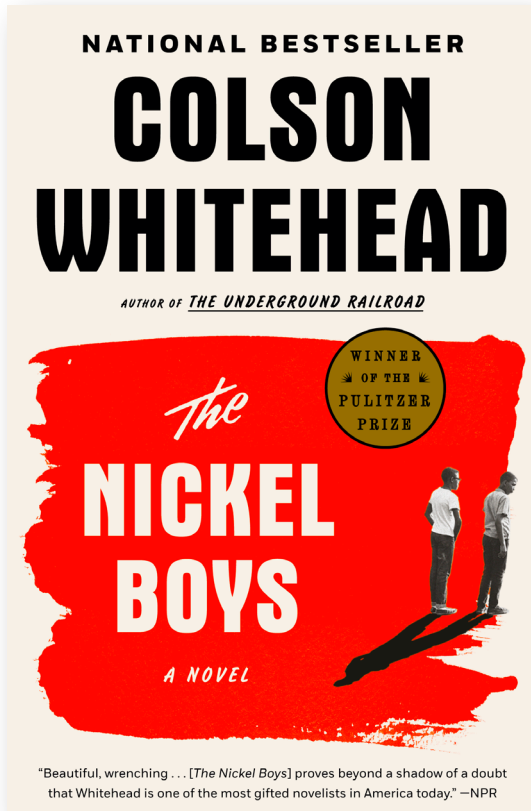




2020  
Read Together  
Palm Beach County  
One Book, One Community

# Read Together

## Events & Discussion Guide



# Read Together Palm Beach County

## "one book, one community"

**PURPOSE:** The Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County is working to involve thousands of adults throughout Palm Beach County in reading the same book at the same time. This community reading campaign will entice adults who can read, but often don't, to get involved in the habit of reading again. It will also promote community dialogue and engagement as citizens gather together to discuss key themes.

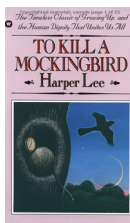
**HISTORY:** Based on the success of similar campaigns in Seattle and Chicago, the Campaign Coordinating Committee conducted Read Together Palm Beach County biannually from 2002 to 2016. Building on the excitement, momentum and success of the 2016 campaign, the Literacy Coalition and the Read Together Committee decided to coordinate the initiative annually. In each campaign, thousands of adults read and discuss the chosen book.



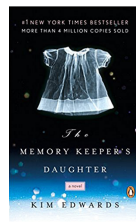
2002



2004



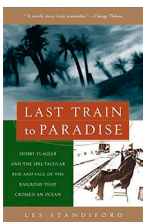
2006



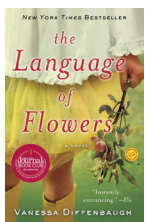
2008



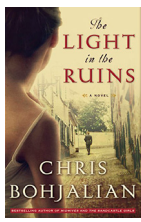
2010



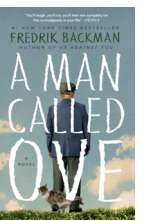
2012



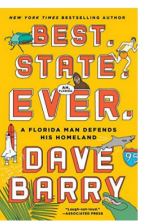
2014



2016



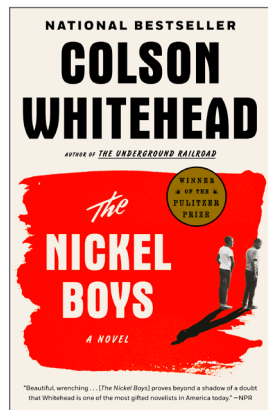
2017



2018



2019



2020



Members of the Read Together Palm Beach County Committee in 2019.

## 2020 Read Together Palm Beach County

### Book Selection Committee:

Laurie Gildan, Chair, Greenberg Traurig, P.A.

Stacy Alesi, Lynn University

Sharon Hill, Literacy Coalition Board Member

Tina Maura, Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach

Deborah Nix, Retired Educator

Carol Rose, *The Palm Beach Post/Palm Beach Daily News*

Tom Streit, Attorney (retired)

Christina Wood, Freelance Writer & Editor

Helena Zacharis, Palm Beach State College

### Campaign Committee:

Sharon Hill, Chair, Literacy Coalition Board Member

Aurora Arthay, Palm Beach County Library

Craig Clark, Boynton Beach City Library

Lisa Hathaway, Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach

Lynn Kalber, Literacy Coalition Board Member

Carol Rose, *The Palm Beach Post/Palm Beach Daily News*

Tom Streit, Attorney (retired)

Christina Wood, Freelance Writer & Editor

*Copies of the book are available at  
The Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County for a \$10 donation.*

# About the Author

## Colson Whitehead



Colson Whitehead is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Underground Railroad*, which in 2016 won the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction and the National Book Award and was named one of the Ten Best Books of the Year by *The New York Times Book Review*.

Whitehead's 2019 book, *The Nickel Boys*, was an instant *New York Times* bestseller and won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in fiction. It was also longlisted for the 2019 National Book Award and nominated for The National Book Critics Circle Award.

Whitehead was named as one of *Time Magazine's* 100 Most Influential People in the World in 2017. A PEN/Faulkner Award finalist, he is the recipient of both a MacArthur Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He has taught at universities across the country.

He is also the author of *The Intuitionist*, *John Henry Days*, *The Colossus of New York* (a book of essays about the city), *Apex Hides the Hurt*, *Sag Harbor*, *Zone One*, and *The Noble Hustle*. His writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, *Harper's*, and *Granta* among other publications.

### Other Titles by Colson Whitehead



Courtesy of Penguin Random House

# Campaign Feature

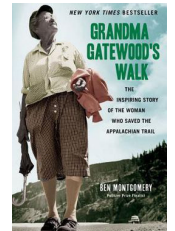
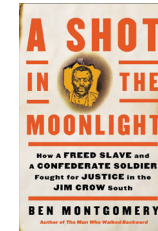
## Ben Montgomery



Ben Montgomery is a former senior writer for the *Tampa Bay Times* and author of four books, including the bestselling *GRANDMA GATEWOOD'S WALK*, and the forthcoming *A SHOT IN THE MOONLIGHT* (Jan. 2021). His work on a series called *FOR THEIR OWN GOOD*, about abuse at the Dozier School for Boys, was honored as a Pulitzer finalist in local

reporting in 2010 and won the Casey Medal and Dart Award.

Ben will participate in virtual Campaign events November 9 and the finale on November 18. See the Community Events listing in this guide for details.



Please join us...

Read Together Palm Beach County  
Virtual Finale

Wednesday, November 18, 2020, 6:00 p.m.  
featuring Ben Montgomery, author of  
*For Their Own Good*

This event is free of charge, but a donation is suggested and reservations are necessary.

Registration opens soon  
[LiteracyPBC.org](http://LiteracyPBC.org)



# Reading Group Questions

1. In the prologue, the narrator observes that after the truth about Nickel Academy comes out, “even the most innocent scene – a mess hall or the football field – came out sinister, no photographic trickery necessary.” Can you think of a time in your life when discovering the history of a place (a particular building, a statue, a historical landmark, etc.) dramatically changed your perception of it?
2. Elwood says that both he and Yolanda King “woke to the world,” or discovered racism, at six years old. How old were you when you became aware of racism and inequality? How do you think this experience is different for different people?
3. While in the infirmary, Elwood reads a pamphlet about Nickel that details the contributions the school has made to the community, including bricks from the brick-making machine “propping up buildings all over Jackson County.” What do you think of the ways that the wider community seemed to benefit from labor performed by Nickel students? Do you see any historical or modern-day parallels to this symbiotic relationship?
4. One student, Jaimie, is half-Mexican and constantly shuffled between the “white” and “colored” sections of Nickel Academy. Why do you think the author included a character with Jaimie’s ethnic identity in this story?
5. One of Elwood’s takeaways from Dr. King’s speeches is the importance of maintaining one’s dignity in the face of oppression. Is Elwood’s decision to escape (and risk the consequences of capture) rooted in the realization that he can no longer maintain his dignity in a place like Nickel?
6. At one point, the narrator writes that “laughter knocked out a few bricks from the wall of segregation, so tall and so wide.” Does humor truly lighten the burden for the boys? Or is it merely one of the very few things that can’t be taken away from them?
7. Who do you think was the true “villain” of the story? The teachers? The school itself? Something or someone else?

Courtesy of Penguin Random House

# Community Events

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2020, 11:30 A.M.–1:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Mandel Public Library** – Live on Zoom, FREE

Enjoy a book discussion with fellow book lovers from the **Friends of the Mandel Public Library** group. October’s book will be the 2020 Read Together Palm Beach County book, *The Nickel Boys*. Registration and an active email address are required. Registrants will receive a Zoom meeting link by email on the day of event. For more information or to register, visit [wpbcitylibrary.org](http://wpbcitylibrary.org) or call **561-868-7701**.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2020, 6:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**– Live on Zoom, FREE

**Presented by Lantana Public Library, Town of Lantana**

Join us as we Read Together Palm Beach County at the Lantana Public Library! We will be virtually discussing Colson Whitehead’s *The Nickel Boys*. To register, contact **561-540-5740** or e-mail: [librarystaff@lantana.org](mailto:librarystaff@lantana.org). For more information, visit [www.lantanalibrary.org](http://www.lantanalibrary.org).

**The Nickel Boys Book Club @ The Lantana Public Library – Facebook Group.** Join & participate in our online book club when it’s convenient for you!

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020, 3:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Jupiter Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year’s Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*.

Pre-register on the website’s *Digital Activities* page:

<http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020, 1:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**– Live on Zoom, FREE

**Presented by Lantana Public Library, Town of Lantana**

Join us as we Read Together Palm Beach County at the Lantana Public Library! We will be virtually discussing Colson Whitehead’s *The Nickel Boys*. To register, contact **561-540-5740** or e-mail: [librarystaff@lantana.org](mailto:librarystaff@lantana.org). For more information, visit [www.lantanalibrary.org](http://www.lantanalibrary.org).

**The Nickel Boys Book Club @ The Lantana Public Library – Facebook Group.**

Join and participate in our online book club when it’s convenient for you!

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020, 6:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Wellington Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year's Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*.

Pre-register on the website's *Digital Activities* page: <http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2020, 11:00 A.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Discussion**

**Presented by North Palm Beach Public Library**

Borrow a copy of *The Nickel Boys* and attend a lively discussion featuring this year's Read Together Palm Beach County selection! Call **561-841-3373** to preregister, or visit [www.village-npb.org](http://www.village-npb.org) for more details.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2020, 2:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Hagen Ranch Road Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year's Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*. Pre-register on the website's *Digital Activities* page: <http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2020, 6:00–7:00 P.M.**

**The Real Story behind Colson Whitehead's Pulitzer-prize-winning novel *The Nickel Boys*** – Live on Zoom, FREE

**Presented by Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach**

A modern reform school where children were brutally punished by sadistic guards? We wish it was only fiction. Author and journalist Ben Montgomery joins us to discuss the true story of the state-run Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida, upon which Colson Whitehead's Pulitzer-prize-winning novel *The Nickel Boys* was based. As a reporter for the Tampa Bay Times, Montgomery spent nearly a decade investigating child abuse and deaths at the now-shuttered reformatory. Registration and an active email address are required. Registrants will receive a Zoom meeting link by email on the day of event. For more information or to register, visit [wpbcitylibrary.org](http://wpbcitylibrary.org) or call **561-868-7701**.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020, 2:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by West Boynton Beach Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year's Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*.

Pre-register on the website's *Digital Activities* page: <http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020, 6:30 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Virtual Book Discussion**

**Presented by Boca Raton Public Library** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Boca Raton Public Library will host a virtual book club. Registration will be through the library's calendar accessible at [www.boca.library.org](http://www.boca.library.org).

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020, 1:30 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Greenacres Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year's Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*.

Pre-register on the website's *Digital Activities* page: <http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020, 6:00 PM**

**Read Together Virtual Finale!**

Join the Literacy Coalition and the Read Together committee for an interview with author Ben Montgomery at the virtual finale. Registration is required at [LiteracyPBC.org](http://LiteracyPBC.org) and a donation is suggested.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020, 2:00 P.M.**

**Read Together PBC Book Virtual Discussion**

**Presented by Lantana Road Branch staff** – Live on Zoom, FREE

The Palm Beach County Library System is holding a virtual book discussions on this year's Read Together book, *The Nickel Boys*.

Pre-register on the website's *Digital Activities* page: <http://events.pbclibrary.org/events/digital-activities>.

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State College**

#### FOUNDING PRESIDENT

Gale G. Howden

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kristin Calder

\* Past President

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### VOLUNTEER

You can volunteer to tutor an adult or child in need of literacy skills. There are also opportunities to help an adult learn English and/or prepare to take the GED exam. No experience is required as we will provide training.



### BOOK DRIVES



Organizations and individuals can conduct book drives for the Literacy Coalition. The collected books are shared with the children's literacy programs operated by the Literacy Coalition such as *Budding Readers* or *Reach Out and Read* or distributed to partner agencies serving economically disadvantaged children. We have shared 2,025 of these donated books in the last year to groups in need including teachers, schools and organizations. We have many more requests for gently used children's books.

### MAKE A DONATION

Your tax-deductible donation will help provide literacy services to adults, children and families who are working to achieve a better life by improving their literacy skills.



#### MAKE A BIGGER IMPACT

Donate long-term appreciated securities, including stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, directly to the Literacy Coalition. Compared with donating cash, or selling your appreciated securities and



contributing the after-tax proceeds, you may be able to automatically increase your gift to the Literacy Coalition and your tax deduction.

#### IMPACT FUTURE GENERATIONS

Consider an endowment gift to the Literacy Coalition that will allow us to sustain the impact in our community for future generations. Include the Literacy Coalition in your retirement plans, will, living trust or related planned giving methods allowing you to extend your legacy of literacy to future generations. Planned gifts – large and small – are a lasting way to help us continue the success we know today in helping families be successful in school and in life.

### READ TO A CHILD

Read together everyday. Point out print everywhere. Do not limit yourself to reading books with your child. Street signs and cereal boxes count too. Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. This attention lets them know they are special and loved.



### ATTEND AN EVENT

There are various events to attend throughout the year that support our literacy programs and initiatives. Events include LOOP for Literacy, the Love of Literacy Luncheon, The Grand Bee Literary Fun & Games and the Literacy Links Golf Tournament.



### PROMOTE LITERACY

You can support the mission of the Literacy Coalition and become an advocate for literacy. Share our posts and information on your social media accounts. Follow LiteracyPBC today!

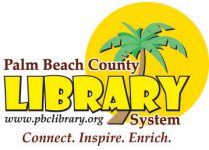


# THANK YOU TO OUR READ TOGETHER PARTNERS & SPONSORS

**GT** GreenbergTraurig

**CHRIS & TOM STREIT**

The Palm Beach Post  
**REAL NEWS STARTS HERE**



## Blume Literacy Center

on the Brenda & C.P. Medore Campus  
3651 Quantum Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33426  
**561-279-9103 | LiteracyPBC.org**

### Our Mission

The mission of the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County is to improve the quality of life in our community by promoting and achieving literacy.

### Our Vision

That every child and adult in Palm Beach County becomes a reader.



Only 1% of rated charities across the country have received 4 out of 4 stars for 11 consecutive years.



**FOLLOW LITERACYPBC TODAY!**

