

They Bullied the White Kids

Glenda Archibald

When I was ten years old, there was one white family that lived on our block. Then another white family also moved on the block. That was the first time I had a white friend, and we became close.

At the age of 13, I went to Manual High School. There were only two white kids in the whole school. One of them was in my classroom. I

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didn't like the way that the black kids treated him. They threw paper balls at him, hit him, and teased him. I didn't know why they did that, because he was a nice kid. After school, they

would chase him through Gilham Park, calling him names like, "honky," "white boy," and "white pig."

Their bullying used to make me mad and I would tell my mother about it because I didn't understand why they acted this way. She would always tell me never to be in a category with people like that. "We are not racists," she told us. "We are supposed to love everybody."

I would stand next to the white boy after school and I fought for him. I stood up to the bullies, both the boys and the girls. I told them to leave him alone because he hadn't done anything to them. The bullies were scared of me because I had brothers and cousins who would back me up.

When I look back on this, I think they acted this way because they were ignorant about the color he was and didn't think white kids were good enough to go to that school. But as I got older I thought about that time, and I realized that they had just as much of a right to go to that school as we did. They wanted education, and we wanted education. Why couldn't we all just get along?



Glenda Archibald grew up in Kansas City, Missouri. She attends school at Literacy Kansas City and Manual Tech and is working on getting her GED. She has four children, 13 grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Defining Racism

Racism is the systematic, institutionalized mistreatment of one group of people by another based on racial heritage.

– Gloria Yamato

[For more on "institutional racism," see pp. 26-27.]

Racism: the poor treatment of or violence against people because of their race; the belief that some races of people are better than others.

– Merriam Webster Dictionary

Explain the difference(s) between the two definitions above.

See the box on the next page for more activities.