



THE PALEY CENTER FOR MEDIA

PALEY EDUCATION @Home
presented by **citi**

What We're Watching





Greetings from The Paley Center for Media’s Education Department!

Welcome to the latest installment of “What We’re Watching.” Twice a month the education department reaches out to the community with tips and ideas for consuming media with kids by highlighting different themes that connect to two selected programs, one for younger viewers and one for older viewers, each with related activities and resources.

Watching media alongside your kids is a perfect jumping-off point to making media literacy a part of your everyday lives. Familiarizing yourself with the basics is a great first step. You can [view our first newsletter about media literacy best practices archived here](#). We also recommend the [National Association for Media Literacy Education’s Parents Guide](#)—it’s a terrific introduction!

What We're Watching: From Rosa to Colin—Bending the Arc towards Justice

In his much revered and frequently quoted “I Have a Dream” speech, Martin Luther King Jr. says, “We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: ‘For Whites Only.’” The movement work of civil rights leaders like King and countless others have helped bring about a nation where these signs are less overt, but emblems of racism and racial inequity persist. Segregation may no longer be the law of the land but deep divisions in our society cultivate an America where the lived experiences of black and brown people are vastly different than that of white people. King’s “beloved community” remains stagnant and incomplete. In another of King’s speeches, he talks about how “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” The struggle of African Americans for freedom, dignity, and equality has been long indeed, but numerous champions and everyday warriors have forged a possible path, rising to their power by either sitting or kneeling in the fight for justice.

This Week's Recommendations for Younger Viewers

Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum: "I Am Rosa Parks" (2020)

Recommended for Grades PK+

[*Available on PBS Kids YouTube Channel*](#)

We return to that magical museum of yesteryear, the Secret Museum, with our favorite time traveling trio of young historians, Xavier Riddle, his sister Yadina, and their friend Brad. In this episode, they travel back in time to meet civil rights activist Rosa Parks. On their first journey, the three adventurers meet young Rosa in 1923 Alabama where the fledgling freedom fighter stands up to a bullying skateboarder who rudely runs her off the road. From a very young age, Rosa, like all young people, understands what is fair and what is not. Like Rosa, we carry this knowledge as we grow, shaping our worldview. When Xavier, Yadina, and Brad travel forward in time to 1955 Montgomery, Alabama, they see Rosa still standing up for herself by refusing to give up her seat to an able-bodied white passenger. Rosa's act of resistance inspires the Black community who choose not to ride the bus in order to protest the unfair treatment of Black bus riders. When the bus companies back down and Black people can sit anywhere they like, the three time-travelers are heartened by their firm belief that "kids can change the world" because after all Rosa Parks "used to be a kid, just like you and me."

Viewing Questions

- What does Yadina mean when she says that Rosa Parks "stood up for herself, and others, by sitting down?"
- Why does young Rosa stop Xavier from using the water fountain?
- In 1923 Alabama, if your skin is white what are some of the things you can do?
- In 1923 Alabama, if your skin is black what are some of the things you can do?
- Why does Rosa and other Black people in 1955 Montgomery refuse to ride the bus?
- If less people ride the bus how might that impact the bus company?
- Do you know of other brave acts by one person that may have inspired others to fight for justice too?

Additional Resources

Read

[*I Am Rosa Parks \(Ordinary People Change the World\) by Brad Meltzer, illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos*](#)

The Bus Ride That Changed History: The Story of Rosa Parks by Pamela Duncan Edwards, illustrated by Danny Shanahan

The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks: Young Readers Edition (for older students) by Jeanne Theoharis; adapted by Brandy Colbert and Jeanne Theoharis

Watch

[Rosa Parks—Civil Rights Activist Video](#)



This Week's Recommendations for Older Viewers

Colin in Black and White: "Road Trip" (2021)

Recommended for Grades 9+

Available on Netflix

This limited series, created, produced, and narrated by former football quarterback, Colin Kaepernick, blends non-fiction historical documentary and scripted narrative to relate Colin's experiences as a high school athlete and transracial adoptee. This episode, the third of the six-part series, begins with the real Colin Kaepernick directly addressing the audience with a lesson from *Black Reconstruction* by W.E.B. Du Bois. Du Bois explains that even though white working-class people experienced the same low wages as the Black working class, they "were compensated in part by a public and psychological wage," giving working-class whites a social prestige and

access to public spaces unavailable to their Black counterparts. Colin shares that being raised by white parents allowed him to move “through life with their audacity of whiteness” but their privilege was never his. As the program shifts into the scripted narrative, we see a young Colin quickly learn of his second-class status. His high school baseball team is in the state tournament and Colin, a star pitcher, drives with his parents to different towns to play ball. At the different hotels, baseball games, and highways, Colin encounters the harsh, traumatic reality of racism. Hotel staff and patrons scrutinize him with suspicion, a baseball umpire threatens Colin with suspension and a state trooper reaches for their gun as Colin reaches for his requested learner’s permit. The division is stark, clearly black and white. As the episode ends, young Colin is approached by a hotel manager who apologizes for his earlier reprimands, he now sees Colin is “one of the good ones.” But both young, fictionalized Colin and older, real-life Colin agree that white people cannot decide who is “an acceptable negro.” Quoting Langston Hughes, present-day, civil rights activist Colin closes the episode with a warning, “Negroes, sweet and docile, meek humble and kind. Beware the day they change their mind.”

Viewing Questions

- What does W.E.B. Du Bois mean when he says white working-class people are “compensated in part by a public and psychological wage?” How does Du Bois say this wage is “paid out” to white people in our society?
- What are some ways that Colin experiences racism?
- How do his parents and his friend Jake respond when Colin voices concern about the hotel staff treating him differently? Why do you think they cannot understand Colin’s feelings?
- What are microaggressions? What are the ways that Colin experiences them?
- In the short skit with the white senior attorney and new black hire, what are ways the black lawyer experiences microaggressions? Do you experience microaggressions in your daily interactions? If so, how do you respond?
- When Colin meets the all-Black baseball team in the hotel lobby, how do the young men behave? How do the other white ball players and their managers behave? How does the hotel staff treat the white ball players? How do they treat the Black ball players?
- What are examples in popular culture that Colin refers to as representing “the acceptable negro?” Why are these characters considered acceptable? Are there examples of “acceptable negroes” in recent television programs?
- What might be signs people of color see every day that tell them they are not welcome?

Additional Resources

Read

The Kaepernick Effect: Taking a Knee, Changing the World by David Zirin

Change the Game (Graphic Novel) by Colin Kaepernick and Eve L. Ewing, illustrated by Orlando Caicedo

Our History Has Always Been Contraband: In Defense of Black Studies, edited by Colin Kaepernick, Robin D.G. Kelley and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

Abolition for the People: The Movement for a Future Without Policing and Prisons, edited by Colin Kaepernick

"Spike Lee to Direct Colin Kaepernick Docuseries for ESPN"

Watch

The Price of Protest: The Colin Kaepernick Story (trailer)

As always, if you have any questions, thoughts, or ideas, don't hesitate to reach out to us at eduny@paleycenter.org.

Happy viewing,

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Photos—*Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum*: Public Broadcasting Service; *Colin in Black and White*: ARRAY Filmworks/ Netflix