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## Antiracism: Next Steps

Thank you for attending our program with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi on October 28th. If you are like many of us, the conversation with Professor Kendi left you energized but also looking for ways to learn and do more.

Librarian Kathlyn Carroll has put together a great [collection of resources](#) we can all use to keep up the momentum of our personal antiracism work. It includes suggestions for reading, writing, listening, and acting. Check them out below!

Best wishes,



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**Beth Kava**  
President, White Plains Library Foundation

**Brian Kenney**  
Director, White Plains Public Library

## Read



Participate in the [One Book, One White Plains](#) reading program. *Read How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi in [print](#) or [digitally through OverDrive](#). Attend a virtual book discussion on November [12th](#) or [23rd](#).

Consider changing your reading habits to choose more books by authors that don't look like you.

[Children's literature professor Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop](#) teaches that books can serve as

[“mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors.”](#) Mirrors present children with families and experiences similar to their own, while windows give a view into the lives and perspectives of people whose experiences differ from ours. Reading books by a diverse group of authors, even in fiction, builds empathy. If you're looking for some suggestions, the [Well Read Black Girl book club curates a fantastic reading list](#) that [“focuses on empowering the narratives of Black women.”](#) For children and teens, may I humbly suggest the [Dive into Diversity posts](#), with book suggestions curated by our own Youth Services department.

Learn more about American history, especially from a perspective you may not have studied in school. Here are two great options to start you out:

- *Lies My Teacher Told Me* by James Leowen  
Leowen analyzes several American history textbooks over the past several decades, comparing how they covered and interpreted historical events over time. Leowen observed that textbooks tend to describe each historical event individually, rather than providing context and pointing out how each event impacted the next. You can find the original and young readers' versions in our [library collection](#); the young readers' version is also available digitally through [OverDrive](#).
- *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn  
Shoutout to my AP US History teacher, Coach King, for whom the common man, or the "dumb dirt-poor farmer," was a core figure in American history. He constantly talked about this book, which relates marginalized groups' experiences in American history. This book is available digitally through [OverDrive](#) and [Hoopla](#), as well as in our library [collection](#). And if you're already familiar with Zinn's work, you might be interested to learn more about the [Zinn Education Project](#), which offers free people's history lessons for teachers. I learn a lot by following their [Instagram account](#).

## Write

When author and antiracism educator [Layla F. Saad launched an Instagram challenge](#), #MeandWhiteSupremacy, it became so popular that she turned it into a workbook. *Me and White Supremacy* is available as a [CD audiobook in our library collection](#), a [digital audiobook through Hoopla](#), and in [digital audiobook and eBook formats through OverDrive](#).

Last month, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi published [Be Antiracist: A Journal for Awareness, Reflection, and Action](#). Here, he [discusses the journal](#) on NPR. While I have tried to recommend free resources here, this is one you'd have to pay for.

## Listen

- [Throughline](#)  
[Rund Abdelfatah and Ramtin Arablouei](#) take current events and explore the history that led to the present situation. They've covered the US Postal Service, mass incarceration, the electoral college, and, as featured in a recent newsletter, [James Baldwin](#).
- [Code Switch](#)  
A podcast about race and identity. Topics are so wide-ranging that, rather than summarize, I'll link to [Code Switch's list of their best 8 episodes](#).
- [About Race with Reni Eddo-Lodge](#)  
From the author behind the bestselling book *Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race* ([Catalog](#) / [OverDrive](#)) comes a podcast that takes the conversation a step further. Featuring key voices from the last few decades of antiracist activism, Reni Eddo-Lodge looks at the recent history that lead to the politics of today.
- [Blacticulate](#)  
*Blacticulate* is a Black British podcast featuring young Black professionals. The podcast gives enlightening tips and advice across industries, and while it

is intended to inspire the Black community, it shows examples of the struggles Black British professionals have faced to get where they are today. I'd also recommended Blacticulate's current podcast [Stories that Stick](#).

## Try

Design your own [21-day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge](#), or follow [this one created by the American Bar Association](#).

Learn more about [the concept of implicit bias](#), and take a [Project Implicit test](#), developed by researchers from Harvard University, the University of Washington, and the University of Virginia. See if your results change after doing some of the other items on this list (mine did.)

Complete Rachel Cargle's free 30-day [#dothework challenge](#). [Rachel Cargle is a scholar, writer, and activist](#) focusing on racial justice and intersectional feminism. I also learn a lot from her [Instagram posts](#).

Have difficult conversations about race. For those who want to talk with children about race but missed our workshop, you'll find great information on the presenters' blog, [Raising Race Conscious Children](#). For people who want to have these conversations with their parents, antiracism author [Ijeoma Oluo offers some advice](#) on NPR's *Life Kit* podcast.

## Act

Remember that, while it is important to do this personal reflection, learning, and change, racism is systemic and institutional. As we read in Jenzia Burgos' article from one of October's Library newsletters, [book clubs are not enough](#). Another article, ["When black people are in pain, white people just join book clubs" by Tre Johnson](#), really brought this point home for me.

To make a real impact, we all need to be looking around us, questioning and taking action. We all have influence over something in our lives; we must figure out how to leverage that influence to dismantle the structures that keep racist policies in place.

Come up with an antiracist action list for yourself. Identify some concrete things you can do to be antiracist. In this [episode](#) of the *Slate* podcast *How To! With Charles DuHigg*, Ijeoma Oluo talks through some practical ideas to help you get started brainstorming.

Prepare yourself to shut down racism that you encounter in daily life. Choose a few phrases that feel right to you, and practice until you feel comfortable saying them. This way you'll be ready to respond, rather than freezing in the moment.

Actively consider race as a factor in your everyday life. Now that you're thinking differently and seeing more, you might notice problems to which you were oblivious before. Whose voices are heard in the spaces you're in, and whose are not? Who is present and who is not? Why is that? What can you do about it?

*I hope this post gives you something to think about, and hopefully a few things to do as well. I'd like to close with a call to action. I invite you to share your antiracism work with us by emailing Brian Kenney ([bkenney@whiteplainslibrary.org](mailto:bkenney@whiteplainslibrary.org)) What further*

*programming on this topic would you like to see from the Library? What antiracist books, podcasts, or films have you found compelling or enlightening? More importantly, what antiracist actions are you taking or working toward? What next steps will you take?*



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