

Week 4 Message from the ABC Curriculum Committee

Welcome to Week 4 of the Action Book Club (ABC) Community! This week our book clubs will be reading one chapter, Chapter 6: Body. In this chapter, Kendi defines “bodily racist” and “bodily antiracist” and contrasts racist and antiracist policy discussions and policies, calling out the “violence of racism...that fears the Black body” and calling for the “nonviolence of antiracism that does not fear the Black body, that fears, if anything the violence of racism that has been set on the Black body.” (p. 80).

This chapter comes one-third of the way through the book and your book club’s journey. The focus on one chapter is intended to give you time to dive deeply: Take some time to reflect on your own bodies in the context of your book club and of current local, state, and national antiracist movements and efforts. Take time to check in with your group.

Some of our book clubs may still be discussing last week’s content (Chapter 4, Biology; Chapter 5, Ethnicity). Please do not worry if you are late to start each week, or if your group discussions span over more than one week or meeting – lean into your process.

We have added a weekly “highlight” that calls out systemic racism and how it is currently being addressed.

Week 4 Highlight

Would you prefer to be accepted, or loved? In a recent episode of her podcast, “Unlocking Us”, Brene Brown interviews Sonya Renee Taylor, author of the book *The Body is Not an Apology: The Power of Radical Self Love*. Taylor believes that acceptance is passive and that love is active, able to destroy and disrupt the systems in our society that scream to us that we are not enough. We are situated in a hierarchy that tells us some bodies possess more value than other bodies. In this way, Taylor connects body love with social justice, and body shame with oppression, racism, violence against black and brown bodies. We invite you to listen and learn about revolutionary practices of self love. [Brene Brown podcast with Sonya Renee Taylor: The Body is Not an Apology](https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-sonya-renee-taylor-on-the-body-is-not-an-apology/) (link to site - <https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-sonya-renee-taylor-on-the-body-is-not-an-apology/>)

Week 4: Chapter 6 (Body)

Pre-ABC Reflection, Discussion Prompts, Actions & Resources

| Activity | Time estimate* | Reflection, Dialogue, Action | Process Suggestions |
|--|---|---|--|
| Self-Reflection Prior to ABC meeting | 5-10 minutes* Prior to meeting | Were there any neighborhoods or places you were forbidden from visiting as a kid? Why? Are there neighborhoods or places you avoid as an adult now? Why? How do your responses relate to this chapter? | Read and think about these questions before and after reading the chapter. Read the chapters before the ABC meeting. If you cannot read the chapter(s) before the meeting, come to the ABC meeting anyway. Participate humbly knowing that you have not read the chapter. |
| Discussion ABC meeting | Greeting and Settling in 10* minutes | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check in with each other (How are you?) 2. Welcome and Agenda 3. Review and check on Participation Norms and Group Process: This is the fourth week of the book club and the chapter is "Body." Ask: To what extent are we focusing on and understanding Kendi's ideas about antiracism and racism. What are we doing well as a group? What can we do better? <p>Possible questions for reflection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the space your bodies have created in the group. Reflect on previous meetings. How have we used time and space? Is everyone participating? Why/why not? • Have we respectfully had uncomfortable conversations? Have we avoided the uncomfortable? What patterns do we see? <p>Re-look at the participation norms. What, if any, changes should we make?</p> <p>Review chapter to identify a key passage or two (to warm-up get back into the chapter after a busy day). Take turns sharing a passage.</p> | Arrive early to the meeting so you can catch up Facilitator welcomes everyone and shares the agenda (made at the previous meeting.) Facilitator asks the group to reflect briefly on participation norms. Ideas for how to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review individual participation and norms silently. Facilitator asks each individual to reflect on one norm the individual has done well and one they need to work on. End. ➤ Review group process while silently reflecting on norms. Facilitator asks for feedback: What is one norm we are doing well? One we need to improve on? ➤ Review norms by reading them aloud followed by individual reflection or by group discussion: On which one norm should we focus today? ➤ Review norms. Facilitator asks: How are the norms working? What do we need to change, if anything? |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | Discussion 50 minutes* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your experience with violence? • Whenever violence or violent acts are brought up in conversation with family members and friends, how is it spoken about? Who are viewed as the perpetrators? Where is it assumed to occur most often? • Why do you think Kendi chooses to tell the story of Smurf in the chapter about bodily racism? | <p>Everyone has a voice. Ideas for making sure all voices are heard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each person chooses a passage. The discussion begins with each person sharing the passage and why. 2. Round robin, each person talks building on previous speaker—in order, around the room. 3. Each one asks one. After making a comment, the speaker calls on the next person to comment. 4. Pairs. First pairs share their thinking in response to the question. Then each person responds. <p>Return to the chapter/text frequently during the discussion. Remember one purpose is to understand the chapter/book/ideas.</p> <p>Facilitator keeps track of participation and asks questions to ensure that all participants get a chance to talk. In addition, active participants ask questions of their colleagues.</p> |
| | Reflection and Action 5 minutes* | <i>Reflect individually:</i> Based on the discussion, what personal action will I take this week? | |
| | Next Steps 5 minutes* | <p>Plan for the next book club meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What chapters are next? • What actions have we committed to for next week’s meeting? Restate the plan. | Facilitator takes notes and reads/restates the plan for the next meeting after the discussion. “We have agreed to...” |
| | Closing 5 minutes* | Thank each other and say good-bye! | |
| Action | Will vary** | <p>Engage with your social media outlets over a one- week period and journal your responses the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What messages about the Black body are taught in the United States? How do these messages show up in the media, in policies, and in our perceptions about communities? | Never underestimate the power and importance of everyday actions you yourself can take. |
| Learn More | Will vary** | Layla F. Saad’s (2020) <i>Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the</i> | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | <i>World, and Become a Good Ancestor</i> models a process of journaling while unpacking the anti-Black narratives we've consumed in a very specific, directed way. This could be an opportunity for future reading or for modeling reflective prompts based on her work. | |
|--|--|--|--|

*These are suggested times. Different groups might spend time differently. The main guideline is to spend time intentionally.

** It is expected that more time might be dedicated to action and learning more as the group progresses through the book.