

# You Matter and Black Lives Matter

Whoever is reading this, I hope you know that you matter. And Black Lives Matter.

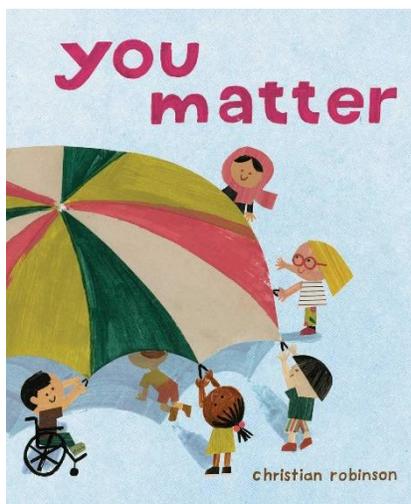
This guide is designed to support conversations about racial injustice and civic engagement for educators and families with young children. There are three parts which you can explore at your own pace with the young people in your life:

- Discussion prompts inspired by the children’s book “You Matter” by Christian Robinson
- Talking points to understand why it’s important to advocate for Black Lives Matter
- Be the Change Collage Making Activity

This guide is no way comprehensive, but we hope it serves to keep important conversations going within your homes, schools, and communities.

To begin, we encourage you to [watch](#) or read the story “You Matter” written and illustrated by Christian Robinson.

## What does “You Matter” mean?



- 1) *What does it mean to say “You Matter”?  
Can you find other ways to say “You Matter?”*

To matter is to feel valued

To matter is to be loved

To matter is to have rights

To matter is \_\_\_\_\_

To matter is \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) *In what ways do the people around you make you feel like you matter? How does it feel?*
- 3) *Have there been times when someone made you feel like you did not matter? How did it feel? What did you do?*

4) *Think about all the ways you can help to make people and the world around you feel like they matter. Discuss your ideas with your friends and family.*

- How can you help a family member or friend feel like they matter?
- How can you help someone in your school feel like you matter?
- How can you help the animals and nature around you feel like they matter?
- How can you help people in your neighborhood feel like they matter?
- How can you help someone who does not feel safe feel like they matter?

These kind of actions to make your community feel like they matter is called ***civic engagement***. Everyone has a role to play in making their friends and community members from near and far feel like they matter. What's wonderful is that every day you have an opportunity to help someone feel like they matter!

Look around you and see who the helpers are in your community. Maybe it's you, your neighbor, or someone you don't yet know but they and you both know that you're all in this together to make your community and the world a better place.

# What does “Black Lives Matter” mean?

## What is racism? And the importance of history in understanding Black Lives Matter

To understand why many people are saying “Black Lives Matter,” we have to think about history. While individual actions (like you being nice to your friend) is very important, we need more than individual actions to make this world a better place. This is because for more than 400 years Black people have been treated unfairly because of the color of their skin. This kind of unfair treatment based on the color of your skin is called **racism**.

Because of racism, Black people have not been given the same opportunities to go to school, find houses and jobs, vote, and many other basic rights. On the other hand, white people have been given these opportunities and more power to live the life they want. This long history of racism has created an **unequal** society in which some groups of people have much more power and opportunities than others. This unequal treatment of different groups of people because of the color of their skin over time creates **systemic racism**. This means that it’s not just about a person being mean to another person. There are things that are not people like laws and organizations that create a **pattern** of mistreatment that repeats over and over again. An example of systemic racism can be seen looking at how certain neighborhoods of color may not have enough teachers in their schools, have healthy foods, or have a safe place to play.

## Why it’s important to say for “Black Lives Matter”

Saying Black Lives Matter does not mean that the lives of people who are not Black do not matter. Black Lives Matter is about making sure that the people who have been made to feel the most unsafe in society can actually feel safe, valued, and respected. Saying “Black Lives Matter” means that you see that there has been a lot of unfair treatment of Black people and that we need to stop repeating the same mistakes and demand justice. We need to appreciate and build on all the important changes that Black activists, artists, and people have contributed to making this world a safer place for all.

## The power and importance of YOU taking action for Black Lives Matter

In order for everyone to feel like they matter, we need to begin by listening to and protecting the people who have been mistreated, hurt, and made to feel like they do not matter. Why? Because if we fail to listen to and care for those who are hurt, we are letting the world decide that it’s ok that some people get mistreated. A world that accepts and continues the mistreatment of certain people is a very dangerous and harmful one for everyone. So everyone has a responsibility in ending racism to make the world a safer place for all. To create a world without racism, we will need to have some big changes. And to make big changes we need everyone to be a part of the change (including you!)? No matter how old you are or what color skin you have, you have the power to be the change for justice and peace. Be creative, find your own power, and seek inspiration and connection with those around you to make the world a better place together.

# Be the Change Collage

Making art can be a powerful and beautiful way to remember and share important messages. Take the time to reflect on all that you have learned and thought about as you make this collage. Find your passion and power to be the change to make a world where we protect and care for Black lives and the life of all our beautiful co-habitants of the world.



Collage made by Natalia Choi, Family Learning Associate

## What you will need:

- 1 SHEET OF PAPER (LARGE POSTER PAPER OR BACK OF A CUT OUT CEREAL BOX)
- COLLAGE MATERIALS
  - PHOTO OR DRAWING OF YOU (TO CUT AND USE IN THE COLLAGE)
  - MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS (YOU CAN ALSO DRAW YOUR OWN PICTURES INSTEAD)
- DRAWING UTENSILS
- SCISSORS
- GLUE STICK
- OPTIONAL: WATERCOLOR

## Suggestions for your creative process

1. **Reflecting:** Take a moment to reflect on your conversations thinking about what it means to matter and why Black Lives Matter. Together converse about:
  - a. What did you learn?
  - b. How did you feel talking together about these issues?
  - c. What questions do you still have?
  - d. What are ways to learn more?
2. **YOU the change maker:** Find or draw a picture of yourself to cut and glue in the collage. As you choose or draw a picture of yourself, think about:
  - a. What is something you love about yourself?
  - b. What makes you feel powerful?
  - c. Taking action can look many ways. You can be thinking, speaking out, or helping someone. Find or draw a picture that represents what you being the change looks like for you.
3. **Envisioning the change:** As you look for or draw the images and words that you want to include in your collage think about:
  - a. What matters to you?
  - b. What does a world without racism look like?
  - c. What are actions you can take to fight racism?
  - d. What can you do to make someone feel like they matter?
  - e. Who inspires you?
  - f. What messages do you want to share with the world?
4. **Bringing you and the change in the same picture:** Cut out all the pictures and drawings that represent you and your ideas. Have fun and experiment placing them in different ways on the paper before you glue. Think about:
  - a. Do you want to draw or paint something in the background? (You can do this before or after you glue the pieces)
  - b. Where do you want each image to go? Where do you place the picture or drawing of yourself?
  - c. How do the different images interact with one another?
  - d. Do you want some images or words to be bigger?
5. **Making change last:** Glue all the pieces of the collage together! Feel free to keep drawing and adding more details if you'd like!
6. **Inspire:** Share your artwork with your friends and family and continue the conversation about ending racism and being the change to make the world a better place.