

Title: *The Hate U Give*
Author: Angie Thomas
Category: Race and Ethnicity

Response Submitted By: Owen M., 9th Grade

Date Submitted: December 5, 2002

1. *What is the main plot of this book?*

This book is about Starr Carter and how she had to ignore the fact that her best friend had been shot in front of her and continue her life without any form of justice for him. Starr was going to a spring break party and decided to leave after some kids started shooting guns in the air. She and her friend, Khalil, drove home but they were pulled over by the police. The cop asked Khalil to exit his car, Khalil complies and tries to grab his hairbrush, a nervous habit. Somehow the cop mistakes the brush for a gun and feels threatened by a fifteen-year-old. So, he shoots him twice while he was standing, and once into his already dead body. The cop then threatens Starr as she tries to help Khalil. Over the next few weeks, you see Starr become numb to the fact that she had seen one of her closest friends brutally killed. Starr and her family try to persecute the cop, but nothing comes of it. Throughout the rest of the book you get to see Starr turn from a scared teenager to someone determined to make a change in the world starting with getting rid of the terrible white privilege her country had seen.

2. *Which character did you most identify with and why?*

I felt that I identified most with the character named Chris. He is Starr's boyfriend from her private school. He starts out as this character you feel inclined to hate, but after a few chapters and seeing how understanding and completely fine with Starr's personal life he is you get the feeling that he would be a super cool person to hang out with.

3. *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the main message of this book is Racial Inequality. I have never personally experienced this, I have read about it before, but this still jarred me, that something as blatant as what was going on in the book existed and everyone was fine with it.

4. *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

This book was in no way "too preachy". The theme was subtle and fell throughout the book in a way that kept reminding you it was there but without a bunch of glowing neon lights that some books have.

5. *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

There were quite a few sides within this book, there was Starr's perspective, the actions of defendants of the cops and some racist bystanders who made Starr and her sibling lives miserable.

6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about the topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

My beliefs were not changed in any way, if anything they were stabilized. The ideas that were floated through this book were very much things I can believe, and I understand. Watching how someone reacted to their best friend getting shot and then how he turned into a slogan or a hashtag was kind of heartbreaking, especially since it's written in the first person because you feel like you are the one talking.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I know some people would hate my saying this, but we need the cop's side of the story, and we need it to be more in depth than what it is now. We got a glimpse inside his head, but it was very much propagandized by his own side to make him seem like a good person.

8. Did this book encourage you to pursue any topic further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?

This book made me want to research more, specifically about Tupac and what he sang about.

9. What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?

A teen would do fine with this. It is a well written book, easy to comprehend, but it does touch upon some matters that have had a lot of light shed on them in the past few months.

10. What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?

I don't know if a book can live up to this one's reputation, but if I had to recommend one it would be the same one that I mentioned last time, I still can't remember the name but it is at Emma Clark Library and it is about a teen boy who killed his father because he didn't want to be a part of a neo-Nazi group anymore. ***

***Emily Ostrander, the Teen Librarian, believes the book Owen is referring to is called *Devils Within*, by S. F. Henson.

Response Submitted By: Anna L., 9th Grade 9

Date Submitted: March 26, 2022

1. What is the main plot of this book?

I think that the main plot of this book is to bring attention to police brutality in predominantly Black neighborhoods and how it affects innocent people. I think it also touches on ignorance of privileged white people living in areas such as where Williamson High School is in this book. The character Hailey was Starr Carter's, the main character's, best friend in the white school. Hailey showed prejudice when Khalil, Starr's best friend since elementary school in Garden Heights, was killed by an officer who mistook his hairbrush for a weapon.

2. Which character do you relate to the most and why?

I don't think I could relate to a character in this book. I certainly can not imagine what it is like to be faced with racial discrimination and hate when I never have. I have no idea how it is to face racism. I certainly can not relate to having my best friend be shot when I have never had to experience that. I also do not relate to Hailey because I try my best to educate myself and I do not believe certain things that Hailey and many other of Starr's Williamson classmates do.

3. What do you think the main message of the book is?

I think that the main message of the book is empowerment and giving love rather than hate to Black people. As simple and seemingly obvious as it sounds it is not done nearly enough. I think this is a great book on the issues faced by over-policed areas which are more often than not predominantly Black neighborhoods.

4. Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?

Honestly the point of this book was for Starr to preach what she believed in for Khalil, so the book would be expected to be a bit "preachy". I think the author does a great job of keeping the story going intense and moving with the message still strong.

5. If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?

I agreed with Starr. In the defense of Khalil, Starr vs the officer who shot him, I agree with Starr's points and beliefs.

6. In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?

My thoughts on the famous saying “The Hate U Give Little Infants F Everybody” from Tupac were reaffirmed through reading this book. The hate young black kids and teens face messes everything and everyone up. The character Khalil had said this in the book.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I do not think there is anything I would change or add to this book, Angie Thomas did an amazing job with it.

8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

Definitely. I am always more encouraged to read more and more and educate myself more on racial divides and inequality. I am also encouraged to take more action in my community and online on these issues. What is most important that this book helped teach me is to LISTEN to black voices and empower voices of those who are ignored.

9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

Really anyone, it is a book that covers serious topics but people of any age should be exposed to these things, not just children that it directly affects like how Starr was told when she was just 9 years old. If someone is interested in different perspectives and racial justice I would recommend this 100%.

10. *What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

- *The Dragons, The Giant, The Women* by Wayetu Moore, a book about her life fleeing Liberia from the first Liberian Civil War and her experience growing up Black in the Southern United States.

- *Dig.* by A.S. King, a book exploring the advantages and evil of white privilege.

- *When they call you a terrorist- a black lives matter memoir* by Patrisse Khan-Cullors & Asha Bandele. It is a memoir reflecting the unjust American criminal justice system and how it affects everyone. The author Patrisse Khan-Cullors is the co-founder of Black Lives Matter.

- *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead, an eye opening book about slavery and the escape of an enslaved girl. The Underground Railroad is an actual system of tracks and tunnels in this novel. It recreates the horrors faced by human beings in the antebellum era.

Respondent’s Name and Grade: Zahra V., 8th Grade

Date Responded To: July 7, 2022

Questions:

1. *What is the main plot of this book?*

The plot of this book follows sixteen-year-old Starr Carter who moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy, predominantly white suburban prep school she attends. When Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood friend Khalil by a police officer, her world is shattered. She is forced to see her unarmed friend be labeled as a thug, a drug dealer, and a gangbanger simply because he is Black. This harsh reality is only known by Starr, who was present at the murder. While coming out with the truth would avenge her friend, Starr is also putting her community, her family, and herself at risk.

2. *Which character did you most identify with and why?*

Although my experiences are different from Starr, I identified most with her because I understand the feeling of not always fitting in as a person of color. Reading about her experiences and the harm police forces have done to Black families across America was gut wrenching and made me delve deeper into the injustices within our country.

3. *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the overarching message of this book is that Black Lives Matter. Oftentimes, the struggles of Black communities in America are pushed under the rug and police officers are allowed to continue their racist acts of violence without any punishment. The murder of Khalil is something we have all heard on the news dozens of times. Reading it now in book form opened my eyes even more to how such events affect families and communities of color, and why it is so important to shed light on such stories.

4. *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too “preachy”?*
No, I think this book did an incredible job at juggling important topics such as racism, class struggles, poverty, and police brutality. Reading the story only inspired me to do more research and did not come off as “preachy” at all.
5. *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*
The two perspectives seen in this book were those of the Black community who suffered the loss of Khalil, an innocent Black man who was murdered solely for the color of his skin, and the racist white people who labeled him as a thug to justify the police officer’s actions. I agree with Starr’s perspective on the event as what occurred was a horrific act of violence against an innocent man who did not deserve to die.
6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*
This book reaffirmed my belief that Black Lives Matter and led me to conduct further research on how police brutality affects people of color at a staggering rate in the United States. Reading about how shocked Starr was at the horrific event made me realize that this story is a true one for so many people in America and that change must occur to prevent such attacks from happening.
7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*
I don’t think any perspective is missing from the book. In fact, I like how this book describes a variety of perspectives. For example, in Chapter 10, Starr has a panic attack at a police roadblock and imagines the police shooting her. I thought it was very impactful to describe how the event affected Starr mentally and how this event will affect her in the future.
8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*
Yes, this book encouraged me to pursue the topic of police brutality in America further because of how much it has run rampant in America over the past few years. After the horrific murder of George Floyd, reading this book gave me better insight on the event and how it impacts families, communities, and that nation.
9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*
I would suggest this book to teenagers of all backgrounds to show how much police brutality affects people in America. I would recommend this book to people who are in 8th grade and up as it discusses mature topics that should be understood and be taken seriously.
10. *What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*
Another book that I think would make a good addition to this category is *On the Come Up*, another novel by Angie Thomas. This book follows Bri, a 16 year old girl aspiring to be a hip-hop legend. The story is relevant because it reminds us that young people can make a difference and be the catalyst for change.