



[How It Went Down](#) by Kekla Magoon

Henry Holt and Co. (BYR), an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2014
ISBN: 9780805098693 (Hardcover)

*Age Range: 14-18 (Suggested by Publisher)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

One death. Two bullets. Seven eyewitnesses...with seven different stories.

When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson dies from two gunshot wounds, his community is thrown into an uproar. Tariq was black. The shooter, Jack Franklin, is white.

In the aftermath of Tariq's death, everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events line up. Day by day, new twists further obscure the truth.

Tariq's friends, family, and community struggle to make sense of the tragedy, and to cope with the hole left behind when a life is cut short. In their own words, they grapple for a way to say with certainty: This is how it went down.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Magoon masterfully captures the cycle of urban violence and the raw emotions of the young people who can't escape its impact." — [Publishers Weekly](#), starred review

★ "How It Went Down is a snapshot in time, a fascinating study of people caught in the crosshairs of an "Event."... A particularly timely tale that can create dialogue and provide understanding about the decisions other people make, and the actions they take." — *VOYA*, starred review

★ "This sobering yet satisfying novel leaves readers to ponder the complex questions it raises." — [Kirkus Reviews](#), starred review

"The many voices provide poignant insights into the forces at play in the impoverished neighborhoods, where joining a gang is tough to resist, but the various perspectives also offer compelling and plausible insights into the way perceptions and preconceptions shape narratives and affect our actions." — *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"The layered voices tell a story both simple and complicated, heartbreaking and maddening." — [The Chicago Tribune](#)

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“Kekla Magoon's books just keep getting better....It's an important, compelling story that everyone should read, especially high school students trying to make sense of our supposed post-racial world.” —[BookPage](#), A Teen Top Pick

“In *How It Went Down*, Kekla Magoon deftly renders us witnesses to an all-too-common news flash in uncommon, unflinching prose. Gripping to the end.” —Rita Williams-Garcia, Newbery Honor winner, National Book Award finalist, and Coretta Scott King Award winner

“A hard-hitting look at the ripple effects of one act of violence on an entire community. *How It Went Down* is engrossing and real—it's the right book at the right time.” —Coe Booth, LA Times Book Prize winner

“Thoughtful and compassionate, beautifully composed, this book takes us inside what we think we know and shows us more.” —Helen Frost, Printz Honor winner

“A powerful novel that will resonate with fans of *Myster's Monster* and Woodson's *Miracle's Boys*.” —*The Horn Book*

“Heartbreaking and unputdownable.” —[School Library Journal](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Coretta Scott King Honor, Author
- Kirkus Best Teen Books of the Year
- ALA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adults
- CCBC Choice (Univ. of WI)
- IRA Notable Books for a Global Society
- YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults
- Virginia Readers' Choice

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

[Teacher's Guide](#)

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*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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