

AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO



A COMMUNITY STORY ABOUT REDLINING
from educators and bestselling authors
BRITT HAWTHORNE and **TIFFANY JEWELL!**

62ND ANNUAL MAIN ST BLOCK PARTY

“
INTRODUCE(S)
THE CONCEPT OF
REDLINING IN THIS
DIGESTIBLE FIRST-
PERSON STORY OF
COMMUNITY CARE.
”

—Publishers Weekly

“
PROVIDES
ACCURATE AND
VALUABLE
HISTORICAL
CONTEXT.
”

—Kirkus Reviews

★
“
THIS WILL BE
ESPECIALLY
USEFUL FOR
THOSE WANTING
TO LAUNCH
DISCUSSIONS
ABOUT WHAT IT
MEANS TO BE IN
COMMUNITY.
”

—The Bulletin of the
Center for Children's
Books, starred review

ABOUT THE BOOK

Olivia can't wait to invite her friends to the 62nd annual Main Street Block Party. But when she does, Alison says that Main Street isn't safe. Olivia's eyes fill with tears, and she begins to wish that she didn't live on Main Street at all.

Then, Olivia learns what happened when her neighbor Ms. Effie was about her age: Ms. Effie's family was also told that Main Street wasn't good enough. The bank wouldn't give them a loan to buy their house based on where it fell on a color-coded map: Mostly Black people lived near Main Street, so the neighborhood was colored red on the map. To fight back against this practice called redlining, Ms. Effie's family became friends with their neighbors and got organized.

With vibrant illustrations by David Wilkerson and engaging text by Britt Hawthorne and Tiffany Jewell, *Main Street* celebrates what might happen when neighbors come together for a common goal and everybody pitches in.

Features back matter with an author's note about the full history of redlining and ideas for further engagement with your community!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATOR

Britt Hawthorne:

Britt Hawthorne is an award-winning author and teacher. She grew up in Rockford, Illinois, where she gobbled up thin-crust pizza and Swedish pancakes. She now lives with her family in Houston, Texas, delighting in coffee, sweet treats, and naps. Learn more about her on Instagram @britthawthorne, or you can visit her at britthawthorne.com.



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Tiffany Jewell:

Tiffany Jewell is a mama, an educator, and the bestselling author of *This Book Is Anti-racist*, *The Antiracist Kid*, and *Everything I Learned About Racism I Learned In School*. She grew up in Syracuse, New York, and currently lives in Western Massachusetts with her family, which includes a little dog with a big bark and a turtle she's had since she was nine! Tiffany spends her days baking bread, searching for the most delicious chai lattes, and dreaming of a world that is truly fair and just. Find out more at tiffanymjewell.com.

David Wilkerson:

David Wilkerson is an American illustrator who was born in Denver, Colorado, and is currently based in Maryland. David developed a love for illustration during his time at the Savannah College of Art and Design. He believes that creation itself is what we live in, and he's spent the last twenty-plus years creating the most authentic version of himself as possible. Find out more at theartofdlw.com/.

● PREREADING

How This Book Came to Be, Why We Wrote It, and What It Is About:

Tiffany was reading the last book in the Tristan Strong series, *Tristan Strong Keeps Punching*, by Kwame Mbalia, with her children. Some of the villain's henchmen are called "the redliners." Her youngest asked, "What's a redliner?" which led to a conversation about what redlining is, the history of home ownership in cities, and the labeling of some neighborhoods as "dangerous" and others as "the best." Tiffany wanted to share more about redlining with her children but couldn't find any kid-friendly resources. She reached out to her friend Britt Hawthorne, who always has excellent book recommendations and wrote *Raising Antiracist Children*. Britt searched for some books to share but realized that there were no children's books about redlining. She said to Tiffany, "We can write it!" And so, the friends did!

● THINGS TO KNOW FOR THE ADULTS

Things to Know About Redlining

Redlining was a system from the 1930s where the government marked some neighborhoods in red and called them "unsafe" for banks.

Families in these redlined areas were denied loans, even if they worked hard and had good credit.

These unfair rules affected schools, parks, and businesses, and their impact can still be seen in many communities today.

Redlining is now illegal, but learning about it helps us understand why some neighborhoods have more resources than others.

Educational Resources about Redlining:

- [Zinn Education Project](#)
- [Social Justice Books](#)
- [rethinking schools](#)
- [Segregated by Design](#)
- [Mapping Inequality Redlining Map](#)
- [KQED resources for understanding redlining maps](#)
- [NewAmericanHistory.org Redlining Map](#)

Things to Know About the Book

The book introduces the idea of fairness and community, helping students understand why some places have more resources and opportunities than others.

The characters give students a way to connect emotionally, making a big topic like redlining easier to understand.

The story shows how people's lives are shaped by where they live, which is an important part of learning about redlining.



Things to Know About Teaching Tough Topics to Kids

Start with what students already know (fairness, rules, and how communities work) before explaining bigger ideas, like redlining.

Use simple, clear language so students can learn without feeling overwhelmed.

Let students ask questions, and remind them that curiosity is welcome and important.

Keep [anti-bias goals](#) in mind by helping students notice unfairness, and think about how to make things better.

Share honest facts but also offer hope, showing that people and communities are working to create fairer systems today.



● PREREADING ACTIVITIES

Explore your school's neighborhood—this doesn't need to happen all in one day and, in fact, would be nice to do throughout the school year so learners may note how things change over time. Help learners place themselves in the story of the school, the community, and the neighborhood.

GO ON A WALK.

- Take a walk around the block—notice if there are other businesses nearby or if the school is in a residential area.
- Do many students walk to school?
- Walk around the school's property and then walk around the neighborhood. Can you visit other nearby neighborhoods? For example:
 - Before you take a walk, see if there are any folks in your community who can lead neighborhood tours to share some history with learners.

GO ON A SKETCH WALK.

- Pause and sketch the neighborhood from different angles.
- Invite the art teacher or an artist in your community to sketch with you.

GO ON A PHOTO WALK WITH A LITTLE FUNSAVER CAMERA, A DIGITAL CAMERA, AN OLD IPHONE, OR WHATEVER YOU CAN FIND TO USE.

- Give learners a prompt (e.g. photograph something new; photograph a doorway; etc.).

GO ON A SOUND HUNT.

- Ask learners to quiet when they get to specific spots on the walk. (They may hear a dog barking or vehicles drive by, or they might hear each other and nothing else!)

MAP OUT THE COMMUNITY.

- This goes nicely with the other walking activities. Children will have an easier time mapping the neighborhood if they've walked it before.

INVITE THE COMMUNITY IN.

- Bring in local municipal workers (city councilors, planners), store owners, historians, librarians, etc. to talk to the learners about how the city was mapped out, how communities support each other, etc.

ARCHIVE THE COMMUNITY.

- Have students bring in an archive from their home, neighborhood, city, etc. Create a gallery with these archives and invite other classrooms to do the same!

Ask Learners:

- What are words you use to describe the neighborhood you live in (home, southside, valley, close, safe, friendly, etc.)?
- Do you ever get a chance to visit a different neighborhood (to visit a family member, etc.)?
- What are words you use when describing some of the other neighborhoods you've visited? What are words we can use to describe the neighborhood our school is in?
- What do you want people to know about your neighborhood (the neighborhood you live in and the neighborhood our school is in)?
- What is history? This book shares a part of our history that is not often told. Spend a little time with learners exploring history and learn what they know about what history is, why we learn about it, and who tells and writes the stories of history.

● PREREADING ACTIVITIES

“Our Neighborhood Then & Now”

Time: About 15–20 minutes

What You Need: Photos or screenshots of your neighborhood from different years (today, ten years ago, twenty years ago), or Google Street View if you can use it; paper; pencil; sticky notes if you have them. *Tip: Your local library’s website and newspaper will have plenty of old photos.*

What to Do

1. Look at the Photos

Study the pictures of your neighborhood from different time periods.
Pay attention to what looks different and what looks the same.

2. Write Your Observations

On your paper, write the chart below. If you are using sticky notes, please place the different headings on paper or the board and have students write their observations on the sticky notes and place them under the proper heading.

| Three Things I Notice | Two Things That Surprise Me/Stand Out | One Thing I Wonder |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. | |
| 3. | | |

3. Sort Your Ideas

Make two lists on your paper (or, create a Venn Diagram. Label one circle “Then” and the other “Now.” The middle of the diagram where the circles are joined may be labeled “Stayed the Same.”):

What Changed

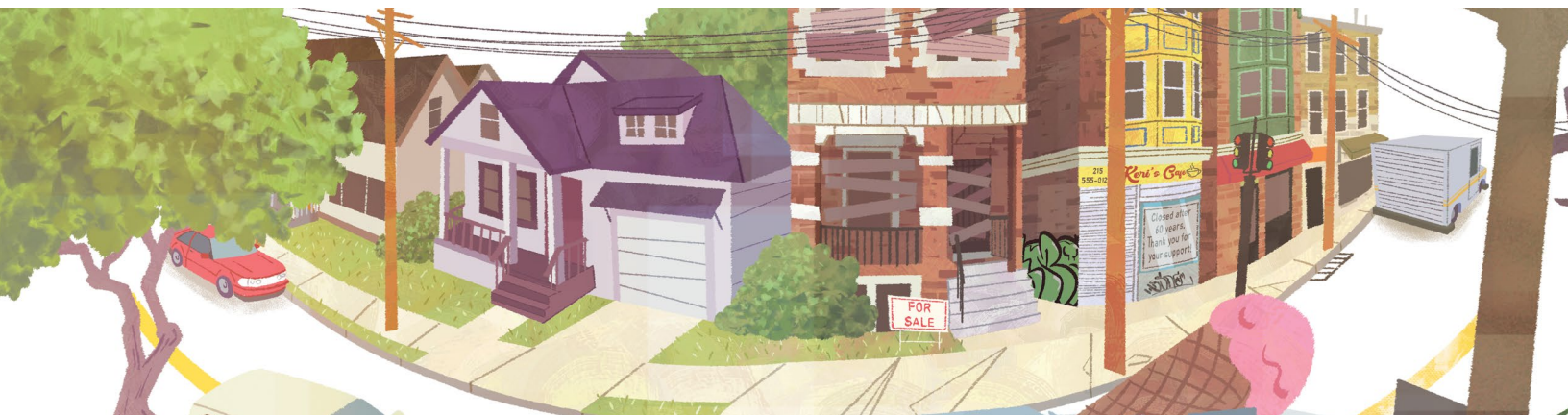
What Stayed the Same

Place your observations in the correct list.

4. Final Reflection

Write two to three sentences answering this question:

“What do these changes tell you about how neighborhoods grow and change over time?”





● PREREADING ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

**Key Terms and Vocabulary/
Words to Know:**

COMMUNITY

Resources
Government
Immigrants
Equality
Collective Action/Activism
B&L (Building and Loans)
Laws and Rules

REDLINING SPECIFIC

Fair Housing
Discrimination
Grade (on a map)
Key (on a map)
Segregation
Desegregation

ECONOMIC TERMS

Loan
Redlining
Map
Bank
Manager
Wealth



Throughout the book, we use terms for neighborhoods that were found on redlining maps. Words like *desirable*, *safe*, *hazardous*, *declining*, *best*, and others. Some of these words may be new to young readers and they may want and need some help in understanding what the words mean.

What is redlining? (Include a simple little timeline that matches up with what Ms. Effie shares.)

Address basic human needs (shelter, safety, community, etc.) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Remind learners that everyone has a right to shelter and safety.



● READING ENGAGEMENT

Anti-bias learning: Review goals for learners and use them to guide the discussions and activities as you read and think critically!



ABE goals for kids:

GOAL 1:

We want the young folks in our lives to love themselves and to take pride in who they are and where they come from.

We want the young readers of this book to love themselves, to take pride in where they're from and where they live, to have positive feelings and expressions for their neighborhoods.

GOAL 2:

Once they know who they are and are confident in their multifaceted identities, they gain a deeper understanding that the world is diverse and expansive. They'll be able to celebrate and honor differences and develop connections in their communities.

We want the young readers of this book to understand that people live in different neighborhoods, come from different places, and to celebrate the differences and similarities in their communities.

GOAL 3:

Students are able to recognize unfairness and start to identify prejudice, discrimination, and injustice. They know that injustice hurts because they are developing the skills and language to understand their own identities and those of others who are similar and different from them.

We want the young readers of this book to recognize that all neighborhoods/towns/cities/etc. aren't given the same resources, stories, and money as others. We want them to recognize that it's not fair that neighborhoods aren't treated fairly and that the stereotypes they may see on the news or hear aren't always accurate and true.

GOAL 4:

Students and the young folks in your life will be empowered to advocate for justice and embrace their role as activists!

We want the young readers of this book to hold dreams for their communities and begin to make a plan to celebrate where they are! We also want them to be able to explore the history of their communities (like Olivia and Ms. Effie do).



● READING ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

Three-Finger Retell to Practice Story Sequencing:

Beginning: First, Olivia

Middle: Then, Olivia

End: Last, Olivia

For Example:

First, Olivia invites her friends to Main Street, but they said no.

Then, Olivia tells Ms. Effie about why she's sad.

Last, Olivia has fun at the block party because Main Street is awesome.

*It's okay if learners tell more of the details they relate to than the overall main idea of the story. It's important they start to gain a sense of time and practice learning and retelling with chronological order.

Now, let's look at the craft of the story!

Setting (Explore the Setting):

- Identify where the beginning of the book takes place.
- Explain what you notice about Alison's house.
- Describe what you notice in the illustrations as Olivia leaves Alison's neighborhood and drives to her own. ("As the houses and buildings around us change, I know we're getting closer to home, to Main Street.") What differences do you notice?
- A lot of the book takes place on the porch of Ms. Effie's home. Why do you think the authors wanted this conversation to happen there, on the porch?
- During the flashback to when Ms. Effie's parents are in the bank manager's office, he says (about Main Street), "It just isn't a good neighborhood." Looking at the illustration of Main Street at the time, do you think his statement is accurate? Why do you think this?
- Compare and contrast the illustrations of the different neighborhoods to help readers to see that "not all places are treated equally."
- What do we learn about Main Street from the illustrations (from our first view of Main Street to the final illustration of the 62nd Annual Main St. Block Party)?
- As we go through the book, what do we ... See? Hear? Smell? Taste? Feel?

What do you ...

| | |
|--------|--|
| See? | |
| Hear? | |
| Smell? | |
| Taste? | |
| Feel? | |

● READING ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

Characterization (Thoughts, Feelings, Statements, Actions):

What do we learn about Olivia in the beginning of the story?

| | at Alison's house? | on the way home in the car? | when she arrives at Main Street? |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| How does Olivia feel ... | | | |
| What does Olivia think ... | | | |
| What does Olivia do ... | | | |

How does Olivia feel?

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| What brings Olivia sadness? | What brings her comfort? | What brings Olivia joy? |
| | | |

What we can infer about Olivia's thinking:

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| What does Olivia think about Main Street at the beginning of the book? | What does she think about her neighborhood in the middle of the book? | What does Olivia think about Main Street at the end of the book? |
| | | |

What does Olivia do throughout the book?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| What does Olivia do at the beginning of the book? | What does Olivia do during the middle of the book when she is with Ms. Effie? | What does Olivia do at the end of the book? |
| | | |



● READING ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

Characterization (Thoughts, Feelings, Statements, Actions):

Let's get to know Olivia!

What does Olivia look like?

How does she wear her hair?
What color is her skin? What
color eyes does she have?
What does Olivia wear?

What does she say?
How do you know? Share
your evidence!

When does she say this?
Who does she say this to?

What does she think?
How do you know? Share
your evidence!

How does she feel?
How do you know? Share
your evidence!

Why does she feel this way?

What does she do?
How do you know? Share
your evidence!

When does she do this?
Why does she do this?
What happened before?
What happens next?

What more would you like to
know about Olivia?

● READING ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

Reflection Charts:

Consider the characters in the text: for example, their personality, physical traits, language, food, and interests. What do you notice about the characters? What about you? Pause and reflect on similarities.

| Characters | Me | Similarities |
|------------|----|--------------|
| | | |

Consider the setting in the text: for example, the neighborhood, community, home, climate, and era. What do you see in the book? What do you see in your own world? Pause and reflect on similarities.

| Characters | Me | Similarities |
|------------|----|--------------|
| | | |

To dive deeper check out TeachingBooks' for School and their
Diverse Books Toolkit



● POSTREADING:

Other Books to Share/Read (In No Particular Order):

- *My Two Border Towns* by David Bowles, illustrated by Erika Meza
- *A New Kind of Wild* by Zara González Hoang
- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson
- *Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed A Neighborhood* by Tony Hillery, illustrated by Jessie Hartland
- *Watercress* by Andrea Wang, illustrated by Jason Chin
- *My Papi Has a Motorcycle* by Isabel Quintero, illustrated by Zeke Peña

Prompts and Critical Thinking:

Even though the practice of redlining is no longer legal, it's impact is still felt today. Can you think of some ways that redlining impacts us today?

Some examples: Lack of sidewalks, stop signs, street lights, and safe and well-marked crosswalks; lack of full-service grocery stores; increase in environmental pollution (including noise pollution); lack of neighborhood amenities that can be easily found in more well-resourced areas (green spaces, community pools, well-funded schools, etc.); what else?

How to read the Mapping Inequality Redlining Map:

What do you notice about the neighborhoods that are labeled as “hazardous” and “declining,” and the neighborhoods that are labeled as “desirable” and “safe”? Where are they located? Which neighborhoods are nearby yours? What were their labels?

- **Redlining Map Activity:** Look at this [map](#) of Philadelphia that inspired the map in the book. Ask students what they notice.

Let's do some dreaming together!

What could make all neighborhoods safer and healthier for everyone? What might need to be built, created, and shared? What might need to be changed?

Why are some neighborhoods well resourced and why do others have no well-resourced options? What could it look like if every neighborhood was well resourced and had everything they needed to be more fair and just? What would make all communities more fair and just?

We all deserve to live in safe and healthy communities. Here are five ways to care for your neighborhood:

1. Notice what's in your neighborhood. Is there a safe crosswalk? Is there a library close by? Does the basketball hoop on the playground have a net? What other things can you notice?
2. Notice who is in your neighborhood. Who are the people you see every day? Who helps you feel strong and safe? How do you and your family help others in your community?
3. Get to know the people in your neighborhood! Use community services like your public library, multi-service center, playground (park), or pool to get to know your neighbors.
4. Create, use, and contribute to community fridges, community gardens, little free pantries, and little free libraries. Share and give to food banks. Help put together and deliver meals to folks in your neighborhood who cannot easily access food.
5. Notice the art in your neighborhood. Who are the artists? What is the story behind the art? Can you also make art to highlight your community's beauty? Have fun with your community!

