



**Title:** How to Be a (Young) Antiracist

**Author:** Ibram X. Kendi and Nic Stone

**Imprint:** Kokila

**Publisher:** Penguin Young Readers

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**Age Range\*:** 12 Up

**Grade Range:** Gr 9 Up  
(Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

# BOOK RESUME: HOW TO BE A (YOUNG) ANTIRACIST

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

The #1 *New York Times* bestseller that sparked international dialogue is now a book for young adults! Based on the adult bestseller by Ibram X. Kendi, and co-authored by bestselling author Nic Stone, *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* will serve as a guide for teens seeking a way forward in acknowledging, identifying, and dismantling racism and injustice.

The *New York Times* bestseller *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi is shaping the way a generation thinks about race and racism. *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* is a dynamic reframing of the concepts shared in the adult book, with young adulthood front and center. Aimed at readers 12 and up, and co-authored by award-winning children's book author Nic Stone, *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* empowers teen readers to help create a more just society. Antiracism is a journey—and now young adults will have a map to carve their own path. Kendi and Stone have revised this work to provide anecdotes and data that speaks directly to the experiences and concerns of younger readers, encouraging them to think critically and build a more equitable world in doing so.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "This is not a simplification of the bestselling *How To Be An Antiracist* for the YA audience. Instead, Stone starts with a thriller-like opening, by delivering Kendi's college acceptance letter into his hands via his father (with whom there is some friction) right before delivering, perhaps, the most racist speech of his life. Drop mic. What? Young adults will be on the edge of their seats, wondering what sort of alternate universe they have wandered into. This is how the authors strip back and flip everything readers know about how they think and the language they use, even carelessly, every day. The next section takes on definitions, and why they matter; it is impossible to discuss anything and align values without definitions, whether it is a bicycle or Christianity. This is sturdy stuff, but it will take committed teenagers to absorb the material which is never less than compelling. "Nic's Notes," appearing in Post-It-like graphics to set the record straight on terms such as "race-neutral policies" (no such thing) perform perfectly as wise elder-slash-emcee to remind readers that they will need to keep their skepticism set to "high" when evaluating anything official. Through a second-person narration, Stone writes of Kendi's life, his own awakening alongside his parents', the history happening all around them, from Lyndon Johnson's affirmative action in his parents' time to Nixon's resignation, and his classroom eyes on matters of race, inequality, genetics, and always this "why?" inside his head that will not be silent. Back matter includes afterword, end notes, and more. VERDICT Heartbreaking, soaring, fulfilling, a deep-dive, this should be canon in high school classrooms and reprinted in pocket-size format for carrying around." —*School Library Journal*, starred review

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★" Popular author Stone has done a heroic job of restructuring Kendi's best-selling adult book for young readers, deleting some chapters and reordering those surviving. But, more importantly, she becomes the narrator of Kendi's material, often addressing him directly (e.g., "Yes, okay, you want to get on with your story . . ."). Never modest, the witty Stone calls herself "the fabulous narrator of your (nonlinear) life's journey to antiracism." As that narrator, she has divided Kendi's story into three parts: "INSIDE: Facing Yourself," "OUTSIDE: Facing the World," and "UPSIDE DOWN: Flipping the World Over." Evidencing the book's challenging complexity, Stone begins it with a veritable smorgasbord of definitions that set the stage for the material to follow. Closely reasoned and intellectually sophisticated, the ensuing book demands readers' careful attention for comprehension. Assisting that process, important terms are highlighted throughout. Also helpful are "Nic's Notes," which—presented in the form of sticky notes—comment on the accompanying text; for instance, "pause to listen, investigate and reflect." This important book is sure to inspire in those who do listen, investigate, and reflect on "that dastardly villain racism," much welcome discussion and debate both in and out of the classroom. It's essential reading."  
—*Booklist*, starred review

" As Jason Reynolds did with *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* (2020), a teen edition of Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped From the Beginning* (2016), Stone puts her own distinctive spin on Kendi's personal exploration of anti-racism in his widely acclaimed 2019 title, *How To Be an Antiracist*. The original work is part memoir, and Stone approaches this in her adaptation by addressing Kendi in the second person as she explicates and contextualizes the epiphanies that brought him to anti-racism, placing the concepts themselves center stage. She switches comfortably between informal and formal modes, even within single passages: "In the 1960s—yeaaaaaars before you were born—President Lyndon B. Johnson implemented Affirmative Action...with the aim of leveling the employment playing field (creating more equity) between White dudes and women and non-White people as a means of expanding employment opportunities for people of color and women." Frequent faux Post-its labeled "NIC'S NOTES" offer further context and commentary. "Peep this quote from racist policymaker Thomas Jefferson," one begins. With key concepts set in boldface, the narrative bristles with definitions as it moves back and forth from Kendi's life to his taxonomy of racism, always touching back on how his own internalized racism inflects on it. Though it's too easy to lose track of whether Stone is addressing "you, IXK," or "you, dear reader," it's a notably effective adaptation. Successfully broadens the reach of the original to a younger audience."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Attention to gender, sexuality, class, and honest self-critique makes for an ambitiously inclusive addition to a growing booklist of youth-oriented racial equity work, but the concluding four c's of changemaking—cogency, compassion, creativity, collaboration—are on full display here in a standout text."  
—*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

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"[A] book that illuminate[s] how each of us are gradually drafted into the thinking, the lies and distorted truths which can render a person unable or at least unwilling to challenge the systems and practices which masquerade as normal, as functional and fair. In reality, many of those systems drive and sustain vast inequality along with pervasive belief in group inferiority or superiority. [A] book that seems to want to equip young people living now, in the midst of surround-sound injustice, open and almost gleeful bigotry—in public and in private—with the language and the skills to recognize they too have been drafted. Then it calls on them to decide if, where, and how they will revolt against that system."—*Time Magazine*

"...an incredibly accessible read geared to teens... guided by Stone's energetic narration; kids will definitely see themselves in his [Kendi's] journey."  
—*The Boston Globe*

"The young person's version gives teens the tools they need to create a more just society and encourages them to undo some of the damage created by generations before them."—*The Root*

#### **AWARDS AND ACCOLADES**

- A Bank Street Best Children's Books Selection

#### **MEDIA AND RESOURCES**

- [Penguin Classroom Educator Guide](#)
- [Penguin Classroom Book Club Guide](#)
- [Mackin Community Author Interview](#)
- [Ms Queenie Clem Author Interview](#)
- [Everywhere Book Fest Author Interview](#)
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