

THE
**BLACKEST
BOOK CLUB**

Reading List

[SAMPLE]



recon.today/blackest-book-club

This is a collection of stories, poems, and essays from classic and contemporary leaders of Black thought and literature. We share this list so that their genius will continue to create understanding and connection among us. We share with the hope that these titles provide mirrors into the political, social, and personal realities of the intersection of Black lives with the notions of power, gender, race, faith, and love.

Reconstruction, Pod Save the People and **Campaign Zero** came together to answer these questions and we think they are a great way for you to talk with your kids, families, and friends.

- **Which book do you wish you had read as a child?**
- **Which book do you think every Black person should read?**
- **What's the book you pick up and read when you need to restore your passion, strength or belief?**
- **Which book has most shaped your identity as a Black person?**



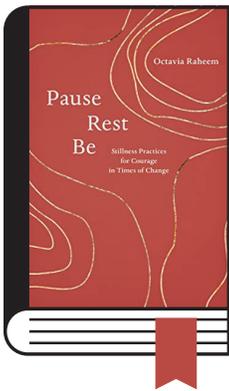
Reconstruction is a Black owned and Black operated curriculum company that provides live, K-12 supplemental and enrichment courses through an online platform that situates Black people, Black culture and Black heritage and contributions to America and the world in an authentic, identity-affirming manner. These interactive courses are designed to bring joy to students with a blend of academic intensives and cultural exploration curriculum. Students of all backgrounds benefit from a more complete understanding of our shared history and society.



De'Ara Balenger

Co-founder, Maestra
Social Impact Agency

Which book do you wish you had read as a child or teen?



Pause, Rest, Be: Stillness Practices for Courage in Times of Change

OCTAVIA F. RAHEEM

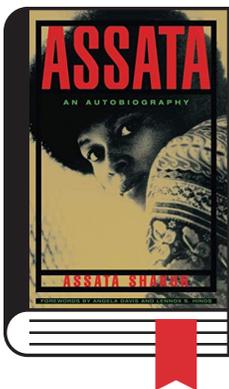
Yoga teacher and activist Octavia Raheem offers us the motivation and guidance we need to restore ourselves in the midst of all sorts of change. Change in our lives—whether it be welcome, joyful, challenging, or more subtle—presents us with the opportunity to pause and gather our energy to work with whatever lies ahead.

“

I read tons as a teen but never anything that taught me how to be still, present or to find inner peace (until this book).

”

Which book pushed your thinking the most?



Assata An Autobiography

ASSATA SHAKUR

With wit and candor, Assata Shakur recounts the experiences that led her to a life of activism and portrays the strengths, weaknesses, and eventual demise of Black and white revolutionary groups at the hand of government officials. The result is a signal contribution to the literature about growing up Black in America that has already taken its place alongside *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and the works of Maya Angelou.

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I read this book in college when I had gotten into my studies on Black thought, expression and contributions to American society. This is one of the texts that, in an intellectual way, helped me understand the depths and power of Black womanhood.

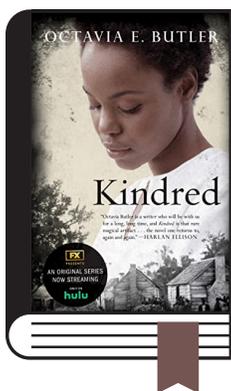
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DeRay Mckesson

Organizer, Activist
Campaign Zero

Which book do you wish you had read as a child or teen?



Kindred

OCTAVIA BUTLER

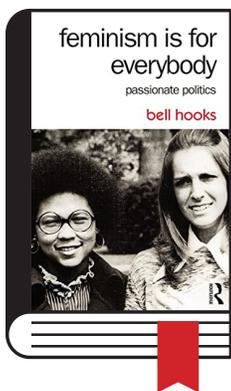
The visionary time-travel classic whose Black female hero is pulled through time to face the horrors of American slavery and explores the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now.

“

I'd never seen black people travel through time as a teenager and Octavia Butler so expertly executes this while also pushing us to think more deeply re: race, slavery, family, and love. I would've loved to read this in a classroom, too.

”

Which book pushed your thinking the most?



Feminism is for Everybody

bell hooks

What is feminism? In this short, accessible primer, bell hooks explores the nature of feminism and its positive promise to eliminate sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. With her characteristic clarity and directness, hooks encourages readers to see how feminism can touch and change their lives to see that feminism is for everybody.

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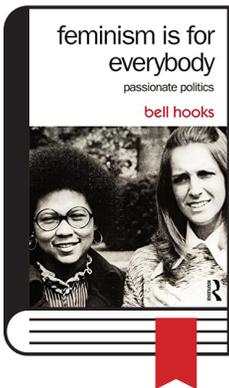
Until this book, I'd never actually understood feminism, the power that it holds to reshape the way that we love and build community, and the promise of blackness in a world where black feminism is embraced. In no uncertain terms, this book changed my life.

”



Myles E. Johnson

Which book do you wish you had read as a child or teen?



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“

*Because the earlier,
the better.*

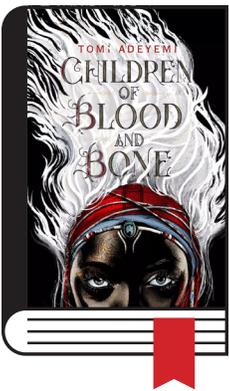
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Kaya Henderson

Educator, CEO
Reconstruction

Which book do you wish you had read as a child or teen?



Children of Blood and Bone

TOMI ADEYEMI

*They killed my mother.
They took our magic.
They tried to bury us.
Now we rise.*

Tomi Adeyemi conjures a stunning world of dark magic and danger in her West African-inspired fantasy debut. Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope.

“

It's an epic fantasy book along the lines of Harry Potter or The Hunger Games, whose protagonist is a young African girl who is trying to restore magic to an unjust world. I would have LOVED to have seen a powerful Black girl protagonist using history, ingenuity, and agency to solve her society's problems. There wasn't anything like this when I was coming up. It would have had a profound impact on how I viewed myself in the world.

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