

Epiphany Racial Justice Group Reading and Media Resource List

Children's Books

(Organized By Age Range)

Sweetest Kulu

By Celina Kalluk and Alexandria Neonakis

Ages: **0+**

A beautiful bedtime book based on Inuit values from an internationally known singer. "Dream a little, Kulu, this world now sings a most beautiful song of you." This beautiful bedtime poem, written by acclaimed Inuit throat singer Celina Kalluk, describes the gifts given to a newborn baby by all the animals of the Arctic. Lyrically and tenderly told by a mother speaking to her own little Kulu; an Inuktitut term of endearment often bestowed upon babies and young children, this visually stunning book is infused with the traditional Inuit values of love and respect for the land and its animal inhabitants. A perfect gift for new parents.

My Heart Fills With Happiness

By Monique Gray Smith and Julie Flett

Ages: **0-2**

The sun on your face. The smell of warm bannock baking in the oven. Holding the hand of someone you love. What fills your heart with happiness? This beautiful board book, with illustrations from celebrated artist Julie Flett, serves as a reminder for little ones and adults alike to reflect on and cherish the moments in life that bring us joy.

Dream Big, Little One

By Vashti Harrison

Ages: **0-3**

This beautifully illustrated board book edition of instant bestseller Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History showcases women who changed the world and is the perfect goodnight book to inspire big dreams. Featuring 18 trailblazing black women in American history, Dream Big, Little One is the irresistible board book adaptation of Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History. Among these women, you'll find heroes, role models, and everyday women who did extraordinary things – bold women whose actions and beliefs contributed to making the world better for generations of girls and women to come. Whether they were putting pen to paper, soaring through the air or speaking up for the rights of others, the women profiled in these pages were all taking a stand against a world that didn't always accept them. The leaders in this book may be little, but they all did something big and amazing, inspiring generations to come.

Pride Colors

By Robin Stevenson

Ages: **0-3**

Through gentle rhymes and colorful photographs of adorable children, Pride Colors is a celebration of the deep unconditional love of a parent or caregiver for a young child. The profound message of this delightful board book is you are free to be whoever you choose to be; you'll always be loved. Celebrated author Robin Stevenson ends her purposeful prose by explaining the meaning behind each color in the Pride flag: red = life, orange = healing, yellow = sunlight, green = nature, blue = peace and harmony, and violet = spirit.

Think Big, Little One

By Vashti Harrison

Ages: **0-3**

Featuring eighteen women creators, ranging from writers to inventors, artists to scientists, this board book adaptation of *Little Dreamers: Visionary Women Around the World* introduces trailblazing women like Mary Blair, an American modernist painter who had a major influence on how color was used in early animated films, environmental activist Wangari Maathai, and architect Zaha Hadid. The irresistible full-color illustrations show the Dreamers as both accessible and aspirational so reader knows they, too, can grow up to do something amazing.

And Tango Makes Three

By Justin Richardson, Peter Parnell, and Henry Cole

Ages: **2-5**

The heartwarming true story of two penguins who create a nontraditional family is now available in a sturdy board book edition. At the penguin house at the Central Park Zoo, two penguins named Roy and Silo were a little bit different from the others. But their desire for a family was the same. And with the help of a kindly zookeeper, Roy and Silo got the chance to welcome a baby penguin of their very own. In time for the tenth anniversary of *And Tango Makes Three*, this Classic Board Book edition is the perfect size for small hands.

The Snowy Day

By Ezra Jack Keats

Ages: **2-5**

Winner of the 1963 Caldecott Medal! No book has captured the magic and sense of possibility of the first snowfall better than *The Snowy Day*. Universal in its appeal, the story has become a favorite of millions, as it reveals a child's wonder at a new world, and the hope of capturing and keeping that wonder forever. The adventures of a little boy in the city on a very snowy day.

Skin Again

By Bell Hooks

Ages: **3-5**

The skin I'm in is just a covering. It cannot tell my story. The skin I'm in is just a covering. If you want to know who I am, you have got to come inside and open your heart way wide. 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. This award-winning book, with its myriad of faces, introduces a strong message of loving yourself and others that will appeal to parents of our youngest readers.

God's Very Good Idea

By Trillia Newbell

Ages: **3-6**

Teach young children how to enjoy being delightfully different yet all part of God's family. Part of the Tales that Tell the Truth series.

M is for Melanin

By Tiffany Rose

Ages: **3-6**

Each letter of the alphabet contains affirming, Black-positive messages, from A is for Afro, to F is for Fresh, to W is for Worthy. This book teaches children their ABCs while encouraging them to love the skin that they're in. Be bold. Be fearless. BE YOU.

Who Will You Be?

By Andrea Pippins

Ages: **3-6**

So begins this loving picture book about a mama who wonders who her child will grow up to be. Will her little one be curious like Grandpa and adventurous like Auntie Amina? Compassionate like Amy and joyful like cousin Curlena? Moving from family members to the wider community, she muses about which attributes her child will possess. A perfect gift for a baby shower, birthday, or graduation. Who Will You Be? features gorgeous artwork and gentle words that celebrate childhood and is an ode to the power of our village--and a reminder that every child is uniquely wonderful.

A is for Activist

By Innosanto Nagara

Ages: **3-7**

A is for Activist is an ABC board book written and illustrated for the next generation of progressives: families who want their kids to grow up in a space that is unapologetic about activism, environmental justice, civil rights, LGBTQ rights, and everything else that activists believe in and fight for. The alliteration, rhyming, and vibrant illustrations make the book exciting for children, while the issues it brings up resonate with their parents' values of community, equality, and justice. This engaging little book carries huge messages as it inspires hope for the future, and calls children to action while teaching them a love for books.

A Letter to Amy

By Ezra Jack Keats

Ages: **3-7**

Generations of children have read, re-read, and loved Ezra Jack Keats's award-winning, classic stories about Peter and his neighborhood friends. Now, for the first time, Peter's Chair, A Letter to Amy, and Goggles! are available in paperback exclusively from Puffin.

Harlem's Little Blackbird: The Story of Florence Mills

By Renée Watson, illustrated by Christian Robinson

Ages: 3-7

Born to parents who were both former slaves, Florence Mills knew at an early age that she loved to sing, and that her sweet, bird-like voice, resonated with those who heard her. Performing catapulted her all the way to the stages of 1920s Broadway where she inspired everyone from songwriters to playwrights. Yet with all her success, she knew firsthand how prejudice shaped her world and the world of those around her. As a result, Florence chose to support and promote works by her fellow black performers while heralding a call for their civil rights. Featuring a moving text and colorful illustrations, Harlem's Little Blackbird is a timeless story about justice, equality, and the importance of following one's heart and dreams.

Hi Cat!

By Ezra Jack Keats

Ages: 3-7

On his way to hang out with the neighborhood kids, Archie very innocently greets a stray cat who follows him and gets in the way. The cat ruins everything – Archie's street show is a mess and his audience drifts away. But things aren't all bad: when Archie goes, the cat follows him all the way home, too!

I Am Every Good Thing

By Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon C. James

Ages: 3-7

The confident Black narrator of this book is proud of everything that makes him who he is. He's got big plans, and no doubt he'll see them through—as he's creative, adventurous, smart, funny, and a good friend. Sometimes he falls, but he always gets back up. And other times he's afraid, because he's so often misunderstood and called what he is not. So slow down and really look and listen, when somebody tells you—and shows you—who they are. There are superheroes in our midst!

We Are Grateful, Otsaliheliga

By Traci Sorell, illustrated by Frané Lessac

Ages: 3-7

The Cherokee community is grateful for blessings and challenges that each season brings. This is modern Native American life as told by an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation. The word otsaliheliga (oh-jah-LEE-hay-lee-gah) is used by members of the Cherokee Nation to express gratitude. Beginning in the fall with the new year and ending in summer, follow a full Cherokee year of celebrations and experiences. Written by a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, this look at one group of Native Americans is appended with a glossary and the complete Cherokee syllabary, originally created by Sequoyah.

Whistle for Willie

By Ezra Jack Keats

Ages: 3-7

Since it was first published in 1964, Whistle for Willie has delighted millions of young readers with its nearly wordless text and its striking collage artwork depicting the story of Peter, who longs to whistle for his dog. The New York Times wrote: "Mr. Keats' illustrations boldly, colorfully capture the child, his city world, and the shimmering heat of a summer's day."

The Skin You Live In

By Michael Tyler

Ages: **3-8**

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. Vivid illustrations of children's activities for all cultures, such as swimming in the ocean, hugging, catching butterflies, and eating birthday cake are also provided. This delightful picturebook offers a wonderful venue through which parents and teachers can discuss important social concepts with their children.

All Because You Matter

By Tami Charles, illustrated by Bryan Collier

Ages: **4-8**

A lyrical, heart-lifting love letter to black and brown children everywhere: reminding them how much they matter, that they have always mattered, and they always will, from powerhouse rising star author Tami Charles and esteemed, award-winning illustrator Bryan Collier. Discover this poignant, timely, and emotionally stirring picture book, an ode to black and brown children everywhere that is full of hope, assurance, and love. Tami Charles pens a poetic, lyrical text that is part love letter, part anthem, assuring readers that they always have, and always will, matter. This powerful, rhythmic lullaby reassures readers that their matter and their worth is never diminished, no matter the circumstance: through the joy and wonder of their first steps and first laughter, through the hardship of adolescent struggles and the pain and heartbreak of current events, they always have, and always will, matter. Accompanied by illustrations by renowned artist Bryan Collier, a four-time Caldecott Honor recipient and a nine-time Coretta Scott King Award winner or honoree, *All Because You Matter* empowers readers with pride, joy, and comfort, reminding them of their roots and strengthening them for the days to come. Lyrical, personal, and full of love, *All Because You Matter* is for the picture book audience what *The Hate U Give* was for YA and *Ghost Boys* was for middle grade: a conversation starter, a community touchstone, and a deep affirmation of worth for the young readers who need it most.

Alma and How She Got Her Name

By Juana Martinez-Neal

Ages: **4-8**

If you ask her, Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela has way too many names: six! How did such a small person wind up with such a large name? Alma turns to Daddy for an answer and learns of Sofia, the grandmother who loved books and flowers; Esperanza, the great-grandmother who longed to travel; José, the grandfather who was an artist; and other namesakes, too. As she hears the story of her name, Alma starts to think it might be a perfect fit after all — and realizes that she will one day have her own story to tell. In her author-illustrator debut, Juana Martinez-Neal opens a treasure box of discovery for children who may be curious about their own origin stories or names. What's in a name? For one little girl, her very long name tells the vibrant story of where she came from — and who she may one day be. A 2019 Caldecott Honor Book

Bilal Cooks Daal

By Aisha Saeed and Anoosha Syed

Ages: **4-8**

Six-year-old Bilal introduces his friends to his favorite dish—daal!—in this charming picture book that showcases the value of patience, teamwork, community, and sharing. Six-year-old Bilal is excited to help his dad make his

favorite food of all-time: daal! The slow-cooked lentil dish from South Asia requires lots of ingredients and a whole lot of waiting. Bilal wants to introduce his friends to daal. They've never tried it! As the day goes on, the daal continues to simmer, and more kids join Bilal and his family, waiting to try the tasty dish. And as time passes, Bilal begins to wonder: Will his friends like it as much as he does? This debut picture book by Aisha Saeed, with charming illustrations by Anoosha Syed, uses food as a means of bringing a community together to share in each other's family traditions.

Coretta Scott

By Ntozake Shange, illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Ages: **4-8**

Celebrated poet and playwright Ntozake Shange captures the spirit of Civil Rights pioneer Coretta Scott King in this picture book biography gorgeously illustrated by Caldecott Medal artist Kadir Nelson. Walking many miles to school in the dusty road, young Coretta Scott knew the unfairness of life in the segregated south. A yearning for equality began to grow. Together with Martin Luther King, Jr., she helped lead change through nonviolent protest. It was the beginning of a journey—with dreams of freedom for all.

Dreamers

By Yuyi Morales

Ages: **4-8**

Dreamers is a celebration of making your home with the things you always carry: your resilience, your dreams, your hopes and history. It's the story of finding your way in a new place, of navigating an unfamiliar world and finding the best parts of it. In dark times, it's a promise that you can make better tomorrows. This lovingly-illustrated picture book memoir looks at the myriad gifts migrantes bring with them when they leave their homes. It's a story about family. And it's a story to remind us that we are all dreamers, bringing our own strengths wherever we roam. Beautiful and powerful at any time but given particular urgency as the status of our own Dreamers becomes uncertain, this is a story that is both topical and timeless. The lyrical text is complemented by sumptuously detailed illustrations, rich in symbolism. Also included are a brief autobiographical essay about Yuyi's own experience, a list of books that inspired her (and still do), and a description of the beautiful images, textures, and mementos she used to create this book. A parallel Spanish-language edition, *Soñadores*, is also available.

Hair Love

By Matthew A. Cherry, illustrated by Vashti Harrison

Ages: **4-8**

Zuri's hair has a mind of its own. It kinks, coils, and curls every which way. Zuri knows it's beautiful. When Daddy steps in to style it for an extra special occasion, he has a lot to learn. But he LOVES his Zuri, and he'll do anything to make her — and her hair — happy. Tender and empowering, Hair Love is an ode to loving your natural hair — and a celebration of daddies and daughters everywhere.

I Am Enough

By Grace Byers, illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo

Ages: **4-8**

This gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another comes from Empire actor and activist Grace Byers and talented newcomer artist Keturah A. Bobo. We are all here for a purpose. We are more than enough. We just need to believe it.

I Believe I Can

By Grace Byers

Ages: **4-8**

From the New York Times bestselling creators of I Am Enough comes an empowering follow-up that celebrates every child's limitless potential. I Believe I Can is an affirmation for boys and girls of every background to love and believe in themselves.

I Too, Am America

By Langston Hughes, illustrated by Bryan Collier

Ages: **4-8**

This picture book of Langston Hughes's celebrated poem, "I, Too, Am America," is also a Common Core Text Exemplar for Poetry.

It Began with a Page: How Gyo Fujikawa Drew the Way

By Kyo Maclear, illustrated by Julie Morstad

Ages: **4-8**

From beloved team Kyo Maclear and Julie Morstad (creators of Julia, Child and Bloom: A Story of Fashion Designer Elsa Schiaparelli) comes an elegant picture book biography that portrays the most moving moments in the life of Gyo Fujikawa, a groundbreaking Japanese American hero in the fight for racial diversity in picture books. Equal parts picture book biography, inspiring story, and a look at racial diversity in America, It Began with a Page is a gem for any book lover, librarian, or child who dares to dream big. Growing up in California, Gyo Fujikawa always knew that she wanted to be an artist. She was raised among strong women, including her mother and teachers, who encouraged her to fight for what she believed in. During World War II, Gyo's family was forced to abandon everything and was taken to an internment camp in Arkansas. Far away from home, Gyo worked as an illustrator in New York while her innocent family was imprisoned. Seeing the diversity around her and feeling pangs from her own childhood, Gyo became determined to show all types of children in the pages of her books. There had to be a world where they saw themselves represented. Gyo's book Babies was initially rejected by her publisher, but

after she insisted, they finally relented, and Babies went on to sell almost two million copies. Gyo's books paved the way for publishers, teachers, and readers to see what we can be when we welcome others into our world.

Let's Talk about Race

By Julius Lester

Ages: **4-8**

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. A strong choice for sharing at home or in the classroom. Karen Barbour's dramatic, vibrant paintings speak to the heart of Lester's unique vision, truly a celebration of all of us. "This stunning picture book introduces race as just one of many chapters in a person's story" (School Library Journal). "Lester's poignant picture book helps children learn, grow, discuss, and begin to create a future that resolves differences" (Children's Literature). Julius Lester said: "I write because our lives are stories. If enough of these stories are told, then perhaps we will begin to see that our lives are the same story. The differences are merely in the details." I am a story. So are you. So is everyone.

Mae Among the Stars

By Roda Ahmed, illustrated by Stasia Burrington

Ages: **4-8**

A great classroom and bedtime read-aloud, *Mae Among the Stars* is the perfect book for young readers who have big dreams and even bigger hearts. When Little Mae was a child, she dreamed of dancing in space. She imagined herself surrounded by billions of stars, floating, gliding, and discovering. She wanted to be an astronaut. Her mom told her, "If you believe it, and work hard for it, anything is possible." Little Mae's curiosity, intelligence, and determination, matched with her parents' encouraging words, paved the way for her incredible success at NASA as the first African American woman to travel in space. This book will inspire other young girls to reach for the stars, to aspire for the impossible, and to persist with childlike imagination.

Missing Daddy

By Mariame Kaba, illustrated by bria royal

Ages: **4-8**

Missing Daddy is a picture book for young readers ages 4 to 8. In this story, a little girl who misses her father because he's away in prison shares how his absence affects different parts of her life. Her greatest excitement is the days when she gets to visit her beloved father. With gorgeous illustrations, this book depicts a little girl's love for her father from whom she is separated because of incarceration. "Missing Daddy is a crucial book for our times. Using storytelling and gorgeous artwork, this book brings heart, soul, and deep compassion to the challenges facing kids with incarcerated parents. A much needed piece of children's literature." —Daniel José Older, New York Times bestselling author of *The Shadowshaper Cypher* and *Dactyl Hill Squad*

My Papi Has A Motorcycle

By Isabel Quintero, illustrated by Zeke Peña

Ages: **4-8**

A celebration of the love between a father and daughter, and of a vibrant immigrant neighborhood, by an award-winning author and illustrator duo. When Daisy Ramona zooms around her neighborhood with her papi on his motorcycle, she sees the people and places she's always known. She also sees a community that is rapidly changing around her. But as the sun sets purple-blue-gold behind Daisy Ramona and her papi, she knows that the love she feels will always be there. With vivid illustrations and text bursting with heart, *My Papi Has a Motorcycle* is a young girl's love letter to her hardworking dad and to memories of home that we hold close in the midst of change.

Saturday

By Oge Mora

Ages: **4-8**

In this warm and tender story by the Caldecott Honor-winning creator of *Thank You, Omu!*, join a mother and daughter on an up-and-down journey that reminds them of what's best about Saturdays: precious time together.

Something Happened in Our Town

By By Marianne Celano, PhD, ABPP, Marietta Collins, PhD, and Ann Hazzard, PhD, ABPP

Ages: **4-8**

A Black man is shot by a policeman, and Emma and Josh have questions. Emma asks her mom, "Why did the police shoot that man?" Josh asks his mom, "Can police go to jail?" Both families, one Black and one White, talk about the shooting, about the history of racial injustice in the United States, and about how they can help break the pattern of racism.

Sulwe

By Lupita Nyong'o, illustrated by Vashti Harrison

Ages: **4-8**

Sulwe has skin the color of midnight. She is darker than everyone in her family. She is darker than anyone in her school. Sulwe just wants to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister. Then a magical journey in the night sky opens her eyes and changes everything. In this stunning debut picture book, actress Lupita Nyong'o creates a whimsical and heartwarming story to inspire children to see their own unique beauty.

The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family

By Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali, illustrated by Hatem Aly

Ages: **4-8**

With her new backpack and light-up shoes, Faizah knows the first day of school is going to be special. It's the start of a brand new year and, best of all, it's her older sister Asiya's first day of hijab—a hijab of beautiful blue fabric, like the ocean waving to the sky. But not everyone sees hijab as beautiful, and in the face of hurtful, confusing words, Faizah will find new ways to be strong. Paired with Hatem Aly's beautiful, whimsical art, Olympic medalist Ibtihaj Muhammad and Morris Award finalist S.K. Ali bring readers an uplifting, universal story of new experiences, the unbreakable bond between siblings, and of being proud of who you are.

What is Light?

By Markette Sheppard and Cathy Ann Johnson

Ages: **4-8**

This lyrical and luminously illustrated picture book explores the beauty of the everyday moments in a child's world. Light can be so many things! The twinkle of a faraway star, a firefly captured in a jar, a mother's love, a turtle dove... Through this thoughtful and celebratory book, young readers will discover the special glow in everything from nature to the smiles of loved ones. Each page reveals a different sparkle found in a child's simple but extraordinary world. The light revealed on the final page makes a fitting finale for this sweet, bright tale.

When We Were Alone

By David A. Robertson, illustrated by Julie Flett

Ages: **4-8**

When a young girl helps tend to her grandmother's garden, she begins to notice things about her grandmother that make her curious. Why does her grandmother have long braided hair and wear beautifully coloured clothing? Why does she speak another language and spend so much time with her family? As she asks her grandmother about these things, she is told about life in a residential school a long time ago, where everything was taken away. When We Were Alone is a story about a difficult time in history and, ultimately, a story of empowerment and strength.

Where Are You From?

By Yamile Saied Méndez, illustrated by Jaime Kim

Ages: **4-8**

When a girl is asked where she's from—where she's really from—none of her answers seems to be the right one. Unsure about how to reply, she turns to her loving abuelo for help. He doesn't give her the response she expects. She gets an even better one. Where am I from? You're from hurricanes and dark storms, and a tiny singing frog that calls the island people home when the sun goes to sleep.... With themes of self-acceptance, identity, and home, this powerful, lyrical picture book will resonate with readers young and old, from all backgrounds and of all colors—especially anyone who ever felt that they don't belong.

Children's Books About Racism (<https://akidsbookabout.com/products/a-kids-book-about-racism>)

By Jelani Memory

Ages: **5+**

Yes, this really is a kids book about racism. Inside, you'll find a clear description of what racism is, how it makes people feel when they experience it, and how to spot it when it happens. This is one conversation that's never too early to start, and this book was written to be an introduction for kids on the topic.

That's Not Fair! Emma Tenayuca's Struggle for Justice

By Carmen Tafolla and Sharyll Tenayuca, illustrated by Terry Ybáñez

Ages: **5-7**

A vivid depiction of the early injustices encountered by a young Mexican-American girl in San Antonio in the 1920's, this book tells the true story of Emma Tenayuca. Emma learns to care deeply about poverty and hunger during a time when many Mexican Americans were starving to death and working unreasonably long hours at slave wages in the city's pecan-shelling factories. Through astute perception, caring, and personal action, Emma

begins to get involved, and eventually, at the age of 21, leads 12,000 workers in the first significant historical action in the Mexican-American struggle for justice. Emma Tenayuca's story serves as a model for young and old alike about courage, compassion, and the role everyone can play in making the world more fair.

Each Kindness

By Jacqueline Woodson

Ages: **5-8**

Winner of a Coretta Scott King Honor and the Jane Addams Peace Award. Each kindness makes the world a little better. This unforgettable book is written and illustrated by the award-winning team that created *The Other Side* and the Caldecott Honor winner *Coming On Home Soon*. With its powerful anti-bullying message and striking art, it will resonate with readers long after they've put it down. Chloe and her friends won't play with the new girl, Maya. Every time Maya tries to join Chloe and her friends, they reject her. Eventually Maya stops coming to school. When Chloe's teacher gives a lesson about how even small acts of kindness can change the world, Chloe is stung by the lost opportunity for friendship, and thinks about how much better it could have been if she'd shown a little kindness toward Maya.

Sing a Song: How "Lift Every Voice and Sing" Inspired Generations

By Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by Keith Mallett

Ages: **5-8**

In Jacksonville, Florida, two brothers, one of them the principal of a segregated, all-black school, wrote the song "Lift Every Voice and Sing" so his students could sing it for a tribute to Abraham Lincoln's birthday in 1900. From that moment on, the song has provided inspiration and solace for generations of Black families. Mothers and fathers passed it on to their children who sang it to their children and grandchildren. Known as the Black National Anthem, it has been sung during major moments of the Civil Rights Movement and at family gatherings and college graduations. Inspired by this song's enduring significance, Kelly Starling Lyons and Keith Mallett tell a story about the generations of families who gained hope and strength from the song's inspiring words.

The Day You Begin

By Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael López

Ages: **5-8**

There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you. There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody really knows you yet, but somehow you do it. Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael López's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway.

A Different Pond

By Bao Phi, illustrated by Thi Bui

Ages: **5-9**

A 2018 Caldecott Honor Book that Kirkus Reviews calls "a must-read for our times," *A Different Pond* is an unforgettable story about a simple event - a long-ago fishing trip. Graphic novelist Thi Bui and acclaimed poet Bao Phi deliver a powerful, honest glimpse into a relationship between father and son - and between cultures, old and new. As a young boy, Bao and his father awoke early, hours before his father's long workday began, to fish on the

shores of a small pond in Minneapolis. Unlike many other anglers, Bao and his father fished for food, not recreation. A successful catch meant a fed family. Between hope-filled casts, Bao's father told him about a different pond in their homeland of Vietnam. Thi Bui's striking, evocative art paired with Phi's expertly crafted prose has earned this powerful picture books six starred reviews and numerous awards.

Viola Desmond Won't Be Budged!

By Jody Nyasha Warner and Richard Rudnicki

Ages: **5-9**

In 1946, Viola Desmond bought a movie ticket at the Roseland Theatre in Nova Scotia. After settling into a main floor seat, an usher came by and told her to move, because her ticket was only good for the balcony. She offered to pay the difference in price but was refused: "You people have to sit in the upstairs section." Viola refused to move. She was hauled off to jail, but her actions gave strength and inspiration to Canada's black community. Vibrant illustrations and oral-style prose tell Viola's story with sympathy and historical accuracy.

The Young Marcher

By Cynthia Levinson

Ages: **5-10**

Meet the youngest known child to be arrested for a civil rights protest in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963, in this moving picture book that proves you're never too little to make a difference. Nine-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks intended to go places and do things like anybody else. So when she heard grown-ups talk about wiping out Birmingham's segregation laws, she spoke up. As she listened to the preacher's words, smooth as glass, she sat up tall. And 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! Audrey Faye Hendricks was confident and bold and brave as can be, and hers is the remarkable and inspiring story of one child's role in the Civil Rights Movement.

When I Was Eight

By Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard

Ages: **6-7**

Olemaun is eight and knows a lot of things. But she does not know how to read. Ignoring her father's warnings, she travels far from her Arctic home to the outsiders' school to learn. The nuns at the school call her Margaret. They cut off her long hair and force her to do menial chores, but she remains undaunted. Her tenacity draws the attention of a black-cloaked nun who tries to break her spirit at every turn. But the young girl is more determined than ever to learn how to read. Based on the true story of Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, and complemented by stunning illustrations, *When I Was Eight* makes the bestselling *Fatty Legs* accessible to younger readers. Now they, too, can meet this remarkable girl who reminds us what power we hold when we can read.

Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation

By Duncan Tonatiuh

Ages: **6-9**

When her family moved to the town of Westminster, California, young Sylvia Mendez was excited about enrolling in her neighborhood school. But she and her brothers were turned away and told they had to attend the Mexican school instead. Sylvia could not understand why—she was an American citizen who spoke perfect English. Why were the children of Mexican families forced to attend a separate school? Unable to get a satisfactory answer

from the school board, the Mendez family decided to take matters into its own hands and organize a lawsuit. In the end, the Mendez family's efforts helped bring an end to segregated schooling in California in 1947, seven years before the landmark Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* ended segregation in schools across America. Using his signature illustration style and incorporating his interviews with Sylvia Mendez, as well as information from court files and news accounts, award-winning author and illustrator Duncan Tonatiuh tells the inspiring story of the Mendez family's fight for justice and equality.

The Undefeated

By Kwame Alexander and Kadir Nelson

Ages: **6-9**

Winner of the 2020 Caldecott Medal

A 2020 Newbery Honor Book. Winner of the 2020 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award. The Newbery Award-winning author of *THE CROSSOVER* pens an ode to black American triumph and tribulation, with art from a two-time Caldecott Honoree. Originally performed for ESPN's *The Undefeated*, this poem is a love letter to black life in the United States. It highlights the unspeakable trauma of slavery, the faith and fire of the civil rights movement, and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes. The text is also peppered with references to the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others, offering deeper insights into the accomplishments of the past, while bringing stark attention to the endurance and spirit of those surviving and thriving in the present. Robust back matter at the end provides valuable historical context and additional detail for those wishing to learn more.

Dream Builder: The Story of Architect Philip Freelon

By Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by Laura Freeman

Ages: **6-10**

Philip Freelon's grandfather was an acclaimed painter of the Harlem Renaissance. His father was a successful businessman who attended the 1963 March on Washington. When Phil decided to attend architecture school, he created his own focus on African American and Islamic designers. He later chose not to build casinos or prisons, instead concentrating on schools, libraries, and museums--buildings that connect people with heritage and fill hearts with joy. And in 2009, Phil's team won a commission that let him use his personal history in service to the country's: the extraordinary Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Dream Builder: The Story of Architect Philip Freelon celebrates a contemporary black STEAM role model, a man whose quiet work enabled the creation of an iconic building reflecting America's past and future. With a stirring text by Kelly Starling Lyons, vibrant pictures by Laura Freeman, and an afterword from Philip Freelon himself, it is sure to inspire the next generation of dreamers and builders.

Here's a list of some of the museums and spaces Philip Freelon designed or helped to design: National Museum of African American History & Culture (Washington, DC); National Center for Civil & Human Rights (Atlanta, GA), Museum of the African Diaspora (San Francisco, CA), Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture (Baltimore, MD), Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture (Charlotte, NC), Emancipation Park (Houston, TX), Durham Bulls Athletic Park (Durham, NC), Expansion of the Motown Museum (Detroit, MI), Mississippi Civil Rights Museum (Jackson, MS)

Unstoppable: How Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team Defeated Army

By Art Coulson, illustrated by Nick Hardcastle

Ages: 6-10

In the autumn of 1912, the football team from Carlisle Indian Industrial School took the field at the U.S. Military Academy, home to the bigger, stronger, and better-equipped West Point Cadets. Sportswriters billed the game as a sort of rematch, pitting against each other the descendants of U.S. soldiers and American Indians who fought on the battlefield only 20 years earlier. But for lightning-fast Jim Thorpe and the other Carlisle players, that day's game was about skill, strategy, and determination. Known for unusual formations and innovative plays, the Carlisle squad was out to prove just one thing—that it was the best football team in all the land.

Shining Star: The Anna May Wong Story

By Paula Yoo, illustrated by Lin Wang

Ages: 6-11

Born in 1905, Anna May Wong spent her childhood working in her family's laundry in Los Angeles's Chinatown. Whenever she could afford it, Anna May slipped off to the movies, escaping to a world of adventure, glamour, and excitement. After seeing a movie being filmed in her neighborhood, young Anna May was hooked. She decided she would become a movie star! Anna May struggled to pursue an acting career in Hollywood in the 1930s. There were very few roles for Asian Americans, and many were demeaning and stereotypical. Anna May made the most of each limited part. She worked hard and always gave her best performance. Finally, after years of unfulfilling roles, Anna May began crusading for more meaningful roles for herself and other Asian American actors. Anna May Wong—the first Chinese American movie star—was a pioneer of the cinema. Her spirited determination in the face of discrimination is an inspiration to all who must overcome obstacles so that their dreams may come true.

Ruth and the Green Book

By Calvin Alexander Ramsey, illustrated by Floyd Cooper

Ages: 7-11

Ruth was so excited to take a trip in her family's new car! In the early 1950s, few African Americans could afford to buy cars, so this would be an adventure. But she soon found out that black travelers weren't treated very well in some towns. Many hotels and gas stations refused service to black people. Daddy was upset about something called Jim Crow laws . . . Finally, a friendly attendant at a gas station showed Ruth's family The Green Book. It listed all of the places that would welcome black travelers. With this guidebook—and the kindness of strangers—Ruth could finally make a safe journey from Chicago to her grandma's house in Alabama. Ruth's story is fiction, but The Green Book and its role in helping a generation of African American travelers avoid some of the indignities of Jim Crow are historical fact.

The Whispering Town

By Jennifer Elvgren, illustrated by Fabio Santomauro

Ages: 7-11

In The Whispering Town it is 1943 in Nazi-occupied Denmark. Anett and her parents are hiding a Jewish woman and her son, Carl, in their cellar until a fishing boat can take them across the sound to safety in neutral Sweden. With the help of the baker, the librarian, the farmer, and her neighbors, Anett keeps Carl and his mother safe even as Nazi soldiers search her street for hidden Jews. With the Nazis closing in, and worried about Carl's safety, Anett thinks of a clever and unusual plan to get Carl and his mother safely to the harbor on a cloudy night without the moon to guide them. Based on a true story.

Little Legends: Exceptional Men in Black History

By Vashti Harrison

Ages: **8-12**

An important book for readers of all ages, this beautifully illustrated and engagingly written volume brings to life true stories of black men in history. Among these biographies, readers will find aviators and artists, politicians and pop stars, athletes and activists. The exceptional men featured include writer James Baldwin, artist Aaron Douglas, filmmaker Oscar Devereaux Micheaux, lawman Bass Reeves, civil rights leader John Lewis, dancer Alvin Ailey, and musician Prince. The legends in *Little Legends: Exceptional Men in Black History* span centuries and continents, but each one has blazed a trail for generations to come.

Memphis, Martin, and the Mountaintop

By Alice Faye Duncan, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Ages: **8-12**

In February 1968, two African American sanitation workers were killed by unsafe equipment in Memphis, Tennessee. Outraged at the city's refusal to recognize a labor union that would fight for higher pay and safer working conditions, sanitation workers went on strike. The strike lasted two months, during which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was called to help with the protests. While his presence was greatly inspiring to the community, this unfortunately would be his last stand for justice. He was assassinated in his Memphis hotel the day after delivering his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" sermon in Mason Temple Church. Inspired by the memories of a teacher who participated in the strike as a child, author Alice Faye Duncan reveals the story of the Memphis sanitation strike from the perspective of a young girl with a riveting combination of poetry and prose.

New Kid

By Jerry Craft

Ages: **8-12**

Winner of the Newbery Medal, Coretta Scott King Author Award, and Kirkus Prize for Young Readers' Literature! Perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier and Gene Luen Yang, *New Kid* is a timely, honest graphic novel about starting over at a new school where diversity is low and the struggle to fit in is real, from award-winning author-illustrator Jerry Craft.

Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness

By Anastasia Higginbotham

Ages: **8-12**

The latest in the Ordinary Terrible Things series, a white child sees TV coverage of a police shooting—and has some questions. "A much-needed title that provides a strong foundation for critical discussions of white people and racism, particularly for young audiences. Recommended for all collections.

—Ashleigh Williams, *School Library Journal*, starred review

"A necessary children's book about whiteness, white supremacy, and resistance. Important, accessible, needed."
—Kirkus

"Anastasia Higginbotham knows something that far too many of us have forgotten: Children are smart. Children are observant. Children understand fairness and justice. and they have an immense capacity for engaging with the "difficult" topics that we grown-ups too often try to avoid. I am in love with *Not My Idea*, and with Higginbotham's direct, radical, compassionate approach to talking about whiteness, racism, and the need to tell painful but

important truths. As a white parent working to raise conscious, loving, anti-racist humans, I cannot wait to share it with my kids."

—Kate Schatz, NYT-bestselling author of *Rad American Women A-Z*, *Rad Women Worldwide*, and *Rad Girls Can*

Resist

By Veronica Chambers

Ages: **8-12**

A perfect tool for young readers as they grow into the leaders of tomorrow, Veronica Chambers's inspiring collection of profiles—along with Senator Cory Booker's stirring foreword—will inspire readers of all ages to stand up for what's right. You may only be one person, but you have the power to change the world.

Before they were activists, they were just like you and me. From Frederick Douglass to Malala Yousafzai, Joan of Arc to John Lewis, Susan B. Anthony to Janet Mock—these remarkable figures show us what it means to take a stand and say no to injustice, even when it would be far easier to stay quiet.

Resist profiles men and women who resisted tyranny, fought the odds, and stood up to bullies that threatened to harm their communities. Along with their portraits and most memorable quotes, their stories will inspire you to speak out and rise up—every single day.

Lost Tribe Series

By Christine Taylor-Butler

Ages: **9-12**

Five friends are in a race against time in this action-adventure story involving ancient tribal artifacts that hold the fate of the universe in the balance. None of these trailblazers imagined their ordinary parents as scientists on a secret mission. But when their parents go missing, they are forced into unfathomable circumstances and learn of a history that is best left unknown, for they are catalysts in an ancient score that must be settled. As the chaos unfolds, opportunities arise that involve cracking codes and anticipating their next moves. This book unfolds sturdy, accurate scientific facts and history knowledge where readers will surely become participants.

Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library

By Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Eric Velasquez

Ages: **9-12**

Amid the scholars, poets, authors, and artists of the Harlem Renaissance stood an Afro–Puerto Rican named Arturo Schomburg. This law clerk's life's passion was to collect books, letters, music, and art from Africa and the African diaspora and bring to light the achievements of people of African descent through the ages. When Schomburg's collection became so big it began to overflow his house (and his wife threatened to mutiny), he turned to the New York Public Library, where he created and curated a collection that was the cornerstone of a new Negro Division. A century later, his groundbreaking collection, known as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, has become a beacon to scholars all over the world.

In luminous paintings and arresting poems, two of children's literature's top African-American scholars track Arturo Schomburg's quest to correct history.

Young Water Protectors: A Story About Standing Rock

By Aslan and Kelly Tudor

Ages: **9-12**

At the not-so-tender age of 8, Aslan arrived in North Dakota to help stop a pipeline. A few months later he returned - and saw the whole world watching. Read about his inspiring experiences in the Oceti Sakowin Camp at Standing Rock. Learn about what exactly happened there, and why. Be inspired by Aslan's story of the daily life of Standing Rock's young water protectors.