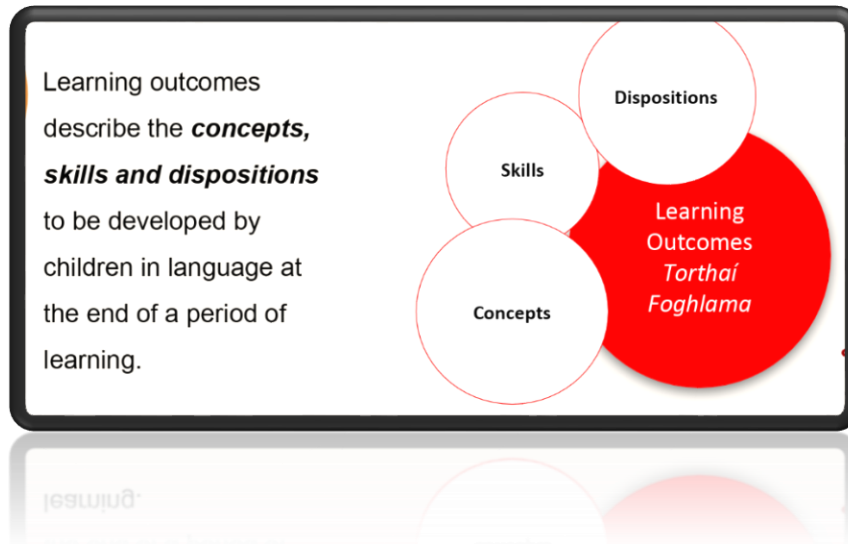


# Nurturing Positive Dispositions: Tolerance over Racism

In nurturing the development of children as competent and confident communicators, the Primary Language Curriculum spotlights the importance of developing dispositions alongside concepts and skills.



Aistear defines dispositions as ‘enduring habits of mind and action. A disposition is the tendency to respond to situations in characteristic ways’ (Aistear, 2009, p.54). Positive dispositions mentioned in Aistear are independence, curiosity, concentration, creativity, **responsibility**, resilience, patience, perseverance, playfulness, imagination, being interested in things, enjoying problem-solving, being a good listener, assessing and taking risks, **being friendly**, wanting to communicate, **being accepting of others and of differences**, **being considerate**, being happy, **cooperating with others**.

Recent decades have seen significant changes in Irish society with over 200 languages now used in Ireland. Teachers are keen to enable pupils to become global citizens successfully engaging with an increasingly diverse world by providing interactions and learning experiences that foster acceptance and understanding of a range of people and cultures. How can we inspire a positive disposition of being accepting of others, being empathetic and considerate, to believe in social justice and actively counter bullying, stereotypes and racism?

The Aistear-Síolta Practice Guide tells us that ‘dispositions are not fixed and they can be encouraged or discouraged, and strengthened or weakened’, over time, ‘through experience and through interactions with others and the environment’. Teachers should ‘try to reinforce positive dispositions, by planning for a supportive environment and interactions that will encourage positive dispositions.

For example,

- model the disposition
- show that you value the disposition
- provide opportunities for children to develop dispositions (time, space, equipment or encouragement).
- take individual differences and preferences into account, for example by introducing changes gradually, or by giving extra support to a child who needs it’.

## Children’s Books to Support Conversations on Race, Racism and Tolerance

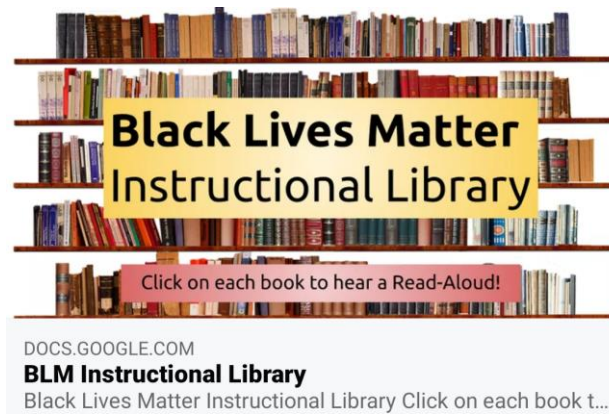
Children’s books that share the personal experiences of diverse individuals are often one of the most effective and practical tools for initiating critical conversations in discussion after reading. To counter racist socialization and racial bias, we should acknowledge race and racism with children and read books that explore challenging themes.

Here is a list of some resources that some teachers may find useful. Not all materials are suitable for all children.

- The Sneetches, by Dr. Seuss <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdLPe7XjdKc>
- The Vicar of Nobbleswicke, by Roald Dahl
- A Is for Activist, by Innosanto Nagara
- Mary Hoffman’s Amazing Grace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LmIfdJRSGQ>
- This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on how to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work Book by Tiffany Jewell
- Over the Hills and Far Away: A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes, by Elizabeth Hammill. Get a taste of it here: <https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/gallery/2014/oct/13/culturally-diverse-nursery-rhymes-gallery0>
- The Lost Homework, by Richard O’Neill, illustrated by Kirsti Beautyman
- Polonius the Pit Pony, by Richard O’Neill, illustrated by Feronia Parker-Thomas
- The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael López
- My Hair is a Garden, by Cozbi A. Cabrera
- Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History, by Vashti Harrison
- The Whispering Town, by Jennifer Elvgren, illustrated by Fabio Santomauro
- Frederick Douglass: The Lion Who Wrote History, by Walter Dean Myers, illustrated by Floyd Cooper
- The Boy and the Wall, by Palestinian refugee children in the Aida Refugee Camp

An extensive list of books suggestions on multi-culturalism and diversity can be found here:

[https://www.educationworld.com/sites/default/files/Book%20Suggestions\\_0.pdf](https://www.educationworld.com/sites/default/files/Book%20Suggestions_0.pdf)



### Black Lives Matter Instructional Library (Read-Aloud Library)

A really nice Black Lives Matters (BLM) Library -Click on each book to hear a Read-Aloud, created by Zyana Melissa López:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/18pOK3roiwPQ9WF7D2wA0o7Ktr8KwAJeZfn-o6O8T\\_Y/copy](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/18pOK3roiwPQ9WF7D2wA0o7Ktr8KwAJeZfn-o6O8T_Y/copy)

## Resources



<https://www.autismlittlelearners.com/>

This website has a huge bank of free visuals, stories, narrated story videos, one step direction activities and picture scenes. The story '*Shades of Skin*' is meant to provide a simple, basic way to talk about skin colour with young children.

Shades of skin story:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vRACFpkcGYZZJLu1351wkJ2RPn0AuzK/view>

For an alternative version with clothing on page 2:

Shades of skin story V2: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D-Cjw\\_aDCFkq\\_6vHwf6wkYwvCwx38BqB/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1D-Cjw_aDCFkq_6vHwf6wkYwvCwx38BqB/view)

The website also has fantastic stories of peaceful protests, wearing masks, seeing other people wearing masks stories and how to video chat with other people stories.



### CNN/Sesame Street - Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism

Watch the entire CNN/Sesame Street racism town hall- CNN's Van Jones and Erica Hill partner with "Sesame Street" for Coming Together: Standing Up to Racism, a town hall for kids and families. Watch the town hall in its entirety below:

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/06/06/app-news-section/cnn-sesame-street-race-town-hall-app-june-6-2020-app/index.html>



<http://yellowflag.ie/>

A practical programme that supports primary and secondary schools to become more inclusive of all cultures and ethnicities, celebrate diversity and challenge racism and discrimination. Each year the Yellow Flag invites a number of applicant schools to participate in the programme. Keep an eye out for applications to reopen for the next school year.



<http://theredcard.ie/teachers/>

Show Racism the Red Card is an anti-racism charity in Ireland since 2006. Their website includes online training, equality audit and an equity policy template, education packs, fact sheets exploring prejudice activity, and pyramid of hate posters

The Red Card Anti-Racism Awareness online course on the issue of racism and discrimination is split into two streams. The first is aimed at members of the football community while the second is tailored for educators. During the course you will be asked questions to help you reflect on the issue of racism and video footage will also appear to help reinforce your learning.



[www.ireport.ie](http://www.ireport.ie)

The iReport.ie system was launched in July 2013, allowing people, communities, and organisations of Ireland to confidentially report and document racist incidents that are occurring nationwide. People bear witness to incidences of racism every day. If you have experienced, witnessed or heard about a racist incident in Ireland there is something you can do about it. Schools can add the iReport Logo ad link to their websites. The Irish Network against Racism and iReport.ie are made possible thanks to Pobal, SSNO (Scheme to Support National Organisations) and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government



<https://www.paveepoint.ie/>

The Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre's mission is to contribute to the improvement in the quality of life, living circumstances, status and participation of Travellers and Roma through working innovatively for social justice, greater solidarity, development, equality and human rights. They have a student resource section on their website.

### Additional Information

- Aistear-Síolta Practice Guide: Helping young children to develop positive learning dispositions Age3-6 Tip Sheet: <http://www.aistearsiolta.ie/en/curriculum-foundations/element-3-themes-of-aistear-/helping-young-children-to-develop-positive-learning-dispositions-3-6-years-.pdf>
- NCCA: Early Childhood: Skills and Dispositions: <https://ncca.ie/en/early-childhood/mo-sc%C3%A9al/skills-and-dispositions>