

## Sample Family Communications on RJA Curriculum

Each week, the director of diversity and equity at Bank Street School for Children sends a family update that summarizes the Racial Justice and Advocacy (RJA) lesson from the week. Through this weekly communication, parents and caregivers stay up-to-date on their children's curricular experience and are prepared to engage their children in follow-up conversations.

### Grades 1/2 Update



#### Defining Race, Justice, and Advocacy

This week we kicked off our RJA curriculum. We started with an assembly where second, third, and fourth grade students shared RJA experiences and memories from previous years. In the classroom, students discussed the meaning of the following words: race, justice, and advocacy.

### Grades 1/2 Update



#### Exploring Different Skin Tones

We read three different picture books focused on recognizing and naming different skin tones: *The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz, *All the Colors We Are* by Katie Kissinger, and *Shades of People* by Shelley Rotner and Sheila M. Kelly.

Children mixed shades of brown and painted swatches of different skin colors. Everyone chose a swatch that they felt matched their skin tone and selected a name (e.g., peach, milk chocolate, sandy) that they felt described their skin color.

### Grade 3 Update



#### Examining Race Through the Census

We looked at U.S. Census forms dating back to the 1860s up through 2010. We looked at how the definition of different races changed throughout the years, and how new races were added to the form throughout the decades.

Children noticed it took until the late 1900s for many races to be included in the Census. We reflected on what it must have felt like for people to have to check a box that did not represent their race.

### Grade 4 Update



#### Analyzing Freedom in the 1700s

We discussed the idea of fighting for freedom, and groups of people who fought for their freedom in the 1700s: enslaved Africans, British colonists, and First Nations people. We discussed two laws from the 1700s in New York that were created to perpetuate slavery.

Students then learned about different methods of resistance to slavery, including everyday resistance, escape, revolt, and changing laws.