



[Home](#) > [When We Say Black Lives Matter](#)

---

# When We Say Black Lives Matter

Books Reviewed:

[When We Say Black Lives Matter](#) [1]

Issue:

[248](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Sue McGonigle](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

The text in this picturebook is a powerful and moving poem explaining the Black Lives Matter movement as if to a small child.

The narrator explains that the Black Lives Matter movement reflects the need to speak out, recognising black people have not only been badly treated by history; many are badly treated now too. The writer emphasises that black people are strong, beautiful, brave and deserve respect.

Look closely at the illustrations as you turn the pages, and you will see a young child gradually grow from a babe in arms. His development is revisited in the final double page spread and the following graduation image with the implicit message that every child has potential for success.

The artwork is bold, textured and colourful. Although the figures are simply drawn with faces silhouetted, they are expressive and full of colour and movement. There are many details to spot in the powerful illustrations- look through the windows and find bunting made from Pan-African coloured flags. Stained glass windows are a repeated motif providing an effective framework for a silhouetted figure enslaved and in chains, or for present-day placard bearing protesters. Other images use the fragmentation of stained glass to great effect, including those referencing African ancestors. Spot the police incident tape and the all too familiar image of an outlined figure on the ground.

This book is a great introduction to the Black Lives Matter movement for children and offers many starting points for discussion. It is beautifully written, the structure, repetition and vocabulary would make this a wonderful book to read aloud or perform.

---

**Source URL (retrieved on Sep '21):** <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/248/childrens-books/reviews/when-we-say-black-lives-matter>

**Links:**

[1] <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/when-we-say-black-lives-matter>

[2] <http://ww.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/248>

[3] <http://www.w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/sue-mcgonigle>