Delve Deeper into All the Difference
A film by Tod Lending

This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Susan Conion of Princeton Public Library and Hanna Lee of the Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary All the Difference.

Accompany two African-American teens from the South Side of Chicago on their journey to achieve their dream of graduating from college. A co-production of American Documentary | POV; Part of American Graduate: Let’s Make It Happen, made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

ADULT NONFICTION

Cantarella, Marcia. I CAN Finish College: The Overcome Any Obstacle and Get Your Degree Guide. Naperville: Sourcebooks, 2012. A comprehensive guidebook that prepares students from all backgrounds to understand and overcome obstacles in their path towards college graduation.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. Between the World and Me. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2015. In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation’s history and current crisis.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. The Flat World and Education: How America’s Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future. New York: Teachers College Press, 2010. Argues that the education system in America needs to make drastic changes in order to build a system of high-achieving and equitable schools that protects every child’s right to learn.

Gilbert, Laura H. Our Plan: A Family-Centered Approach to Paying for College. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015. Our Plan is a family-centered approach to paying for college that starts and ends with the most important people in the college journey – the student and his or her parents. Written in a simple, coach-by-your-side style, Our Plan provides practical guidance on how to get the education you want for a price that is uniquely affordable to you.

Moore, Wes. The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates. New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2011. Rhodes scholar and combat veteran considers his path to success and the path of the other Wes Moore, another young man with the same name, from the same city, who is now serving a life sentence for the murder of a police officer beside him, vowing to help make Newark “a symbol of educational excellence for the whole nation.” But their plans soon ran into the city’s seasoned education players, fierce protectors of their billion-dollar-a-year system. It’s a prize that, for generations, has enriched seemingly everyone, except Newark’s children.


Russakoff, Dale. The Prize: Who’s in Charge of America’s Schools? Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. When Mark Zuckerberg announced his $100 million pledge to transform the downtrodden schools of Newark, New Jersey, then mayor Cory Booker and Governor Chris Christie were

Steele, Claude. Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do (Issues of Our Time). New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2011. He sheds new light on American social phenomena from racial and gender gaps in test scores to the belief in the superior athletic prowess of black men, and lays out a plan for mitigating these “stereotype threats” and reshaping American identities.


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graduation. Illuminates the reform needed in the American education system by tracing the path of trailblazing Brooklyn students.

ADULT FICTION

Ellison, Ralph. Invisible Man. New York: Vintage International, 1995. A nameless narrator describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending a Negro college from which he is expelled, moving to New York and becoming the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "the Brotherhood", and retreating amid violence and confusion to the basement lair of the Invisible Man he imagines himself to be.

Petry, Ann. The Street. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1946. The Street tells the poignant, often heartbreaking story of Lutie Johnson, a young black woman, and her spirited struggle to raise her son amid the violence, poverty, and racial dissonance of Harlem in the late 1940s.

Southgate, Martha. The Fall of Rome. New York: Scribner, 2002. Southgate offers an absorbing and enlightening novel about the tensions inherent in being "the only chip in the cookie" among the white elite. The story is told through three characters: a classics instructor and a new student, both African American, and a newly-arrived white teacher.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Jabari, Asim and Bryan Collier. Fifty Cents and a Dream: Young Booker T. Washington. New York: Little, Brown and Col, 2012. Born into slavery, young Booker T. Washington could only dream of learning to read and write. After emancipation, Booker began a five-hundred-mile journey, mostly on foot, to Hampton Institute, taking his first of many steps towards a college degree. When he arrived, he had just fifty cents in his pocket and a dream about to come true. The young slave who once waited outside of the schoolhouse would one day become a legendary educator of freedmen.


Sitomer, Alan Lawrence. Hip-Hop High School. New York: Hyperion Paperbacks, 2006. Andre Anderson's sister Theresa tells in her own hip-hop flav'a voice how she comes from behind to go up against one of the baddest monsters of high school—the SAT—and wins!