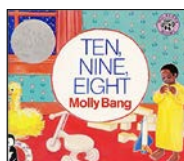


Thanks to Kathleen Moore, from the Dayton Metro Library, we have the following suggestions of books that feature African American lead characters. These books include positive role models and images of African Americans as survivors, revolutionaries, artists, scientists, creators, musicians, dancers, astronauts, politicians and pioneers. Some confront stereotypes, addressing differences in how people and families look and act; others explore and celebrate African American culture. The list is grouped by youngest recommended grade and sorted by the author's last name.

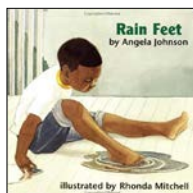
## Board Books (Birth-Age 3)



**Whose Knees Are These?** (2006) Asim, Jabari. "Knees like these/don't grow on trees." On each spread, viewers get a glimpse of the child in question. On the final spread, the book takes a vertical twist to show the whole, laughing child. Sweet and simple, and children will enjoy bending knees along with the protagonists.



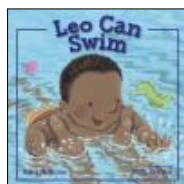
**Ten, Nine, Eight** (1996) Bang, Molly. This beguiling picture book, with a palette of eye-filling colors, appears to arise naturally from the love binding a father and his child who turn bedtime into playtime with a rhyming game. A Caldecott Honor Book.



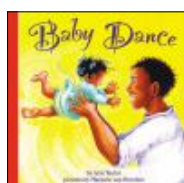
**Rain Feet** (1994) Johnson, Angela. This title is characteristic of Johnson's earlier books with their emphasis on warm, loving relationships in an African American family. Joshua splashes through puddles in a yellow slicker and boots. The pastel watercolor illustrations that fill each double-page spread are cozy and soothing, and the language is rhythmic and quietly reassuring.



**I Am So Brave!** (2014) Krensky, Stephen. An African-American preschooler stars in this fourth book in Krensky and Gillingham's board book series about children overcoming fears and showing off their knowledge and skills. Krensky showcases common fears (dogs, swimming, the dark, etc.), but bolsters each moment of uncertainty with one of affirmation. "I was scared of good-byes," he writes as Gillingham shows the boy sobbing when it's time for school. "Now I'm happy to wave," reads the opposing page.

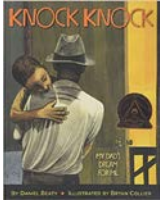


**Leo Can Swim** (2016) McQuinn, Anna. Leo (of *Lola Reads to Leo* fame) loves the water. In preparation for an upcoming swim class, the toddler and his dad read a book that gives a nod to Eric Carle's *Mister Seahorse*, then head off to the pool for baby/parent swim time. The families represented are of multiple ethnicities. Hearson's colorful acrylic illustrations are as fun and playful as the text.

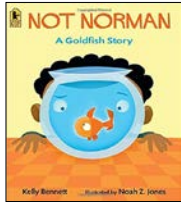


**Baby Dance** (1999) Taylor, Ann. Babies love to be twirled and lifted and held lovingly, and in this delightful board book a father dances his baby lovingly across the pages. The rhythmic poem by nineteenth century poet Anne Taylor, with pastel illustrations by Marjorie van Heerden.

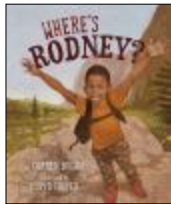
## Preschool to Grade 3



**Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream For Me** (2013) Beaty, Daniel. The story of a boy growing up after his father disappears from his life. The pain and anger of the separation unique to the loss of a boy's father is powerfully portrayed. [Age 5-6, Grade Preschool-3]



**Not Norman: A Goldfish Story** (2005) Bennett, Kelly. As a boy attempts to convince someone else to take his disappointing pet, he learns to love Norman the goldfish himself. [Age 4-8, Grade PreK-3]



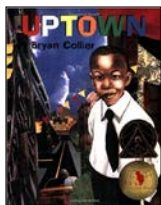
**Where's Rodney?** (2017) Bogan, Carmen. Always more interested in what's happening outside the school walls than in his classroom, Rodney has a reputation for goofing off. On field trip day, Rodney is surprised when the bus leaves the city, travels through the countryside, and climbs high onto a mountain. For the first time in his life, the boy really feels "outside" as he explores nature and many of its wild wonders. Rodney discovers he can change from fast to slow or loud to quiet, depending on the situation. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-2]



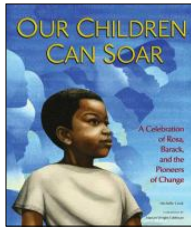
**The Legend of the Valentine: An Inspirational Story of Love and Reconciliation** (2002) Bond, Katherine Grace. Marcus, a nine-year-old African-American boy living in Alabama in the sixties, learns the true meaning of valentines as he is faced with whether or not to forgive his classmates and others who have hurt him, when his wise grandmother tells him the true story of St. Valentine. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**The New Small Person** (2014) Child, Lauren. Elmore Green likes being an only child, so when his parents bring a new small person, his baby brother, into the house he is not pleased and does his best to keep the new small person out of his life. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]

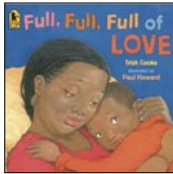


**Uptown** (2000) Collier, Bryan. A picture book tour of Harlem. Played out to the refrain of "Uptown is..." a boy makes the rounds of his neighborhood, starting with the Metro-North train as it crosses the Harlem River ("Uptown is a caterpillar"). Readers see him shopping on 125th Street, where "the vibe is always jumping as people bounce to their own rhythms," listening to music ("Uptown is jazz"), playing basketball and more. From Van Der Zee photographs to the Apollo Theater to the Boys Choir of Harlem, Collier touches on a host of icons; he infuses the volume with a sense of community: musicians improvise, men gather in a barbershop, & a trio of sisters in matching dresses head off to church. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-2]

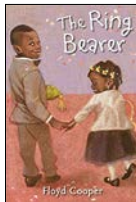


**Our Children Can Soar: A Celebration of Rosa, Barack, & the Pioneers of Change**

(2009) Cook, Michelle. Showcasing the art of 13 artists, Cook's adaptation pays tribute to 10 individuals, including George Washington Carver, Jesse Owens and Jackie Robinson. These figures' triumphs are shown as part of a seamless continuum: "Martin marched... so Thurgood could rule. Thurgood ruled... so Barack could run. Barack ran... so our children can soar!" [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



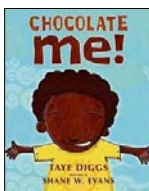
**Full, Full, Full of Love** (2003) Cooke, Trish. As Jay Jay helps his grandmother prepare for the extended family's Sunday dinner, he finds a comforting, often palpable abundance everywhere he looks. [Age 2-5, Grade Preschool-1]



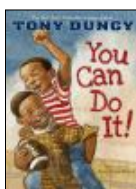
**The Ring Bearer** (2017) Cooper, Floyd. Jackson's mom is getting married, and Jackson is nervous about his role and his new family. He is the ring bearer, and he's concerned about tripping as he goes down the aisle. Jackson is also getting a new stepsister named Sophie, and he's not sure what to think about that. He's also not sure about calling the man he knew as Bill "Dad." [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-2]



**Jabari Jumps** (2017) Cornwall, Gaia. Jabari is definitely ready to jump off the diving board. He's finished his swimming lessons and passed his swim test, and he's a great jumper, so he's not scared at all. In a sweetly appealing tale of overcoming your fears, newcomer Gaia Cornwall captures a moment between a patient and encouraging father and a determined little boy you can't help but root for." [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**Chocolate me!** (2011) Diggs, Taye. A young boy is teased for looking different than the other kids. His skin is darker, his hair curlier. He tells his mother he wishes he could be more like everyone else. And she helps him to see how beautiful he really, truly is. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



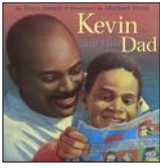
**You Can Do It!** (2008) Dungy, Tony. Faith and the support of a loving family help Linden when he is upset over being the only one in his class or at home who does not know what he wants to be when he grows up. [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-2]



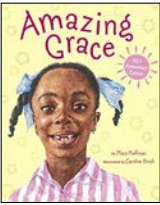
**Yesterday I Had The Blues** (2003) Frame, Jeron Ashford. In this upbeat tale, moods may color the way people look at the world, but family togetherness trumps all. Ashford associates various emotions with colors, thus it's an excellent way to introduce kids to metaphor. This could be a versatile tool for creative-writing units, too. [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-2]



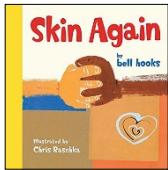
**Hello Goodbye Dog** (2017) Gianferrari, Maria. A mixed-race girl who uses a manual wheelchair finds a way for her irrepressible pet to stay by her side. Sweet, skillfully rendered illustrations are clear, convey Moose's worldview, and depict a diverse group of people. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



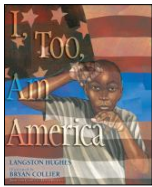
**Kevin And His Dad** (1999) Hays, Michael. Smalls, Irene. Kevin feels excitement, pride, pleasure, and love as he spends an entire day working and playing with his father. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



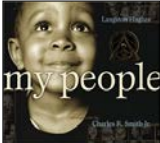
**Amazing Grace** (1991) Hoffman, Mary. Grace loves stories, whether they're from books, movies, or the kind her grandmother tells. So, when she gets a chance to play a part in Peter Pan, she knows exactly who she wants to be. Remarkable watercolor illustrations give full expression to Grace's high-flying imagination. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**Skin Again** (2017) Hooks, Bell. Celebrating all that makes us unique and different, *Skin Again* offers new ways to talk about race and identity. Race matters, but only so much--what's most important is who we are on the inside. Looking beyond skin, going straight to the heart, we find in each other the treasures stored down deep. Learning to cherish those treasures, to be all we imagine ourselves to be, makes us free. [Age 5-6, Grade Preschool-K]



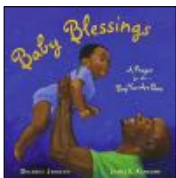
**I, Too, Am America** (1994) Hughes, Langston. Winner of the Coretta Scott King illustrator award, *I, Too, Am America* blends the poetic wisdom of Langston Hughes with visionary illustrations from Bryan Collier in this inspirational picture book that carries the promise of equality. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**My People** (2009) Hughes, Langston. Langston Hughes's spare yet eloquent tribute to his people has been cherished for generations. Now, acclaimed photographer Charles R. Smith Jr. interprets this beloved poem in vivid sepia photographs that capture the glory, the beauty, and the soul of being a black American today. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]

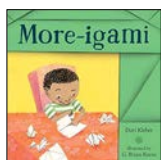


**Hair Dance!** (2007) Johnson, Dinah. Hair comes in all colors, textures, and styles. Whether it is worn long or short, in braids or cornrows, or left natural in an Afro, hair plays a big part in who we are and how we feel about ourselves. In this inspiring book, Kelly Johnson's stunning photographs of girls wearing a range of hairstyles and the lyrical words of Dinah Johnson's poem celebrate African American hair in all its radiant variety. [Age 5-9, Grade Preschool-up]

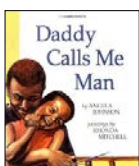


**Baby Blessings: A Prayer For The Day You Are Born** (2010) Jordan, Deloris. An African-American mother and father express their promises and hopes for their newborn son in the form of a blessing: "You will always be loved with a love that knows no bounds. You will touch the world in your own special way. We pray that you will always be kind." Under their loving and watchful eyes, the boy matures into a kindergartner, and by the book's end, he's also become a big brother. [Grade Preschool-K]

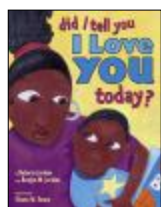




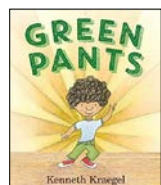
**More-igami** (2016) Kleber, Dori. Joey loves anything that folds (road maps, accordions, foldaway beds). When Sarah Takimoto's mother gives his class an origami demonstration, he finds his passion. ("Joey's eyes popped. His jaw dropped. Mrs. Takimoto called it origami.") Origami does not come easily for Joey, but he perseveres until he masters it. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



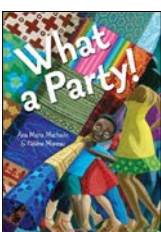
**Daddy Calls Me Man** (2000) Johnson, Angela. "This story...consists of four short verses about the happy home life of a young African-American boy. Family love and the shared stories and symbols that connect the generations are pervasive themes." - Kirkus Reviews, starred review. [Age 3-6, Grade Preschool-1]



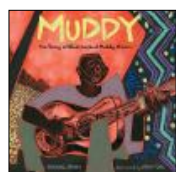
**Did I Tell You I Love You Today?** (2004) Jordan, Deloris. Follows an African- American mother through a typically busy day, chronicling all the obvious and not-so-apparent ways she expresses her unconditional love. Although the artist pictures three children, one young son in particular is the focus of the mother's attention: most of the action revolves around him, and the book opens and closes with her offering a prayer at his bedside. [Age 3-8, Grade Preschool-3]



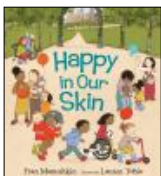
**Green Pants** (2017) Kraegel, Kenneth. Jameson refuses to wear *pants* that are not *green*, until he has to choose between wearing his *green pants* and wearing a tuxedo with *black pants* so that he can be in his cousin's wedding. [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-2]



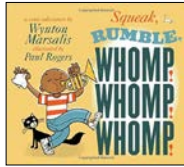
**What a Party!** (2014) Machado, Ana Maria. When his mother says "invite anyone you'd like" for birthday cake, a boy's party becomes a 24-hour fiesta of friends, food, music, and dancing. In this deliciously imaginative chain tale, the boy recounts sending a simple invitation to his friend Jack: "Bring along whoever you want and whatever you like to eat." So Jack comes with Larry, a soccer ball, and two kinds of coconut cookies. Jack tells Beto and Antonieta, who arrive with their parrot, pineapple, mangoes, and passion fruit. Antonieta's best friend, Fatima, brings her brother Djamal, their dog, and tajine with olives and pickled lemons. The international buffet grows along with the guest list: pizza, springerle, flan, sushi... [Age 4-7, Grade Preschool-2]



**Muddy: The Story Of Blues Legend Muddy Waters** (2017) Mahin, Michael. This picture book biography tells the story of the early life of McKinley Morganfield (1913-83), aka Muddy Waters, an American blues legend. Born in rural Mississippi and raised by his Grandma Della, Waters was interested in music from an early age and improvised his own homemade instruments. He faced opposition throughout, from disapproving family members to sharecropper bosses, but resisted and persevered, as he was "never good at doing what he was told." Eventually Waters moved to Chicago, where he helped develop the unique "Chicago Blues" style, merging the popular jazz of the day with traditional Delta blues from the South. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**Happy in Our Skin** (2015) Manushkin, Fran. Is there anything more splendid than a baby's skin? For families of all stripes comes a sweet celebration of what makes us unique—and what holds us together. [Age Birth-6, Grade Preschool-1]



**Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!: A Sonic Adventure** (2012) Marsalis, Wynton. Takes readers (and listeners) on a rollicking, clanging, clapping tour through the many sounds that fill a neighborhood. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



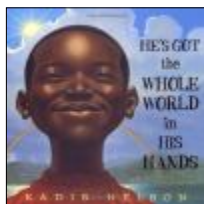
**These Hands** (2010) Mason, Margaret H. An African-American man tells his grandson about a time when, despite all the wonderful things his *hands* could do, they could not touch bread at the Wonder Bread factory. Based on stories of bakery union workers; includes historical note. [Age 4-7, Grade Preschool-3]



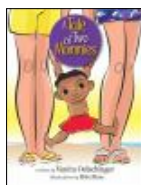
**Grandma in a Blue with Red Hat** (2015) Menchin, Scott. Saturday is the best day. Because that's the day I go to art class at the museum," explains an African American boy. He and his classmates discuss famous art pieces and discuss why each one is worthy to be included in the museum-because it's beautiful/funny/one-of-a-kind/makes viewers feel good. The boy realizes that his beloved grandmother fulfills all of the requirements for a museum exhibit and decides to donate her to the collection. [Age 4-8, Preschool-3]



**Princess Hair** (2017) Miller, Sharee. Celebrate different hair shapes, textures, and styles in this self-affirming picture book! From dreadlocks to blowouts to braids, *Princess Hair* shines a spotlight on the beauty and diversity of black hair, showing young readers that every kind of hair is princess hair. [Age 5-6, Grade Preschool-3]



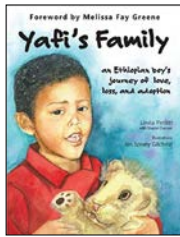
**He's Got the Whole World in His Hands** (2015) Nelson, Kadir. What began as a spiritual has developed into one of America's best-known songs, and now for the first time it appears as a picture book, masterfully created by award-winning artist Kadir Nelson. Through sublime landscapes and warm images of a boy and his family, Kadir has created a dazzling, intimate interpretation, one that rejoices in the connectedness of people and nature. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**A Tale of Two Mommies** (2011) Oelschlager, Vanita. Three multicultural children spend a day at the beach, building sand castles, eating ice-cream, and swimming all while quizzing one member of the group about his life with two mommies. [Age 5-8, Grade Preschool-3]



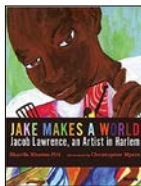
**Lizard From The Park** (2015) Pett, Mark. Curly-haired, brown-skinned Leonard finds a large egg in Central Park, takes it home, and plays with it, all with an air of quiet wonder. When a lizardlike creature busts forth from the egg, he names it—naturally—Buster. [Age 3-8, Grade Preschool-3]



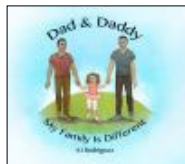
**Yafi's Family: An Ethiopian Boy's Journey Of Love, Loss And Adoption** (2010) Pettitt, Linda. In this beautiful, moving book, an Ethiopian boy is adopted and journeys to his new family in Australia. Gilchrist's vibrant full-page illustrations expertly portray the child's strong emotions toward both his birth and adoptive families, as described in the text. Yafi yearns for contact with his aunts, uncles, and especially Grandma Elsa, who cared for him until he was adopted. Although this story is not set in America, there are many commonalities for children adopted outside of their home country. [Age 4-7, Grade Preschool-2]



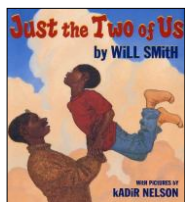
**The Word Collector** (2018) Reynolds, Peter. While others collect stamps or trading cards, Jerome collects words that he hears, sees, or reads—words that catch his fancy "multi-syllable words that sounded like little songs" or "words he did not know the meaning of at first, but were marvelous to say." A perfect introduction to vocabulary units that should encourage youngsters to collect their own words to create their own poems. Positive role model of boy who loves writing. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**Jake Makes A World: Jacob Lawrence A Young Artist In Harlem** (2015) Rhodes-Pitts, Sharifa. Jake Makes a World follows the creative adventures of the young Jacob Lawrence as he finds inspiration in the vibrant colors, bustling sights and sounds, and the characters of his community in Harlem. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



**Dad & Daddy: My Family Is Different** (2017) Rodriguez, A.J. Dad & Daddy is the story of Mia, who has two dads at her house, both African-American. The book answers questions about naming parents—Dad and Daddy—and demonstrates how this family is just like any other, and that there are many ways to build a family as long as love lives at the center. [Grade Preschool-2]



**Just the Two of Us** (2001) Smith, Will. Celebrates the dignity, integrity, and honor of being a father. Smith writes about the care Dad takes driving his newborn home from the hospital; his laughter when he discovers his son has his ears; and his pain when he explains that when love is concerned, broken hearts are unavoidable. Smith briefly addresses the issue of divorce, but he makes it clear that "when push comes to shove / You were conceived in love." [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



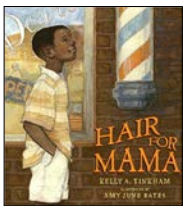
**Jordan's Hair** (2005) Spruill, Ed. Little Jordan has a problem. He loves to be with his friends at school, but his skin color and hair texture is different from theirs. Jordan thinks God doesn't love him because he looks different. He soon prays for a change in his appearance so he can look just like his friends. With the help of his parents and teacher, Jordan comes to understand that he has been beautifully and wonderfully made by God's hands. He discovers that sometimes his friends may even want to look like him. Jordan learns that he is loved because of the kindness on the inside and not his appearance on the outside. [Age 4-7, Grade Preschool-2]



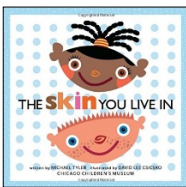
**Big Hair Don't Care** (2013) Swain-Bates, Crystal. Lola has curly hair which is much bigger than that of other kids at her school, but she tells anyone who listens how much she loves her hair. Designed to boost self-esteem and build confidence, this book is aimed at boys and girls who may need a reminder that it's okay to look different from the other kids at their school. [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-2]



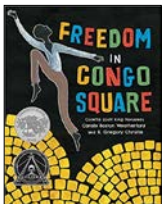
**Bippity Bop Barbershop** (2002) Tarpley, Natasha. Miles is nervous about visiting the barber for his first "official" haircut; he's afraid that the buzzing clippers will hurt, and he doesn't know what kind of cut to request. The descriptions of Miles trying to be "brave" are labored and unconvincing. Happily, the resolution of his hairstyle dilemma rings true: he selects a cut just like his daddy's. Miles and Dad leave the shop with identical haircuts, sharing high-fives, "two cool cats" walking to the rhythm of a "bippity bop" beat. [Age 4-7, Grade Preschool-3]



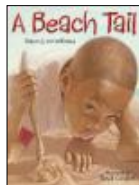
**Hair for Mama** (2007) Tinkham, Kelly. A realistic look at a strong family facing cancer. Told in Marcus' tender yet energetic first-person voice, this offers explanation as well as story, as the boy describes cancer and chemotherapy. Without sentimentality, both text and art capture the fear, pain, and hope that come with chemotherapy for a family member. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-3]



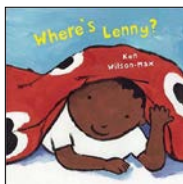
**The Skin You Live In** (2005) Tyler, Michael. With the ease and simplicity of a nursery rhyme, this lively story delivers an important message of social acceptance to young readers. Themes associated with child development and social harmony, such as friendship, acceptance, self-esteem, and diversity are promoted in simple and straightforward prose. [Age 4-8, Grade Preschool-2]



**Freedom in Congo Square** (2016) Weatherford, Carole Boston. Chosen as a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book of 2016, this poetic, nonfiction story about a little-known piece of African American history captures a human's capacity to find hope and joy in difficult circumstances and demonstrates how New Orleans' Congo Square was truly freedom's heart. [Age 4-8, Preschool-3]



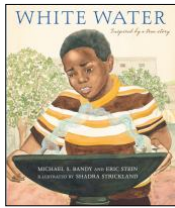
**Beach Tail** (2010) Williams, Karen. When his father tells him not to leave the lion he is drawing on the beach, a little boy starts making a very, very long tail—and a trail to follow back. [Age 3-7, Grade Preschool-3]



**Where's Lenny?** (2013) Wilson-Max, Ken. Lenny plays hide and seek with his dad. Is he in the cupboard? No. Or in the sitting room? No, it's only the dog. He's not in the kitchen either. What about on the stairs? No, just blobs of jam. At last Dad and Mum see a little giggly lump under the bedclothes in Lenny's bedroom. Here's Lenny, ready for a tickle and a hug! [Age 2-5, Grade Preschool-K]



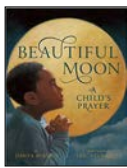
## Kindergarten to Grade 3



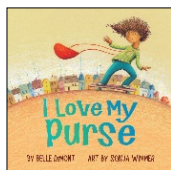
**White Water: Inspired By A True Story** (2011) Bandy, Michael S. After tasting the warm, rusty water from the fountain designated for African Americans, a young boy questions why he cannot drink the cool, refreshing water from the "Whites Only" fountain. Based on a true experience co-author *Michael S. Bandy* had as a boy. [Age 5-8, Grade K-3]



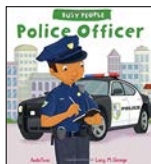
**Those Shoes** (2007) Boelts, Maribeth. Jeremy, who longs to have the black high tops that everyone at school seems to have but his grandmother cannot afford, is excited when he sees them for sale in a thrift shop and decides to buy them even though they are the wrong size. [Age 5-8, Grade K-3]



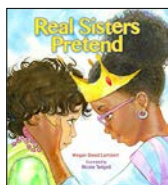
**Beautiful Moon: A Child's Prayer** (2014) Bolden, Tonya. Under a radiant moon and surrounded by all the noises of the city at night, a little boy prays for those in need, for wars to end, for the sick to be healed, and for all the members of his family. [Age 5-7, Grade K-2]



**I Love My Purse** (2017) Dumont, Belle. Charlie loves the bright red purse that his grandmother let him have. One day, he decides to take it to school. First his father, then his friends, and even the crossing guard question him about his "strange" choice. After all, boys don't carry purses. But Charlie isn't deterred. Can be used to discuss gender roles. [Age 5-8, Grade K-2]



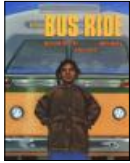
**Busy People: Police Officer** (2016) George, Lucy M. It's a busy day at the festival for Officer Seth and Officer Thea. A car is stuck in the mud and a little boy needs their help. Can the officers solve every problem that comes their way? [Age 5-6, Grade Preschool-2]



**Real Sisters Pretend** (2016) Lambert, Megan Dowd. Even though they don't look alike (Tayja has brown skin, Mia white). "We are sisters," Tayja says, staring into Mia's eyes. "Real sisters." Tadgell emphasizes the girls' closeness in warm watercolor-and-pencil vignettes that show them talking about being adopted by two mothers while playing. The sisters also talk frankly about the fact that "some people" don't instinctively see them as a family, remembering a recent grocery store encounter. [Age 4-8, Grade K-5]



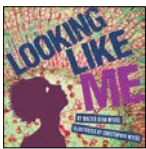
**The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist** (2017) Levinson, Cynthia. When nine-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks heard grown-ups talk about wiping out Birmingham's segregation laws, she spoke up. When she heard the plan—picket those white stores! March to protest those unfair laws! Fill the jails! – she stepped right up and said, I'll do it! She was going to j-a-a-ii! [Age 5-10, Grade K-5]



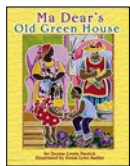
**The Bus Ride** (1998) Miller, William. A black child protests an unjust law in this story loosely based on Rosa Parks' historic decision not to give up her seat to a white passenger on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955. [Age 6-10, Grade K-3]



**Early Sunday Morning** (2017) Millner, Denene. Early Sunday Morning follows June, Mommy, Daddy, and brother Troy through their weekend routine as June prepares for a special performance leading the children's choir at church on Sunday morning. [Age 4-9, Grade K-3]



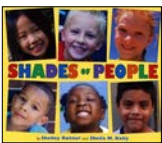
**Looking Like Me** (2009) Myers, Walter Dean. Walt Whitman once wrote, 'I contain multitudes,' and that important concept is brilliantly interpreted here by the Myers' father-son partnership. The elder Myers' rhythmic poem celebrates a young Everyman from Harlem who looks in the mirror to 'see a real handsome dude looking just like me.' Moving through the city, he encounters family and friends who share their points of view: 'Along came my sister, / fine as she can be. / "Hey, Jeremy," she said, / "You're little brother to me."' Each helps him see that he is a valued artist, runner, dreamer, and more, and that he has a lot to give to himself and the world. [Age 5-9, Grade K-4]



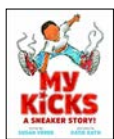
**Ma Dear's Old Green House** (2004) Patric, Denise Lewis. Denise Lewis Patrick's own childhood memories of visits with her grandmother are the inspiration for this story. Through heartwarming and lyrical prose, Patrick shares memories of summers at her 'special place'--Ma Dear's old green house. [Age 5-8, Grade K-3]



**Firefighter** (2008) Rau, Dana Meachen. These books are more basic than most offerings on the subject, combining rebuses with repetitive, simple texts. One short sentence per spread is accompanied by a full-page photo. [Age 5-6, Grade K-1]



**Shades of People** (2009) Rotner, Shelley and Kelly, Sheila. Explores the many different shades of human skin, and points out that skin is just a covering that does not reveal what someone is like inside. [Age 5-6, Grade Preschool-1]



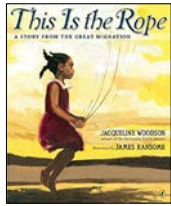
**My Kicks: A Sneaker Story!** (2017) Verde, Susan. Unable to convince his mother that his torn, stained, and smelly sneakers are irreplaceable, a young African American boy realizes that new sneakers have advantages. [Age 5-7, Grade K-2]



**All Different Now : Juneteenth, The First Day Of Freedom** (2014) Woodson, Jacqueline. In 1865, members of a family start their day as slaves, working in a Texas cotton field, and end it celebrating their freedom on what came to be known as Juneteenth. [Age 5-9, Grade K-4]



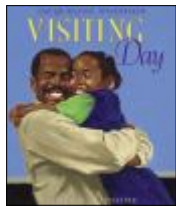
**The Other Side** (2001) Woodson, Jacqueline. Clover's mom says it isn't safe to cross the fence that segregates their African-American side of town from the white side where Anna lives. But the two girls strike up a friendship, and get around the grown-ups' rules by sitting on top of the fence together. [Age 5-8, Grade K-3]



**This Is The Rope: A Story From The Great Migration** (2014) Woodson, Jacqueline. A utilitarian rope—now a toy, now a clothesline, now a fastening cord—ties together this lyrical multinational story of one family's experience leaving the South for greater opportunities up North. An author's note offers a brief familial history as well as a few lines about the Great Migration and supports the text as a resounding affirmation of the journey made by more than six million African Americans in search of change.

With characteristic grace and a knack for the right detail, Woodson and Ransome have provided a pleasing portrait of one loving family in the midst of a movement.

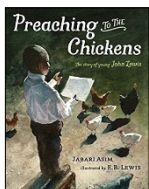
[Age 5-8, Grade K-3]



**Visiting Day** (2002) Woodson, Jacqueline. A little girl visits her dad in prison with her grandmother. The visit is sweet, heartfelt, and even idyllic, with the characters' love for one another the central theme of the story. The word 'prison' never appears in the text, but the illustrations include views of the prison—barbed wire atop the outside walls and a uniformed guard in the visiting room. For children who have never experienced visiting a parent in prison, the images may be problematic. Caregivers

must preview to determine how appropriate this book may be for individual children.

[Age 5-7, Grade K-2]



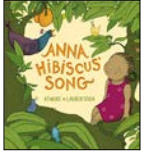
**Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis** (2016) Asim, Jabari Asim gives readers a fascinating glimpse into the boyhood of Civil Rights leader John Lewis. John wants to be a preacher when he grows up—a leader whose words stir hearts to change, minds to think, and bodies to take action. But why wait? When John is put in charge of the family farm's flock of chickens, he discovers that they make a wonderful congregation! So he preaches to his flock, and they listen, content

under his watchful care, riveted by the rhythm of his voice. [Age 5-8, Grade K-3]

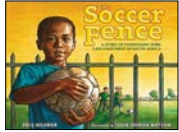


**Wind Flyers** (2007) Johnson, Angela. A boy's love of flight takes him on a journey from the dusty dirt roads of Alabama to the war-torn skies of Europe. Introduces young readers to the contributions of the Tuskegee Airmen in World War II. [Age 5-9, Grade K-4]

## Grade 1 and Up



**Anna Hibiscus' Song** (2012) Atinuke. Anna Hibiscus is so happy she could explode, so she tries to figure out how to channel all of her positive energy. [Age 5-7, Grade 1-2]



**The Soccer Fence: A Story Of Friendship, Hope, And Apartheid In South Africa** (2014) Bildner, Phil. As a boy, Hector loved playing soccer in his small Johannesburg township. He dreamed of playing on a real pitch with the boys from another part of the city, but apartheid made that impossible. Then, in 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison, and apartheid began to crumble. The march toward freedom in South

Africa was a slow one, but when the beloved Bafana Bafana national soccer team won the African Cup of Nations, Hector realized that dreams once impossible could now come true.

[Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]



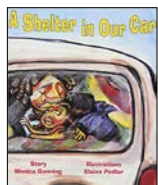
**Mae Jemison (You Should Meet)** (2016) Calkhoven, Laurie. Meet Mae Jemison, the first African-American female astronaut! Before she was an astronaut, Mae went to medical school and joined the Peace Corps, but she never forgot her childhood dream to travel to outer space. On September 12, 1992, Mae flew into space with six other astronauts aboard the space shuttle Endeavour and made history—just like you can if you follow your dreams! [Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]



**Some Kind Of Love: A Family Reunion In Poems** (2010) Dant, Traci. In this moving tribute, 15 poems describe the joy of one African-American family's annual reunion weekend. [Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]



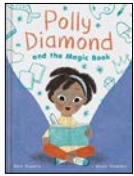
**Katherine Johnson (You Should Meet)** (2017) Feldman, Thea. Katherine Johnson is a brilliant mathematician who worked at NASA in the early 1950s until retiring in 1986. Katherine's unparalleled calculations (done by hand) helped plan the trajectories for NASA's Mercury and Apollo missions (including the Apollo 11 moon landing). She is said to be one of the greatest American minds of all time. [Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]



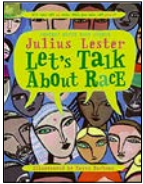
**A Shelter in Our Car** (2004) Gunning, Monica Gunning. After Papa died in Jamaica, Zettie and Mama came to America, where they now live in the city in the backseat of their car, while Mama tries to go to school and also earn money to pay rent for a room. This picture-book brings close the harsh realities of being homeless, scavenging for food, washing in the park rest room, being harassed by police. The illustrations are in an intensely emotional modernist style with exaggerated facial expressions and body

language. The strong, black-outlined figures are scary at times, but then so is the nightmarish reality of being without shelter. [Age 5-8, Grade 1-2]





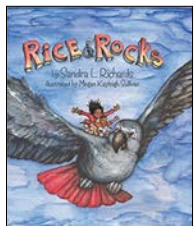
**Polly Diamond and the Magic Book** (2018) Kuipers, Alice. Polly loves words. And she loves writing stories. So when a magic book appears on her doorstep that can make everything she writes happen in real life, Polly is certain all of her dreams are about to come true. But she soon learns that what you write and what you mean are not always the same thing! [Age 6-8, Grade 1-4]



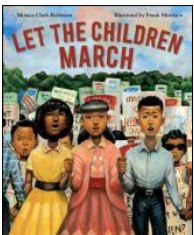
**Let's Talk About Race** (2005) Lester, Julius. In this acclaimed book, the author of the Newbery Honor Book *To Be a Slave* shares his own story as he explores what makes each of us special. [Age 4-8, Grade 1-5]



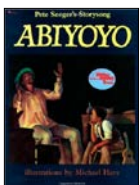
**Back of the Bus** (2010) Reynolds, Aaron. This sterling collaboration views Rosa Parks' 1955 refusal to give up her bus seat through the eyes of a perceptive boy seated with his mother in the rear of the bus. [Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]



**Rice and Rocks** (2017) Richards, Sandra. Giovanni's friends are coming over for Sunday dinner, and his grandmother is serving rice and beans. Giovanni is embarrassed he does not like 'rice and rocks' and worries his friends will think the traditional Jamaican dish is weird. This exciting story celebrates the varied traditions of every culture while also highlighting the delicious similarities that bring us all together. [Grade 1-3]



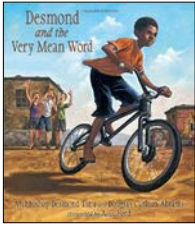
**Let the Children March** (2018) Robinson, Monica Clark. Nearly 55 years ago, an anti-segregation march that came to be known as the Children's Crusade was instrumental in pushing President Kennedy and Congress to adopt the Voting Rights Act. That historic event is chronicled here in a semi-fictional narrative from the perspective of one of the young participants in Birmingham in 1963. This remarkable story remains relevant today as young readers think about their roles in the ongoing struggle for justice. [Age 6-9, Grade 1-4]



**Abiyoyo: Based On A South African Lullaby And Folk Story** (1994) Seeger, Pete. Banished from the town for making mischief, a little boy and his father are welcomed back when they find a way to make the dreaded giant Abiyoyo disappear. [Age 4-8, Grade 1-2]



**I Want to be Free** (2009). Slate, Joseph. Based on a sacred Buddhist tale as related in Rudyard Kipling's novel "Kim," tells of an escaped slave who rescues an abandoned baby from slave hunters. [Age 6-8, Grade 1-3]

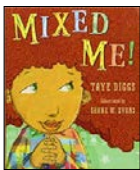


**Desmond and the Very Mean Word** (2013) Tutu, Desmond. When Desmond takes his new bicycle out for a ride through his neighborhood, his pride and joy turn to hurt and anger when a group of boys shout a very mean word at him. He first responds by shouting an insult, but soon discovers that fighting back with mean words doesn't make him feel any better. With the help of kindly Father Trevor, Desmond comes to understand his conflicted feelings and see that all people deserve compassion, whether or not they say they are sorry. [Age 6-9, Grade 1-4]



**Blacksmith's Song** (2018) Van Steenwyk, Elizabeth. An enslaved nine-year-old boy narrates this tense fictional story about the Underground Railroad. His father, the plantation's blacksmith, uses his hammer and anvil as a signal: "Tonight he is sending word to the folks in the woods, who are waiting to hear when it's time to leave." Despite the story's uncertain historical underpinnings, it's a plausible, powerful vision of ingenuity and daring in action. [Age 6-10, Grade 1-5]

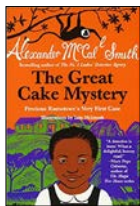
## Grade 2 and Up



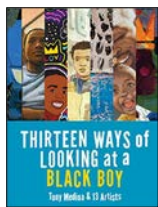
**Mixed Me!** (2015) Diggs, Taye. Mike has awesome hair. He has lots of energy! His parents love him and he is a perfect blend of the two of them. Still Mike has to answer lots of questions about being mixed. [Age 7-10, Grade 2-5]



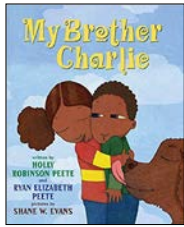
**In the Garden with Dr. Carver** (2010) Grigsby, Susan. In this story set in the early 1900s, African-American elementary-school students Sally and her classmates get scientific lessons from Dr. George Washington Carver, who arrives in a "funny-looking wagon" pulled by an old mule, his "movable school." Everyone in the small Alabama town has heard of the famous plant scientist, and pays attention to what he has to say. [Age 4-8, Grade 2-3]



**The Great Cake Mystery: Precious Ramotswe's Very First Case** (2012) McCall Smith, Alexander. When a piece of cake goes missing from Precious Ramotswe's classroom, a traditionally built young boy is tagged as the culprit. Precious, however, is not convinced. She sets out to find the real thief. Along the way she learns that your first guess isn't always right. She also learns how to be a detective. [Age 7-10, Grade 2-5]

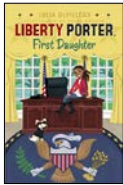


**Thirteen Ways Of Looking At A Black Boy** (2018) Medina, Tony. A baker's dozen of artists—Cozbi A. Cabrera, Ekua Holmes, Javaka Steptoe, and others—contribute bold and stylistically diverse images to accompany Medina's five-line poems, which reflect the lives, dreams, and worries of male black children. Boys of varying ages appear, allowing readers to see both the unvarnished joy of early childhood and the worries that later crop up. [Age 6-11, Grade 2-3]

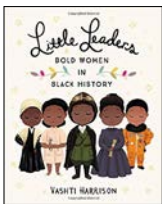


**My Brother Charlie** (2010) Peete, Holly Robinson. Twins Callie and Charlie have a lot in common, but they are also very different: Charlie has autism. Callie narrates the story, describing what autism is and exploring the issues that come along with it. The theme is of love, patience, and acceptance. Endnotes give a few basic facts for children unfamiliar with the disorder. The authors, a mother-daughter team, based this story on personal experience. Evans's bright, mixed-media illustrations skillfully depict the family's warmth and concern. [Age 7-10, Grade 2-5]

## Grade 3 and Up



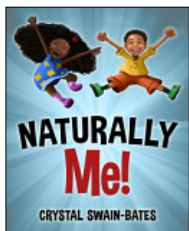
**Liberty Porter, First Daughter** (2010) DeVillers, Julia. Eight-year-old Liberty Porter's father has just been elected President of the United States—and she's the new First Daughter! As Liberty moves into the White House, she vows to make herself indispensable to her country—but can she get past her run-ins with the Chief of Staff? [Age 8-12, Grade 3-7]



**Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History** (2017) Harrison, Vashti. Little Leaders educates and inspires, telling true stories of 40 trail-breaking black women in American history, breaking boundaries and achieving beyond expectations. Brings to life both iconic and lesser-known figures of history: abolitionist Sojourner Truth, pilot Bessie Coleman, chemist Alice Ball, politician Shirley Chisholm, mathematician Katherine Johnson, poet Maya Angelou, and filmmaker Julie Dash. [Age 8-11, Grade 3-7]

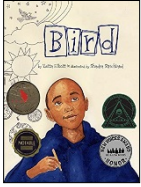


**When The Beat Was Born: DJ Kool Herc And The Creation Of Hip-Hop** (2013) Hill, Laban Carrick. Herc, an aspiring DJ and reluctant immigrant from Jamaica to the Bronx, was working a house party at his Sedgwick Avenue housing project when inspiration struck: he put the same record on two turntables to extend the break in a song ("when the lyrics ended and the music bumped and thumped") and added verbal riffs drawn from Jamaican chanting and toasting. [Age 6-10, Grade 3-4]

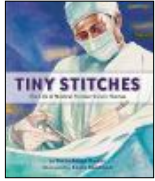


**Naturally Me!** (2014) Swain-Bates, Crystal. Designed to boost self-esteem and build confidence in children of all ages, this fun rhyming picture book follows a freckle-faced girl and a gap-toothed boy throughout their day as they show the reader they celebrate their appearance and feel comfortable in their own skin, just the way they naturally are! By the end of the story, young readers will be chanting the theme of the book: "I'm proud to be naturally me!" While this book features African-American children, its message of self-acceptance is a universal one that can be enjoyed and appreciated by children of all races. [Age 8-12, Grade 3-7]

## Grade 4 and Up



**Bird** (2008) Elliott, Zetta. A young African American boy expresses himself through drawing as he struggles to understand his older brother's drug addiction and death, while a family friend, Uncle Son, provides guidance and understanding. This may be okay for younger children if they are experiencing similar situations in their families. [Age 8-13, Grade 4-6]



**Tiny Stitches: The Life Of Medical Pioneer Vivien Thomas** (2016) Hooks, Gwendolyn. A picture book biography about the genius and research of Vivien Thomas, who pioneered open-heart surgery for infants, specifically to treat newborns afflicted with tetralogy of Fallot, or blue baby syndrome, a previously fatal condition. After losing his savings in the October 1929 stock market crash, Thomas accepted a job at Vanderbilt University as a research technician under Dr. Alfred Blalock. He is shown practicing techniques, working in the lab, and researching in the library. The narrative covers many examples of the racism that Thomas faced, including less pay, housing discrimination, and the press's failure to acknowledge his development of what was later named the Blalock-Taussig shunt. [Age 7-12, Grade 4-6]



**Amazing Faces** (2010) Hopkins, Lee Bennett. In this contemporary yet timeless collection of poems, acclaimed anthologist Lee Bennett Hopkins brings together sixteen selections that reveal through poetic word imagery the common universal emotions and feelings we all have, whether they be happy, excited, wishful, proud, sad, or lonely. The poems taken as a whole reflect the great variety of people in our society, bringing children of today into focus as they meet with childhood experiences and also interact with adults in their world. [Age 9-12, Grade 4-6]