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### YOUTH PERSPECTIVE: Reflections on Racism

White Feather Woman  
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#### Bio

I come from a small town, Keremeos, British Columbia. My main hobby is playing basketball. I am 14 years and am a strong believer in my culture. I wrote this speech for a contest at my school and placed second. This speech is based on facts and personal experiences. I take this subject really seriously because I believe in a racist free world.

*Way xast kelhalt iskwist* Jasmine.

Hello my name is Jasmine.

Honestly have you ever said a racist comment to somebody? Have you ever had someone say something racist to you? Well I have and it hurts. It makes you feel badly about yourself. I believe racism is wrong. Here is what racism means to me - Mistreating people because of the colour of their skin.

Did you know that black people were used as slaves? Did you know that First Nations including my papa were sent to Church residential school at age 4 and did not return home until he was 14 years old? Just think about leaving your family to speak a language you never heard before or to live on food that was foreign to you or to be whipped every time you speak your language. STOP! Put yourself in my papa's shoes. How would you feel? Racism has hurt a lot of people including my family and yours. Racism is hurtful and wrong.

Wouldn't life be boring without some sports such as hockey? I mean, who here likes hockey? Well, First Nations invented Lacrosse then that was soon transformed into hockey. First Nations also invented pemmican (a.k.a. *jerky*). The Inuit invented the Kayak. Coloured people have made or invented a lot of other things probably more than you know. Everyone can contribute no matter the colour.

I don't know if you have ever heard of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but it states that every human being is free and equal in dignity and rights. Not a lot of people have heard of that document but it is very important but nobody seems to care.

Now that I look at our history only a very famous activist named Martin Luther King Jr. stood up for our rights. As he stated in his most known speech: "I had a dream that one day this name will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed. We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal. Free at last. Free at last!"

You wouldn't think any of this stuff to be true but it is. We should just face it - Racism happens everywhere even in school. But all of us can make a difference by standing up for classmates or anybody because racism is wrong!

I thank you!