

MCPS IVALUE Newsletter – February 2022

Inclusion. Validation. Action. Learning. Understanding. Equity.

In This Issue

Chinese Lunar New Year, Black History Month, MTREP Book Club, ADL Resources, and IVALUE Anti-Bias Foundational Training Series.

We would love to include authentic voices in our newsletter and welcome contributors! If you would like to share your experience and expertise please contact Dacia Griego, dgriego@mcpsmt.org.

What is IVALUE?

The IVALUE Anti-Bias Working Group is an initiative by Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) to move forward with creating a more inclusive workplace and school setting.

We recognize that our community needs to learn skills in order to be aware of and interrupt bias related to race, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, creed, citizenship status, ability, economic or social conditions, or marital or parental status.

Chinese New Year by Dr. Xin Bu, Associate Professor at the University of Montana

[The Origin of Chinese New Year](#)

Chinese New Year, also known as Spring Festival, has a history of 3500 years. It is the most important traditional Chinese festivals. The exact date of the new year differs depending on the lunar calendar. 2022 Chinese New Year will occur on February 1st, 2022. A popular myth about the origin of Chinese New Year is the tale of Nian. Nian was a famous monster in ancient time. It was said that Nian would come down from mountain and eat human beings every night. Villagers were so afraid of the monster that they locked their doors every day before sunset. They stayed home praying for survival. A wise old man encouraged people to stand up to fight it. They figured out that Nian was afraid of red color, noise, and fire. In order to drive Nian away, they learned to decorate their houses with red, light up fireworks, and play drums loudly. They also prepared a big meal and prayed for protection from their ancestors. Later, those activities evolved to be Chinese New Year traditions.

[Chinese New Year](#)

Today Chinese New Year is a 15-day festival. Typically, people get seven consecutive days off during the Chinese New Year. The importance of this festival is comparable to Thanksgiving in Western cultures. It is a time for family gathering and relaxation after

one year's hard work. People will take whatever cost to travel back home. Given the population of China, Chinese New Year is a time each year when the most mass transportation happens on earth! In addition to the traditions from the tale of Nian, another tradition is the thorough cleaning of house to remove any bad luck. The last event of Chinese New Year is the fifteenth day, also called the Lantern Festival. People glow lanterns in temples or carry them during a nighttime parade. A dragon dance is also very popular, involving a couple of dancers carrying a long, colorful dragon through the streets. 12 Zodiac Signs Chinese zodiac is represented by 12 animals, which are namely, Rat, Ox, Rabbit, Dragon, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. Chinese zodiac years begin/end at Chinese New Year. The 12 animals represent the repeating zodiac cycle of 12 years. 2022 is a year of the Tiger. Recommended classroom activities:

[Recommended classroom activities:](#)

Paper-cutting. This is an easy to follow video cutting a snowflake:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO4mSqVCgTU> .

Making Chinese lantern: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gA0zE_7j2k

How to Say Happy New Year in Chinese: 新年快乐 “Xīn nián kuài lè!”

[Classroom Resources for the Lunar New Year](#)

MCPS Alumni, Yolanda Mah shares this recipe by Chef Daddy Lau, [Cantonese Chow Mein](#). Yolanda remembers cooking with her Dad as a young girl, and his techniques were similar to Chef Daddy Lau. Yolanda says this recipe is easy to make, affordable, and represents “long life”. This traditional recipe is common to make for Lunar New Year. <https://madewithlau.com/recipes/cantonese-chow-mein>

Book Link: [Ruby's Chinese New Year by Vickie Lee, Illustrated by Joey Chou](#)

Book Link: [Our Lunar New Year by Yobe Qiu](#) (Learning Chinese, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese and Indian Lunar New Year traditions.)

Clip: [New Year Lion Dance](#)

[Our Favorite Lunar New Year Traditions by Marcus, Kimber, and Mason.](#)

This year, Lunar New Year lands on the 1st of February and it's the year of the Tiger! We wear red for good luck. We eat long noodles for longevity and oranges for good luck and happiness.

[Our Favorite Lunar New Year Traditions](#)

Kimber, age 7: My favorite Lunar New Year tradition is eating long noodles.

Marcus, age 7: My favorite Lunar New Year tradition is getting the ang pow (red envelope with money inside).

Mason, age 10: My favorite Lunar New Year tradition is the ang pow and wearing red for good luck.

Montana Racial Equity Book Club at MPL

From the Missoula Public Library

The Missoula Public Library and The Montana Racial Equity Project hosts a monthly Book Club! This new discussion group is facilitated by Chris Young-Greer, Education Initiative Lead for the [Montana Racial Equity Project](#). Reading selections include mainly nonfiction titles about social justice, equity, and issues affecting historically marginalized, disenfranchised, and oppressed individuals or communities. The Book Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

This discussion group is facilitated by Chris Young-Greer, Education Initiative Lead for the Montana Racial Equity Project. Reading selections include mainly nonfiction titles about social justice, equity, and issues affecting historically marginalized, disenfranchised, and oppressed individuals or communities. For more information on this lively and inspiring Book Club visit the [Montana Racial Equity Project's website](#).

Black History Month Resources

Read Aloud Videos and Books:

- *Born on the Water by Nikole Hannah-Jones and Renee Watson, Illustrated by Nikkolas Smith*
- *Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine, Illustrated by Kadir Nelson*
- *28 Days: Moments in Black History that Changed the World by Charles R. Smith Jr.*
- *March (Book One - Three) by John Lewis*

Articles:

- *When You're The Only Black Kid In Class During Black History Month*
- *Black History: More Than Slavery And Civil Rights*
- *120 Amazing Contributions by Black Inventors*

In Case You Missed It

- Poet, Amanda Gorman, recites [2022 New Day's Lyric](#).
 - Amanda Gorman was named the first National Youth Poet Laureate of the United States. In 2021 she read her original poem, "The Hill We Climb" during President Biden's Inauguration.

- The University of Montana presents at Martin Luther King Jr Day Event. Songs of Freedom: A Celebration of the Words and Voices of the Black Women's Freedom Struggle with activist, musician and spoken word artist, Michelle Armster.

Black History is Montana History

- Attend UM Black Student Union's 2022, 5th Annual Black Solidarity Summit (virtually), February 18th-20th. You can find updates regarding this event on the group's website: www.umt.edu/black-student-union
- Montana Historical Society special digital issue on Black History in Montana. "African Americans in Montana and the West."
- Document Detectives Researching Black History in Montana & Missoula

IVALUE Anti-Bias Training Series

We are so excited to announce another round of trainings has been scheduled. The foundational training series will include four sessions with topics including Individual Identity and Perspectives, Creating Culturally Safe Community, Interrupting Oppression, and Making a Plan.

MCPS IVALUE Anti-Bias Training Series: April 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th, 2022.

Training sessions will take place virtually. More information including registration will follow.

Additional Resources from the ADL

There are several terrific resources through the ADL (Anti-Defamation League) including lesson plans and learning opportunities. Here are a few that we'd like to highlight:

- **Read Aloud and Conversation with Jacqueline Woodson** <https://www.adl.org/author-read-aloud-conversation-series>. Wednesday, February 9, 2022 @ 2:00 PM MST.
 - Jacqueline Woodson has written over 30 books for children and adults. She is the recipient of several awards including most recently 2020 MacArthur Fellowship and the 2020 Hans Christian Andersen Award. Her New York Times best-selling memoir, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, won the National Book Award. Each Kindness, The Day You Begin and Harbor Me were ADL Education's Book of the Month in August 2014, November 2018 and January 2020, which includes discussion guides for teachers and families. Register [HERE](#).
- **When Stars Are Scattered** Find a study guide and lessons [HERE](#) for the book *When Stars are Scattered* (9-12 years) by Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed, illustrated by Iman Geddy.
 - This book is available at several MCPS School Libraries. Here is a sneak peek, [Chapter One read by Omar Mohamed](#).

- *Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. When Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future. It would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day. This graphic novel tells the story of a childhood spent waiting, and a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings.*

What do you value?

The IVALUE team would like to thank you for taking the time to read through this newsletter. We hope that the content was informative, educational, and thought-provoking. Please feel free to connect with an IVALUE Leadership Team Member if you have questions or thoughts you'd like to share.

We also invite you to share topics and ideas for future newsletters. Our goal is for this newsletter to share updates and also become a resource. Let us know what you would like to learn more about.

You can find more information about IVALUE on our webpage at www.mcpsmt.org/IVALUE.

IVALUE Leadership Team

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