

## *How It Went Down*

By  
Kekla Magoon.

### *Grade Levels:*

- Grades 9 and Up

### *Synopsis:*

- Dead young black man. White shooter claims self-defense. Sound familiar? Through a unique chorus of voices Tariq Johnson is brought to life in all the complexity and tragedy of a human life cut short. Witnesses, friends, family, neighbors, politicians, and religious figures tell their fragments of the event; exposing their own biases and limited points of view. Powerful emotional authenticity pulls the reader through this quick read. Just as in real life, there is no resolution, just the opportunity to bear witness to the cycle of urban violence and to discuss the questions raised.

### *Author Website:*

- <http://keklamagoon.com>

### *Curricular Connections:*

- Racism in America
- Black Lives Matter

### *Lesson Ideas:*

- [http://keklamagoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/how\\_it\\_went\\_down\\_reading\\_guide.pdf](http://keklamagoon.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/how_it_went_down_reading_guide.pdf)

### *Common Core Standards:*

- The MacMillan Reading guide gives CCSS
- CCSS: L.9-10.1, L.9-10.2; RL.9-10.1; W.9-10.1, W.9-10.4

### *Additional Materials:*

- <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-how-it-went-down/#gsc.tab=0>
- <http://www.hbook.com/2013/08/opinion/young-dreamers/>

### *Suggested Companion Titles:*

- *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore
- *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot

### *Professional Reviews:*

- *Booklist* (10/01/2014)
- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (11/01/2014)
- *Horn Book Guide* (11/01/2014)
- *Kirkus Reviews* starred (09/01/2014)

- *Library Media Connection* (01/01/2015)
- *Publishers Weekly* starred (08/25/ 2014)
- *School Library Journal*\_(08/01/2014)
- *Teacher Librarian* (10/01/2014)
- *Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)* (08/01/15)

#### Awards

- Coretta Scott King Author Honor, 2015