

4 WAYS TO
FIGHT ABLEISM
WITH
KIDS BOOKS

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WEBINAR WORKBOOK



4 WAYS TO FIGHT ABLEISM WITH KIDS BOOKS

How to use this workbook: GUIDED OPTIONS

- Visit the link below for access to the webinar recording and companion resources.
- Watch the #LiberatingWebinars video.
- Use this workbook to take notes as you watch, or reflect on the webinar afterward.
- Share this webinar and workbook with a friend using the link below.



COMPANION RESOURCES

bit.ly/awnluminary

4 WAYS TO FIGHT ABLEISM WITH KIDS BOOKS

Access the books you already have

ACTION #1

Listing books you have easy access to, note whether each is **validating**, **destigmatizing**, **normalizing**, or **problematic** for living with a disability.

Note: most books fit more than one use. A validating story for physical disabilities could be problematic for neurodiversity or full of sexism. A story you find validating might help outsiders understand your experience.

DISABILITY REPRESENTATION

VALIDATING
DESTIGMATIZING
NORMALIZING
PROBLEMATIC

1. Two of my child's favorite stories:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Two of my own childhood favorites:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Two stories I've been meaning to read:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Two books recommended to me:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 WAYS TO FIGHT ABLEISM WITH KIDS BOOKS

Read beyond the cover

ACTION #2

Don't just read each book - read *about* each book.

1. Who is this written by?

Is this story written and illustrated by *#OwnVoices* makers with the disability in the story?

2. Who is this story about?

Whose story or experience is being shared or appropriated?

3. Who controls the story?

Which character has the power to shape the story? Which character makes decisions that impact others?

4. Who is profiting?

Do the sales of this book benefit actual people with disabilities?
Do the messages in this book shape society to end ableism, or reinforce it?

4 WAYS TO FIGHT ABLEISM WITH KIDS BOOKS

Recognize cultural patterns

ACTION #3, Part 1: Focus & Gather Resources

Supremacy is the culture we live in, so symptoms of ableism can be hard to identify if you grew up understanding these messages as ‘normal.’

Get specific and focused: For the purpose of this exercise, choose **one specific disability** to discuss with your kids. You can always repeat his exercise with new identities and experiences later on.

My kids should understand the experience of living with this disability: _____

Our family has chosen these books to learn about this disability:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Patterns we noticed and discussed:

Need help getting started? Check the next page for common tropes.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4 WAYS TO FIGHT ABLEISM WITH KIDS BOOKS

Recognize cultural patterns

ACTION #3, Part 2: Ableism Bingo!

Supremacy is the culture we live in, so symptoms of ableism can be hard to identify if you grew up understanding these messages as ‘normal.’

Get specific and focused: For the purpose of this exercise, choose **one specific disability** to discuss with your kids. You can always repeat his exercise with new identities and experiences later on.

Pitiful disabled person	‘Overcoming’ disability (not overcoming ableism)	Disabled person has super powers <i>(ex: magical or wise savant)</i>	Author does not have the disability they write about
Evil Crip <i>(ex: villain with eye patch, scars, craniofacial differences)</i>	Dry text, boring plot, no story, bland illustrations	Disability as an insult <i>(ex: dumb, stupid, blind, crazy)</i>	Spunky / burdensome disabled sidekick/ sibling
Inspiration porn	Exceptionalism <i>(ex: “She’s not like the other girls!”)</i>	Zero disabled characters	Glasses = Weak, Smart, Nerd
Saviorism	Token wheelchair or white cane	Author thanks to ‘expert’ who does not have this disability	Author assumes person with this disability will never read this book

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Recognize cultural patterns

ACTION #4, Confront your own assumptions

No one is born knowing how to identify, name, and unpack ableism. Use this script as a launchpad for discussions with kids to model reflection, growth, critical thinking.

When I first read _____, I loved it.

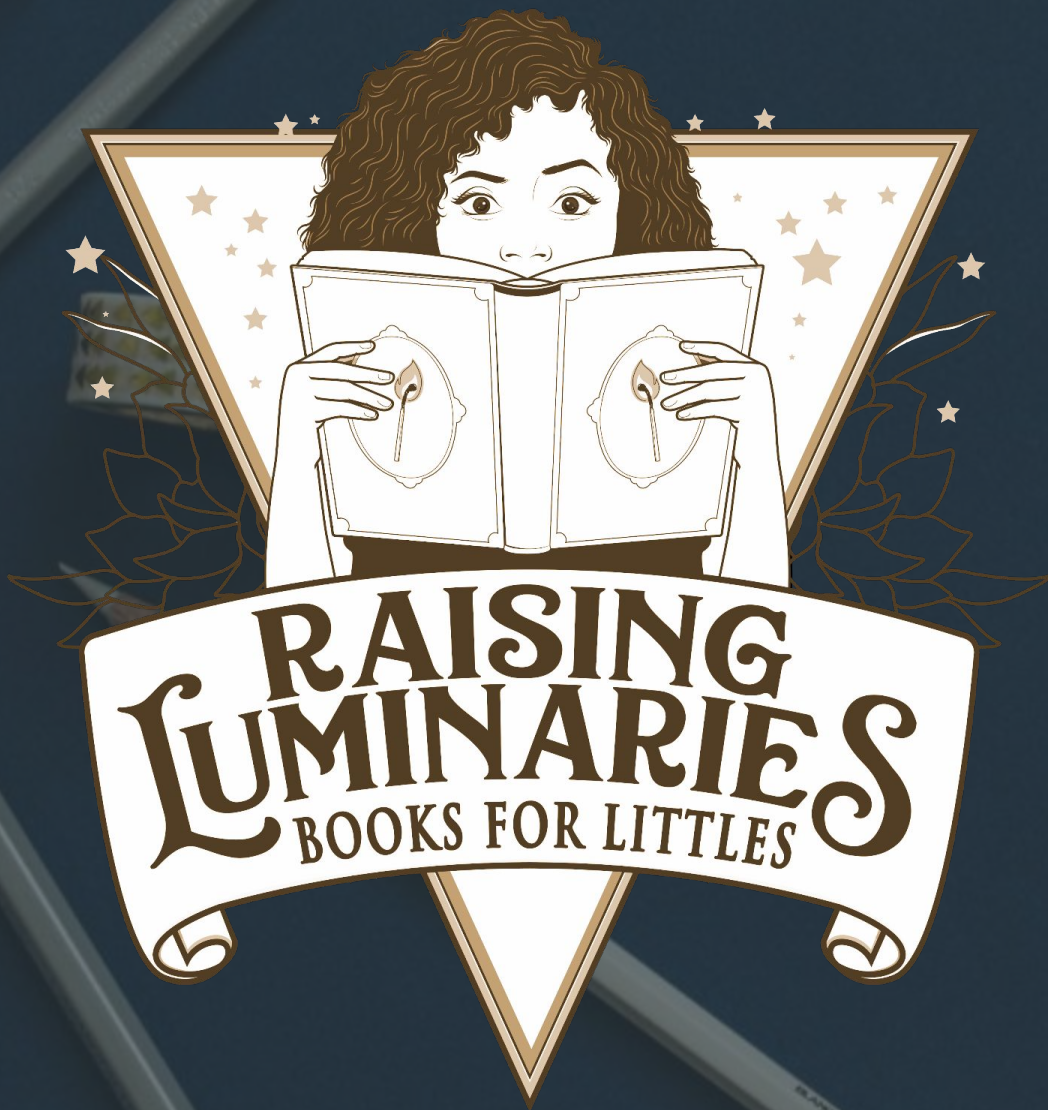
After learning more about disability justice, I've noticed how this book reinforces the following problematic messages about disability: _____

_____, _____ **and** _____ .

It's okay that I still enjoy what I first loved about this book.

It's okay that I feel _____ about it now.

What I realize now is _____ .



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