her religious mother will never allow it. But Xiomara is determined to find a way because she has something to say that can only be shared through her poetry.</p> <p>***Recommended for grade 8 only or with parent permission***</p>
<p>It's Trevor Noah : born a crime : stories from a South African childhood</p> <p>Noah, Trevor E-book</p>		<p>Comedian Trevor Noah shares his personal journey from his birth in South Africa to his job behind the desk at "The Daily Show."</p>
<p>Black Lives Matter Harris, Duchess Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>Examines the history and future of the Black Lives Matter movement. Includes a map, text-related questions, a glossary, resources for further information, and color photographs.</p>

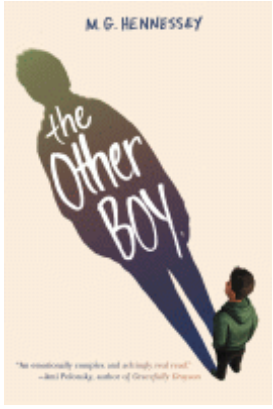
<p>Voices for Peace</p> <p>Wilson, Wayne L.</p> <p>Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>Briefly highlights some of the largest peace protests in history, including non violent anti war demonstrations like rallies, marches, vigils, and boycotts--such as the Mayday Protest in 1971 and the Women's Peace Party's action during World War I. Includes a timeline and glossary.</p>
<p>Brown Girl Dreaming</p> <p>Woodson, Jacqueline</p> <p>E-book</p>		<p>Free verse autobiography of Jacqueline Woodson about her childhood growing up in the sixties and seventies in both the North and the South, from South Carolina to Brooklyn, New York.</p>
<p>A Good Kind of Trouble</p> <p>Ramée, Lisa Moore</p> <p>Multi-user- E-books</p>		<p>All twelve-year-old Shayla wants to do is follow the rules, but when she starts seventh grade, the rules have changed. Her two best friends seem to be going their own ways and some people at school are saying that she's not black enough. After a ruling in a controversial court case involving the shooting of a black man by a white police officer, Shayla decides to join the Black Lives Matter movement and</p>

		<p>begins passing out black armbands at school. As the unrest in both Los Angeles and her school spreads, Shayla must figure out if some things are worth breaking the rules.</p>
<p>Between the Lines Grimes, Nikki E-book</p>		<p>A group of high school students grow in understanding of each other's challenges and forge unexpected connections as they prepare for a boys vs. girls poetry slam.</p> <p>***Recommended for 8th grade or with parent permission***</p>
<p>Monday's Not Coming Jackson, Tiffany D. Multi-user - E--book</p>		<p>After Monday Charles goes missing, her best friend Claudia seems to be the only one who notices and when she is unable to get help from Monday's mom or sister, she fears the worst.</p> <p>***Recommended for 8th grade or with parent permission***</p>

<p>The Stars Beneath our Feet</p> <p>Moore, David Barclay</p> <p>E-book</p>		<p>Lolly is having a terrible time-- his brother Jermaine got in a fight and then got shot. He doesn't know how to go on, but using the two giant bags of LEGOs his mom's girlfriend gave him, Lolly finds himself caught up in making a gigantic city--so big it goes outside his apartment. Then, he and his friend Vega get jumped by a few older guys, and Lolly will have to decide either to join a "crew" and get revenge, or find a different path.</p>
<p>Monster</p> <p>Myers, Walter Dean</p> <p>Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken.</p> <p>***Recommended for 8th grade or with parent permission***</p>

<p>All American Boys Reynolds, Jason Audiobook and E-book</p>		<p>When sixteen-year-old Rashad is mistakenly accused of stealing, classmate Quinn witnesses his brutal beating at the hands of a police officer who happens to be the older brother of his best friend. Told through Rashad and Quinn's alternating viewpoints.</p> <p>***Recommended for 8th grade or with parent permission***</p>
<p>Dear Martin Stone, Nic E-book and Audiobook</p>		<p>Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.</p> <p>***Recommended for 8th grade or with parent permission***</p>

<p>The Skin I'm In Flake, Sharon E-book</p>		<p>Thirteen-year-old Maleeka, uncomfortable because her skin is extremely dark, meets a new teacher with a birthmark on her face and makes some discoveries about how to love who she is and what she looks like.</p>
<p>How to Handle Discrimination and Prejudice Chambers, Catherine Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>Offers encouragement and advice for teenagers who have been targets of discrimination, such as how to deal with feelings of suffering and depression that can arise from discrimination, as well as how to feel positive about themselves.</p>
<p>The 57 Bus : a true story of two teenagers and the crime that changed their lives Slater, Dashka Audiobook</p>		<p>Explores the true stories of Sasha and Richard, two teens from Oakland, California, who never would have met if not for the 57 Bus which they both were taking home one day. Richard, an African American boy, had a lighter; Sasha, a white boy, wore a skirt. A dare to use the lighter changes both boy's lives forever.</p>

<p>The Other Boy</p> <p>Hennessey, M. G.</p> <p>Multi-user- E-book</p>		<p>Twelve-year-old Shane Woods loves pitching on his baseball team, writing graphic novels, and spending time with his best friend Josh. But nobody knows that Shane is transgender--that he was assigned at birth as female but really identifies as a boy. And when someone at school threatens to expose Shane's secret, he must find a way to ignore the hate, accept himself, and show the world what his identity means.</p>
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Other amazing book recommendations:



Fiction

HARRINGTON, Kim. [Revenge of the Red Club](#)

Gr 4-8- When Riley's school suspends the students' newspaper, imposes sexist dress codes, and shuts down the Red Club—a support group for girls

dealing with menstruation—Riley and her classmates lead a revolution. Written from a cisgender perspective, this book nevertheless offers strong and inclusive messages about periods and also encourages readers to speak out.

WOODSON, Jacqueline. [Harbor Me](#)

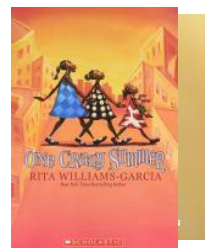
Gr 4-7 -When a sixth grade teacher pulls a group of her students together every Friday to chat without the hovering presence of adults, Holly, Esteban, Amari, Tiago, and Ashton meet and share their experiences. Their stories and evolving relationships touch on timely topics like deportation, racism, and parental incarceration while demonstrating the need for genuine listening, discussion, and justice.

THOMAS, Angie. [The Hate U Give](#)

Gr 8+ or with parent permission Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

WILLIAMS-GARCIA, Rita. [One Crazy Summer](#)

Gr. 5-8 In the summer of 1968, after traveling from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated



poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp.



Nonfiction

CAMERINI, Valentina. [Greta's Story: The Schoolgirl Who Went on Strike To Save the Planet](#)

Gr 3-6 -While Greta Thunberg's biography to date may be brief, Camerini's portrait of the climate activist will inspire. The author explores Thunberg's path to activism, the support of her family, her experience with Asperger's syndrome, and the worldwide revolution she is spearheading. Hopeful despite the serious subject matter, this work is an exemplary model for young readers eager to effect change.

GATES, Henry Louis, Jr. with Tonya Bolden. [Dark Sky Rising: Reconstruction and the Dawn of Jim Crow](#)

Gr 6 Up -A much-needed examination of Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era, this should supplement all middle school history textbooks. Gates and Bolden look back at historical perspectives while drawing parallels to current issues of inequity and racism, illustrating how we got where we are, and emphasizing that change is imperative.

JEWELL, Tiffany. [This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How To Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work](#)

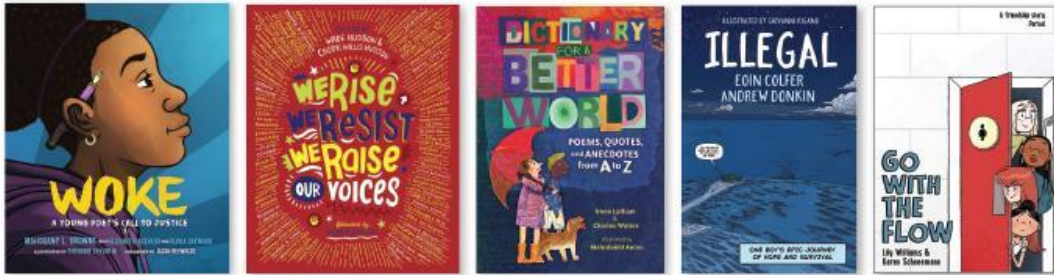
Gr 6 Up -Jewell invites readers to grab a notebook and work their way through four themed sections, with plenty of room for reflection and conversation. With an activity called “Disrupt!” the author offers suggestions for what to do if readers observe two Black men being detained by police. While Jewell acknowledges that the consequences of these actions will depend on readers’ position and privilege, she doesn’t fully explore the risks at stake. Still, there’s no substitute for this interactive guide.

RICH, KaeLyn. [Girls Resist! A Guide to Activism, Leadership, and Starting a Revolution](#)

Gr 7 Up -Ready to smash the patriarchy? This robust, positive book explains how to generate change. While some of the information is best suited for young adults, there is a wealth of material for upper middle graders. Readers will learn about microaggressions, rape culture, lobbying, social pressure, and even fiduciary agents in this book that perfectly blends concept, context, and action.

YOUSAFZAI, Malala with Patricia McCormick.

Gr 3-6 -Yousafzai’s story has been written and adapted for adults, teens, middle graders, and young children. Though appropriate for middle graders, this text doesn’t shy away from the reality of Yousafzai’s life. After learning about her work with women’s rights, her journey, and the support and education she received from her family, readers will feel that they, too, are capable of making a difference.



Poetry

BROWNE, Mahogany L. with others. [Woke: A Young Poet's Call to Justice](#)

Gr 3-6 -The poems in this eloquent and instructive glossary of social justice address allyship, privilege, silencing, protest, and more, providing clear definitions and context. This short but robust title is a great classroom resource, though middle graders will also enjoy reading it cover to cover.

HUDSON, Wade & Cheryl Willis Hudson, eds. [We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices](#)

Gr 3-7 -An impressive array of authors and artists share their experiences through letters, short stories, poems, and music. Whether reading one piece at a time or cover to cover, this collection will bolster and inspire readers when the world falls short of their expectations. The topics here are complex, but never overwhelming. Those feeling hurt, confused, and lost in our persistently chaotic world will find respite here.

LATHAM, Irene & Charles Waters. [Dictionary for a Better World](#)

Gr 4 Up -Authors Latham and Waters (*Can I Touch Your Hair?*) tackle an alphabet's worth of topics in this poetic dictionary: belonging, diversity, freedom, netiquette, tenacity, and zest. A "Try It" section, notes from the authors, and quotes follow each poem. Ideal for both elementary and middle school demographics.

Graphic Novels

COLFER, Eoin & Andrew Donkin. [Illegal](#)

Gr 5 Up -Colfer, Donkin, and Rigano tell the story of Ebo, a young Ghanaian refugee frantically searching for his brother as both head toward Europe. The subject matter is difficult—murder and survival in horrifying conditions—but conveyed in a way that is appropriate for the target audience. This potent tale will touch readers; use it also to supplement discussions on immigration and refugee experiences.

WILLIAMS, Lily & Karen Schneemann. [Go with the Flow](#)

Gr 4-8 -When the boys football team gets new uniforms (again) and the school can't even keep the for-purchase pad and tampon dispensers stocked, four friends are roused to action. This beautiful graphic novel explores friendship, periods and the stigma against menstruation, and social justice. While the main characters are high school sophomores, the book will resonate with upper elementary and middle school students. Both the narrative and back matter normalize menstruation, and the authors acknowledge the experiences of trans and nonbinary people, albeit briefly. Amazing, period.

Worley, T. (2020). Social Justice: Fifteen titles to address inequity, equality, and organizing for young readers | Great Books. *School Library Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=great-books-social-justice-middle-grade>