

# Intersection Allies: We Make Room For All

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## Identities & Themes

- Black/African American
- Latinx/e/o/a
- East/Southeast Asian American
- South Asian/Middle Eastern American
- Native American/Indigenous
- Bi/Multiracial identity or relationships
- Gender diversity
- Family diversity: Same-gender relationships
- Immigration/Migration
- EL/Language barrier
- Ability/Neurodiversity
- Religion/Faith
- Friendship
- Kindness
- Standing up
- Community

## Teacher Reflection Questions

1. Which of your social identities are seen, valued, and affirmed in society? Which, if any, are not?
2. What have been the biggest influences on your identity development?
3. How are your students' personal and social identities affirmed and developed in healthy ways in your classroom?

## Background Information for Teacher

It is important for you to read the **Foreword** and **A Letter To Grown-Ups** to yourself before you read this book to your students. Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, who coined the term intersectionality, and the authors provide an important frame for what this book is necessary to teach.

Intersectionality means recognizing both personal and social identities. Personal identities are the things that make us unique (likes/dislikes, personality type, skills, peculiarities, talents, etc). Social identities relate to the social categories that society puts people in, often without their consent or control (race, gender, age, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, ability, race, religion, etc.). These social categories are constructed to keep some groups on top and others on the bottom. These social identities are often what society judges us on, and for our students, these are the identities that are often targeted for teasing or mistreatment.

Schools focus mainly on developing children's personal identities. Discussion and positive representations of social identities are also necessary and important to healthy, complex identity development, as is learning to respect and appreciate all of each other's differences in order to prevent bias-based teasing and mistreatment. This book provides a foundation for discussing social identities with students.

Vocabulary: intersectionality, solidarity, ally/allyship, 1.5 generation, bias, privilege

## Anti-Bias Education Tenets

- ▣ Empathy & Understanding
- ▣ Healthy Complex Identities
- ▣ Respect Across Differences
- ▣ Notice, Name, & Reject Bias
- ▣ Responsiveness & Action

## Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

- ▣ Self-Awareness
- ▣ Self-Management
- ▣ Social Awareness
- ▣ Responsible Decision-Making
- ▣ Relationship Skills

## Read this to the students before reading the book:

*This book explores how each of us has many different identities that make us who we are, including skin color/race, culture, gender identity, ability, language, age, religion/faith, and wealth/class. Some of us face more challenges than others because of our various identities. This is what intersectionality is - the multiple identities that we have and the struggle to have all of who we are be seen and valued.*

## Discussion Questions (essential questions bolded)

1. **What identities/groups are highlighted in the book?** (disability, gender identity, Black/African American, Native American, Latinx, Asian Americans, immigrants, refugees)
2. **Why do you think these identities were chosen?**
3. Based on the book, how would you define what an ally is? (An ally is someone who uses their privileges to help make life easier or safer for others.)
4. **Why do we need allies?**
5. On page 17, it says, *“Not toys or money, nor treasures untold - Community care is more precious than gold.”* What does this line mean to you?
6. **The book mentions in a couple of places that what a person wears can “inspire debate”. How is this true for some of the characters in the book?** (gender identity, hijab-wearing Muslims women)
7. **What do these characters need from an ally in these situations?**
8. **The spread on pages 26 and 27 references protesting in support of different identities and groups. What are some of the identities/groups that are represented on the signs and in the images?** (LGBTQ+ - PRIDE and Trans Lives Matter, women - Say Her Name, Black/African Americans - Black Lives Matter, Native Americans - Native drummer)
9. **Based on this, what do you think it means to “join along in solidarity”?** (*“Solidarity is when people with different identities and abilities come together to work towards the same goal. (page 47)”*)
10. On page 40, it says, *“Barriers and biases are often to blame. We strive to be equal but not all the same.”* What does this line mean to you?

## Journal Prompts & Extension Activities

1. How have you been an ally for someone else? When has someone else been an ally for you? Write or draw about a time when you experienced allyship.
2. Which identities are you most aware of? What have been the biggest influences on these identities and how you think about yourself and who you are?
3. **Identity Outlines:** Have students trace an outline of themselves on butcher or bulletin board paper. Using the categories of identities explained on page 38 (race, religion, citizenship, class, ability, age, gender, size, and skin color), write, draw, or collage words, phrases, and images that represent their various identities inside the outline of their bodies.



## Literacy Connections

- Poetry
- Identify details in the text
- Compare and contrast characters
- Identify theme or main message
- Describe characters/ Character development
- Use illustrations/pictures/ photos to gain information
- Make inferences
- Make text connections (to self, text, the world)
- Vocabulary in context
- Figurative language
- Rhythm and rhyming