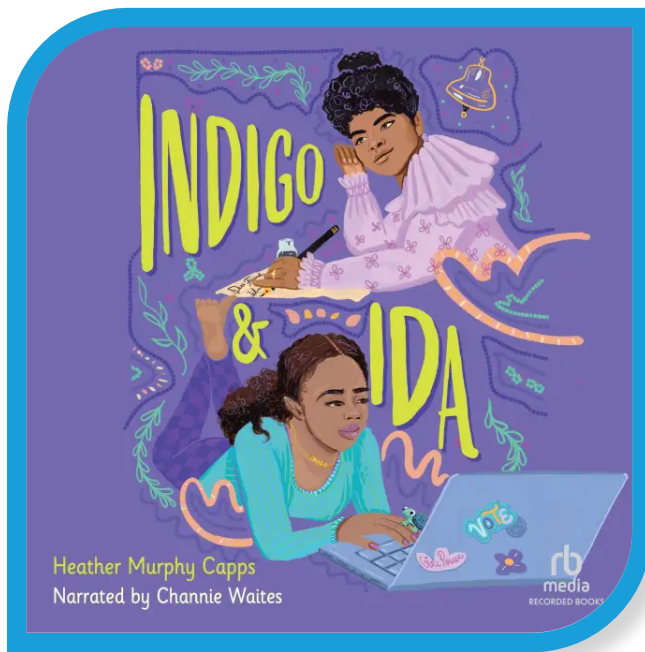




# Monthly Featured Book

Presented by ADL's Education Department

**About the Monthly Featured Book:** This collection of featured books is from Books Matter™: The Best Kid Lit on Bias, Diversity and Social Justice. The books teach about bias and prejudice, promote respect for diversity, encourage social action and reinforce themes addressed in ADL Education's programs. For parents, guardians and family members, reading the books listed on this site with your children and integrating the concepts into your interactions with them is an excellent way to help children grapple with and learn about these important principles.



## Indigo & Ida

Heather Murphy Capps (Author)

Age Range: 10-13

Year Published: 2023

### Book Themes

Activism, Civil Rights, Friendship, Journalism, Friendship, History, Race and Racism, Social Justice

## About the Book

When eighth grader and aspiring journalist Indigo breaks an important story, exposing an unfair school policy, she's suddenly popular for the first time. The friends who've recently drifted away from her want to hang out again. Then Indigo notices that the school's disciplinary policies seem to be enforced especially harshly with students of color, like her. She wants to keep investigating, but her friends insist she's imagining things. Meanwhile, Indigo stumbles upon a book by Black journalist and activist Ida B. Wells—with private letters written by Ida tucked inside. As she reads about Ida's lifelong battle against racism, Indigo realizes she must choose between keeping quiet and fighting for justice.

## Conversation Starters

Whether you read the book aloud with your child or your child reads it on their own and you discuss it later, you can use these open-ended questions to deepen the conversation. Remembering not to judge their responses, listen thoughtfully and engage in a give-and-take that will help them expand upon their understanding of the book and its themes.

- What happens in the story?

- Why does Indigo want to go to detention? What does Indigo see when she is in detention?
- How does Indigo go about trying to change school policies she dislikes and disagrees with? Have you ever had strong opinions about a particular school policy and if so, what was it and why?
- How does Indigo use video and social media as a journalist and in her efforts to tell the truth about school policies she thinks are unfair?
- How is social media used and portrayed throughout the book? How does it relate (or not relate) to your experiences with social media? How so?
- Why do you think Indigo decides to run for Class President? What was that experience like for her?
- What do you think of the friendships between Indigo, Abbie and Manning? How has their friendship changed over the years? What do you think will happen next in their friendships with each other?
- In the book, how are friendships explored? What is a friendship from the book that you admire? What is a friendship you have concerns about? To what extent do the friendships resonate or remind you of your friendships?
- Why do you think the author decided to include Ida B. Wells and the letters that Indigo finds in the book?
- What did you learn about Ida B. Wells by reading the book? What else do you want to know about her?
- In what ways are Ida and Indigo similar and in what ways are they different in terms of their personalities, issues they care about, and lived experiences?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book? What is the message in the story?

## Talking Points

Below are some important considerations to highlight in order to make this a learning opportunity for your child and your family.

### 1. School Policies and How We Feel About Them

Engage in a conversation with your child about the school policies that are explored in the book. Ask your child what school policies Indigo focuses on in her reporting and her presidential campaign. Share with your child that school policies are the rules and procedures for guiding behavior in a school. Elicit that in the book, Indigo first focuses on school detention and how students aren't allowed to use the bathroom while in detention, and how she notices that the only students in detention are Black and brown students. Indigo also addresses the school policy that students aren't allowed to have their cell phones in school. Talk with your child about how Indigo expresses her opinion about those policies and attempts to change them. Ask them about some of the policies in their school—which ones they like, appreciate and agree with and those they don't like, disagree with or think need changing. Explore their reasons for feeling the way they do about these policies and ask what they would say in a social media post, letter or speech about the policy to influence others. Share your own experiences with school policies when you went to school, how you felt about some of the school policies and the extent to which you or others tried to change or alter them.

### 2. Ida B. Wells

Talk with your child about Ida B. Wells, who is a prominent character and storyline in the book. Ask them what they learned about her by reading the book. If there is interest, together watch the short video, [Ida B. Wells: Journalist and Anti-Lynching Activist](#). Then ask what else they learned about Ida B. Wells from the video and

consider learning more about her using books and online resources, exploring other questions you may have about her. Explore the importance of learning about people in history, especially those who had an impact on society. You can also share some or all of the following facts and information:

- Ida Bell Wells was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi on July 16, 1862; she was born into slavery during the Civil War.
- When she was 14 years old, both of Wells' parents and her infant brother died during the yellow fever epidemic. She went to work and kept the rest of the family together with the help of her grandmother.
- She began teaching at the age of 14 and continued to teach after moving to Memphis, Tennessee.
- In 1887, the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled against Ida B. Wells in a lawsuit she had brought against the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad for having been forcibly removed from her seat after she refused to give it up for one in a "colored only" car.
- In 1892, after three friends of hers were lynched by a mob, Wells began an editorial campaign against lynching. She continued her anti-lynching crusade, first as a staff writer for the New York Age and then as a lecturer and organizer of anti-lynching societies.
- Wells was a strong supporter of women securing the right to vote. She marched in the 1913 suffrage parade in Washington, D.C., when many of the organizers resisted Black women's participation. After Black women were told they could only march in segregated sections, the NAACP organized letter and telegram protests.
- Wells was one of the co-founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).
- In 2020, Wells was awarded a posthumous (awarded after death) Pulitzer Prize in recognition of her "outstanding and courageous" reporting about lynching.

### 3. Women's History Month

Discuss with your child the importance of Women's History Month and why women like Ida B. Wells are critical to the commemoration month. Remind them that Ida B. Wells is an important and influential Black woman in history; she was a journalist, educator and civil rights activist. Explain that March is Women's History Month—an annual celebration of the history, achievements, and contributions of women. Ask your child why they think we have a month dedicated to learning about women throughout history. Elicit/explain that the reason we have Women's History Month is to honor and commemorate women because sometimes when history is discussed and taught, girls and women are left out or only some women are included. This is due to sexism, bias, and exclusion. The same is true for other themed months like Black History Month, Native American Heritage Month and others. Elicit and explain that it is important to learn about important women in history because it helps us gain a better understanding of the world/society during that time, it can be inspiring to those who are trying to make society more just in current times, it can build empathy and understanding about that time period, and it provides an accurate understanding of people (especially those in marginalized identity groups) who played a critical role in shaping society. It is also important to note that while we have Women's History Month, women and girls' accomplishments and history should be part of our learning throughout the year. If interested, together engage in additional reading, watch programming or attend community events to learn more about Women's History Month.

## Other Books You Might Like



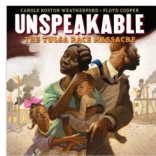
Amina's Voice <https://www.adl.org/aminas-voice>



Front Desk <https://www.adl.org/front-desk>



Hearts Unbroken <https://www.adl.org/hearts-unbroken>



Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre <https://www.adl.org/unspeakable-tulsa-race-massacre>

## ADL Additional Resources

The following are curriculum and other resources on

- 7 Ideas for Teaching Women's History Month <https://www.adl.org/resources/lesson-plan/7-ideas-teaching-womens-history-month>
- 10 Ways Youth Can Engage in Activism <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/10-ways-youth-can-engage-activism>
- 13 Picture Books to Read for Women's History Month <https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/13-picture-books-read-womens-history-month>
- Civil Rights Movement <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/civil-rights-movement>
- Children's Books About Gender and Sexism <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1577>
- Children's Books about Social Justice <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resources-for-educators-parents-families/childrens-literature?f%5B0%5D=topic%3A1583>
- Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk>
- The Purpose and Power of Protest <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/purpose-and-power-protest>
- Women's History Month Resources <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/womens-history-month-resources>