

## TEACHABLE BOOKS

# Global Issues: Racism – Author Visit

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**GRADE LEVEL:** Secondary (11-12)

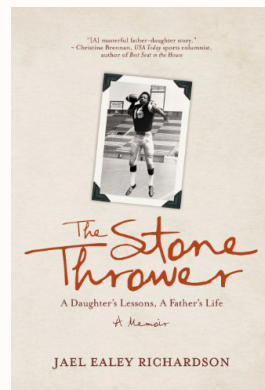
**THEME:** Global Issues

**SUB-THEMES:** Racism

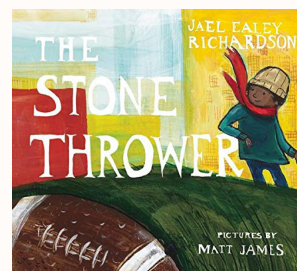
## LEARNING FOCUS

Preparing for an Author Visit: Students need to be prepared to get the most out of in-school and virtual author visits. This activity is designed to not only give students knowledge of the author but also to help them understand the author's motivation to write about growing up Black.

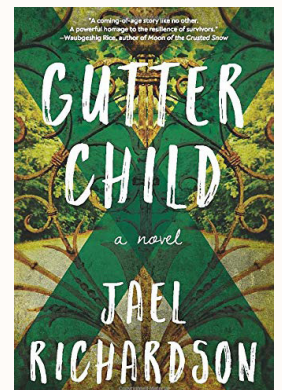
## FEATURED BOOKS



*The Stone Thrower: A Daughter's Lessons, A Father's Life* by Jael Ealey Richardson (Dundurn Press, 2012)



*The Stone Thrower* by Jael Ealey Richardson, illustrated by Matt James (Groundwood Books, 2016)



*Gutter Child* by Jael Ealey Richardson (Harper Avenue, 2021)



## LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Introduce students to the author Jael Ealey Richardson who will be visiting the class (in person or virtually). Show a portion of the documentary [Stone Thrower: The Chuck Ealey Story](#) so students can meet Jael’s father Chuck Ealey and learn about his experiences as an athlete dealing with racial prejudice and his personal philosophy.

Discuss this [quote](#) by Chuck Ealey: “My past experiences have taught me, that no matter what; if you believe in yourself and are confident, regardless of circumstances, you can achieve anything.” There are other resources on this website that may also be helpful in setting context.

Share current photos and/or short video clips of athletes and sport teams taking an anti-racist stance. Discuss the who, what, when, where and why to flush out why athletes in particular took such a public stand in the Civil Rights Movement or the Black Lives Matter movement.

Discuss anti-Black racism and brainstorm further evidence of it in the world of sports. Possible athletes to discuss include: Muhammad Ali, Colin Kaepernick, John Carlos, Tommie Smith, Warren Moon, Serena Williams, Debi Thomas, Jack Johnson, Althea Gibson, Hank Aaron, Wilma Rudolph, Bill Russell, and Jackie Robinson.

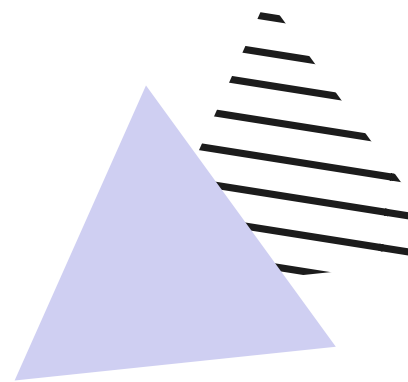
### READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Read aloud the picture book “The Stone Thrower.” Also read the back page to give a little background for students and to help them understand how Chuck Ealey, the author’s father, built up his skill of throwing to hit a moving target as a child at the railroad, and how this same determination carried over to his career as a quarterback who had to accurately throw the football to a moving target down the field (the receiver). What price did he pay? What was going on in his life that made it challenging for him to succeed (i.e. siblings, single motherhood, friends and family, change of schools)? Is determination enough and what factors impacted his success (i.e. opportunity, access, support, sacrifices and choices)? What if he couldn’t play football? Where could determination have played a role in his life?

Introduce the biography the author wrote earlier by the same title. Discuss: Why do you think it was important for Jael to research her father’s history and document it in these two books?

Give students a little background about Jael’s work today and her creation of the [Festival of Literary Diversity](#) and her new book “Gutter Child.”

Inform students that there will be time for a question period with the author. Just like a reporter conducting an interview, each student should prepare thoughtful questions. Advise them that other questions will come to mind as they listen to the author, and that while there will not be time to ask all of their questions, by practising ahead of time they can be better prepared. Have students work in small



groups using a paper or [digital question matrix](#) to record their questions about Jael Ealey Richardson’s work and about anti-Black racism.

## MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

Invite students to think about their favourite Black athletes, icons and role models today. Have students work in small groups to discuss their achievements and any barriers they had to success. Students will choose a format to create a visual of their ideas and questions: poster, web of our ideas, questions we have, concrete poetry, etc.

Post visuals around the room/library so the author can see that students have done some deep thinking about her work.

## REFLECT AND CONNECT

After the author visit have students return to the question matrix they created and consider what they now understand and the questions they still would like to find answers to. Debrief as a class and develop a list of big ideas and big questions.

## ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS AND BOOK LISTS TO SUPPORT THIS SUB-THEME

- [Canadian Books to Help Tackle Racism](#) (Canadian Children’s Book Centre)
- [Awesome Anti-Racist Kids’ Books](#) (49th Shelf)
- [Raising and Teaching Anti-Racist Kids](#) (OISE Library News)
- [A Different Booklist](#)

## ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

This lesson would serve well as an introduction to an inquiry of Black athletes, icons and role models—their struggles and achievements while overcoming anti-Black racism.

## MORE RESOURCES

- Jael Richardson’s [website](#)
- Chuck Ealey’s [website](#)
- [Festival of Literary Diversity \(FOLD\)](#) - Celebrating diverse authors and storytellers
- [How Do We Nurture Student Questioning?](#) (Canadian School Libraries Journal) - This article outlines the role of questioning in learning and shares strategies for learning to question