

## CMR Analysis of *Racial Justice in America* – A Series for Grades 4-6

### [What is White Privilege?](#) – by Leigh Ann Erickson with Kelisa Wing

**Excerpt:** “In the United States, racial bias and racism have led to something called **White privilege**. White privilege means that because of ongoing biases and racism in people and the places they work, **White people have more access to power and resources than a Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color (BIPOC) in the same situation.**” (p. 7-10, emphasis added throughout)

This and other overly simplistic statements in this booklet, combined with anecdotes relating conditions as they were 100 years ago, perpetuate stereotypes based on half-truths and prejudice – another name for pre-judging someone based on the color of their skin.

**Excerpt:** “**Racism happens when racial bias leads to action. The actions that the people who founded this country took and the laws that they created deeply hurt people who were not White.** That hurt continues today. White privilege and the advantages that come with it are the result of racial bias and racism.” (p. 16)

This polemic passage disparages the character and wisdom of the Founding Fathers and the documents they wrote. The Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights are the foundations of freedom in America, but this booklet misleads children by suggesting that those documents benefited only white people. The booklet fails to teach students about Americans of all races who sacrificed everything to mend America’s flaws.

**Excerpt:** “**Where to Start? 1. Don’t be Color-Blind:** Telling yourself or other people that you ‘don’t see color’ isn’t true and isn’t fair. We need to make sure we see *all* of who a person is.” (p. 28)

This passage misrepresents the concept that people should be treated as equals, without discrimination based on race or any other factor. Treating people as equals, regardless of color, is a sound concept that is rooted in constitutional principles. Practices that treat people differently, based on their race, are disconnected from our Constitution. Race-based policies create new forms of unfair treatment and resentments that cannot be resolved.

**Excerpt:** “On April 5, 1968, the day after **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** was murdered, a White third-grade teacher . . . taught her students about **racism and privilege**. She divided up her class according to eye color and gave different children **advantages and disadvantages** based on their eye color. Each child got to experience both sides. Years later, during interviews with these students, they said this lesson was a life-changing experience.” (p. 30)

Such an exercise could be useful in teaching an important lesson, but the “diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) agenda contradicts that lesson by justifying deliberate, government mandated, discrimination against non-minorities, whether their lives have been privileged or not.

### [What is ‘Anti-Racism?’](#) – by Hedreich Nichols with Kelisa Wing

**Excerpt:** “In the 1930s, the modern idea of ‘race’ was introduced by the **National Party in Germany**. The party, called the **Nazis**, believed there was a master race of people that was superior to everyone else . . . **People who didn’t belong to the ‘master race’ were killed during the Holocaust.**” (pp. 10-11)

The booklet’s peculiar failure to mention the millions of Jews killed during Hitler’s regime misleads children about the history of the Holocaust and the heroic efforts of WWII allied forces who liberated victims of the Nazis and defeated Hitler’s Third Reich.

**Excerpt:** “The **Europeans and the British** used Aristotle’s teachings as one way to justify taking over countries when **people weren’t Christians**. **This was called colonization**. The Europeans and the British also believed in making some people from those countries work for free. **This was called enslavement**. They **kidnapped Black people** from Africa and brought them to the American colonies in the 1600s and 1700s . . . In the New World, colonists encountered the indigenous people of North America. We know these diverse groups as Native Americans. **They too were not Christians and were considered inferior**. **Colonists killed and mistreated them to get the land we now call the United States.**” (pp. 12-13)

This broad-brush passage, teaching children that the United States and European governments were founded in racism, is an entry-level introduction to adult critical race theories espoused by author Ibram X. Kendi and other CRT activist authors. The booklet mentions Christianity primarily in negative contexts, omitting parts of history that do not fit the CRT narrative of white supremacists oppressing black people, Native Americans, and others.

The booklet also does not mention that [the slave trade existed since ancient times](#), or how America fought a bloody Civil War to end that practice and save the Union. The booklet mentions both black and white abolitionists, but not the Christian philosophy that motivated many of them, including [William Wilberforce](#). Instead, the abolitionists are described as “early anti-racists.”

**Excerpt:** “Today, the **Black Lives Matter movement** is leading a new era in the fight for civil rights. Black Lives Matter began in 2013 as a hashtag started by three women, **Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi**. The hashtag developed into a human rights organization that now **advocates for social change.**” (pp. 23 and 28-30)

The booklet’s effusive praise of BLM relies on misleading half-truths. A child reading this is not informed about [serious controversies](#) surrounding the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation (BLMGNF), which was founded by the three women named in the booklet and now appears [leaderless](#). Nor would students learn that the incident in question sparked the [most costly race riots](#) in American history. Some have speculated that pressures from DEI activists may have affected [police hiring standards](#) in Memphis, leading to the tragic death of Tyre Nichols.

The booklet encourages students to do “anti-racist” things, some of which are not problematic, but there is no mention of controversies surrounding the [Marxist training](#) of BLMGNF’s founders, or the organization’s misuse of millions of dollars donated by well-meaning people and corporations.

**[What is the Black Lives Matter Movement?](#) – by Hedreich Nichols with Kelisa Wing**

**Excerpt:** “**Slavery in America started before the framing of the country’s legal system. George Washington, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin,** and others had enslaved people working in their homes cooking and cleaning. The enslaved Africans and their descendants worked the land of their enslavers to plant and harvest. People rich enough to own people as slaves usually got richer because they kept the money they would have had to pay regular workers. **The enslavers also had more rights and more privileges. People in slavery got nothing . . .** For most of the Black people in America, especially in the South, enslavement continued for almost 250 years, from 1619 to 1865. Once slaves were free, they lived in poverty, and many died.” (pp. 8-9)

Slavery was indeed horrible, but this narrative omits any mention of historic events such as the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the [many successes](#) of black Americans. The booklet does emphasize [Jim Crow laws](#) and segregation practices that have been illegal for decades. The booklet also portrays BLMGNF founder Patrisse Cullors in the context of peaceful protests and demonstrations, such as street painting, and protests are portrayed as non-violent. Violence that left many cities in ruins during the summer of 2020 is attributed to “fringe groups,” not people the FBI [used to identify](#) as “black identity extremists.”

**Excerpt:** “Some media outlets began to focus on violent clashes between citizens and police. Propaganda on social media blamed Black Lives Matter for the violence. Some people wrongly believed that BLM thought only Black lives mattered. They condemned BLM as violent and anti-White. These groups, some with ties to White supremacist groups, started using hashtags like #AllLivesMatter and #BlueLivesMatter.” (p. 22)

This passage uses half-truths and a jump to conclusions about motives to put “some people” into the same category as “white supremacists.” The phrases “All Lives Matter” and “Blue Lives Matter” should be no more controversial than the phrase “Black Lives Matter,” but since 2020 anyone who stated the former were accused of being *for* white supremacy and *for* police violence against black people. The rhetoric is typical of toxic CRT ideology and divisive in the extreme.

**Excerpt:** There are many ways to support the Black Lives Matter movement. Some people march. Some promote content highlighting the ongoing need for social change on social media. Others help paint murals like the ones pictured in this book. **Some people donate to the Black Lives Matter Global Foundation to help fund advocacy groups.**” (pp. 26-28)

The booklet includes some suggestions for mitigating racism that are not problematic, but the suggestion that children should “do the work” of raising money for the [controversial Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation](#) is over the top. Young children in school have better things to do than to raise money for divisive CRT activist groups that deliberately foster racial misunderstandings, resentments, and stereotypes that advance false narratives.

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*The booklets excerpted above name Kelisa Wing, whose name is on the cover, as a “Content Advisor.” Ms. Wing is serving as the Chief of Diversity & Inclusion programs for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), which educates 67,000 children around the world.*