Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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INTERACTIVE CATALOG

#AllBooksForAllKids
See What’s Inside

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- True Equity and Diversity in the School Library

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- First Chapter Fridays – Ryan La Sala

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Why Your Students Need Diverse Books

Your students and their needs are changing. How much?

The number of homeless children has increased 70% since 1991.

25% of students are from an immigrant household.

9.6% are English Language Learners (ELL).

9.2% of youth ages 13-17 identify as LGBTQ+.

7% are enrolled in gifted programs.

14% receive special education services.

The majority of the student population under the age of 15 is not White.
“A bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. Thanks to their dad, he and his twin brother, Jordan, are family. Told in dynamic verse, this fast and furious middle grade novel bounces with rhythm and bursts with heart.

The Crossover
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers • www.hmhco.com

Warm-Up
- Set the stage by researching YouTube videos featuring basketball videos and comparing them to the story. Invite the basketball coach or physical education teacher to collaborate with you in describing or demonstrating the game of basketball.
- Act. Work together to draw character sketches or find magazine or Web-based images that look like these heroes. Invite the basketball coach or physical education teacher to collaborate with you in describing or demonstrating the game of basketball.

Fourth Quarter
- Overtime
- RL.6.3

3. Nicknames are an important part of this story and help us understand and relate to the characters. Read aloud the poems “How I Got My Nickname” (pp. 6–7) and the nicknames in the story. Invite students to talk about their favorites to practice and perform for the class.

4. Set the stage by researching YouTube videos featuring basketball videos and comparing them to the story. Invite the basketball coach or physical education teacher to collaborate with you in describing or demonstrating the game of basketball.

5. Several of the poems in this novel lend themselves to a readers’ theater performance, so that students can get a sense of the characters’ voices. The following poems offer killers that can be used in two parts: plain text and italicized text for two volunteers or two groups to read aloud in turn.

6. Several of Kwame Alexander’s poems in this novel of his favorites to practice and perform for the class.

7. Challenge students to write their own “vocabulary” and compare your findings with the vocabulary poem.

8. Raise the bar on students by looking up some of these words in a dictionary (or online) and comparing your findings with the vocabulary poem.

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African Proverbs: For All Ages Johnnetta Betsch Cole and Nelda LaTeef • Black Heroes of the Wild West James Otis Smith
Chinese Immigrants: In Their Shoes Janie Havemeyer • Cuba in My Pocket Adrianna Cuevas • Gittel's Journey: An Ellis Island Story Lesléa Newman

Journal of a Travelling Girl Nadine Neema • A Long Pitch Home Natalie Dias Lorenzi • Nathan's Song Leda Schubert
The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family Ibtihaj Muhammad • When We Are Kind Monique Gray Smith
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and other discerning readers

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**BOOKS THAT SPEAK WITH MANY VOICES**

**The First Blade of Sweetgrass**
A Native American Story
★ “A sweet story, deeply personal, thoughtfully detailed.”
—Publishers Weekly starred

**Have I Ever Told You Black Lives Matter**
★ “A must-purchase that will empower Black children.”
—School Library Journal starred
★ “Black history and culture come alive.”
—Booklist starred

**2021 CORETTA SCOTT KING ILLUSTRATION HONOR WINNER!**
**Magnificent Homespun Brown**
A Celebration
★ “This celebration makes magic.”
—Kirkus starred
★ “A magnificent paean to a varied hue.”
—Publishers Weekly starred
★ “A must-read.”
—School Library Journal starred

**Lailah’s Lunchbox**
A Ramadan Story
An ALA Notable Book for Children
2019 Daybreak Picture Book Award Winner
ISBN 978-0-88448-431-8

**The Arabic Quilt**
An Immigrant Story
2021 Arab American Book Award
★ “A timely, heart-warming story.”
—School Library Journal starred
ISBN 978-0-88448-754-8

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Representation matters. This phrase has become widely popular in just about every sector of our culture within the last decade. From movies and television shows to politics, and of course, throughout literature, the gospel truth is that representation does matter. It’s this idea that people like to see and hear stories about people who look, sound, and live just like them.

I am no different. As an African American, an avid reader, and an educator, not only do I want to read books about other awe-inspiring Black people, but I also want opportunities for my students to experience the same. Just as much as my kids can turn on the local radio and literally hear their stories being sung across the airwaves, I want them to be able to see themselves mirrored throughout the stories on the pages they choose to read.

This is why representation matters.

And this is why I selected these books! I wanted to string together a list of works that could easily captivate the minds of young readers, and also resonate with them on a personal level. I figured these books might draw reluctant readers out of their shell and into a world they never imagined they’d actually see themselves in.

“It’s this idea that people like to see and hear stories about people who look, sound, and live just like them.”

But the question remains, “Why books?” And more importantly, “Why do children need to read books about things they already know?”

Here’s my answer: If through reading kids can transport themselves into a world they’re already familiar with, it will almost feel as if they’re no longer reading about being in someone else’s shoes, but instead, they are walking in them. This is why readers will often admit that they’ve gotten “lost in a book.” The words coming from the pages completely snatch them up!

So, when my kids from the west side of Chicago read Kwame Alexander’s basketball book, *The Crossover*, they aren’t just walking in Filthy McNasty’s Jordan brand shoes, they’re running and dunking in them!

This is what we want, ya’ll – for our kids to see themselves in action!

In class, I’ll often share funny stories from childhood with my scholars. These stories are usually pretty common among Black families and speak to the average Black experience in America. All throughout my storytelling, my kids are nodding in agreement, laughing their heads off, and literally...
Dwayne Reed

screaming phrases like “YAAAS! I know exactly what you talkin’ ‘bout!” They’re familiar with the stories and feel a sense of belonging as they engage with their own reality.

“The phrase representation matters is not just a buzzword to me. It’s a must, a reality that I am constantly fighting for.”

We want books to do this to and for our readers.

I want books like Big Hair, Don’t Care and Crown to show my little Black girls and boys that their hair is beautiful, no matter how kinky, curly, or nappy it might be. I want books like Nelson Mandela, The Undefeated, and March to inspire their young minds and challenge them to take action in fighting for what they know to be true!

I want my girls to read Dancing in the Wings and truly believe they can make something of themselves by expressing the passion and rhythm and heart they have within. And for my fellas, I want them to feel motivated to work hard, to discipline themselves, and to shoot for the stars after reading sports books like Home Court, The Crossover, and Ghost.

The phrase representation matters is not just a buzzword to me. It’s a must, a reality that I am constantly fighting for. I want my students, and students everywhere, to have the chance at seeing themselves in the books they have around them. I want every reader, regardless of their circumstances, life experiences, or reading ability, to have at least one opportunity to nod, laugh, and say, “YAAAS! I know exactly what you talkin’ ‘bout!”

This is why representation matters. Happy reading, ya’all!

Mr. Reed

You probably know Dwayne from his viral music video, “Welcome to the 4th Grade.” Dwayne’s mission is to reach students – sometimes through music, but always with purpose and enthusiasm.
Carla and the Christmas Cornbread  
Carla Hall • Chinese New Year: A Celebration for Everyone  
Jen Sookfong Lee
Day of the Dead  
Patricia Hutchison • Diwali: Festival of Lights  
Rina Singh • Every Month Is a New Year: Celebrations Around the World  
Marilyn Singer

Pete the Cat: Five Little Bunnies  
Kimberly and James Dean • If You Lived During the Plimoth Thanksgiving  
Chris Newell
The Passover Parrot  
Evelyn Zusman • Three Ways to Trap a Leprechaun  
Tara Lazar • Tim O'Toole and the Wee Folk: An Irish Tale  
Gerald McDermott

Elementary School: Holidays and Traditions
See full list.
Insights at a Glance

Follett Tags help you quickly find the best, most relevant materials, handpicked by our team of educators. Explore by genre or by cross-curricular topics around diversity and inclusion.

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Artemis: Goddess of Hunting and Protector of Animals  Teri Temple
Beauty and the Beast: A Story About Trust  Meredith Rusu
The Book of Mythical Beasts & Magical Creatures  Stephen Krensky
Feathered Serpent and the Five Suns: A Mesoamerican Creation Myth  Duncan Tonatiuh
Folktales for Fearless Girls: The Stories We Were Never Told  Myriam Sayalero
Hansel and Gretel  Jessica Gunderson

It Is a Tree  Susan Batori
Jewish Fairy Tale Feasts: A Literary Cookbook  Jane Yolen
Little Bird's Day  Sally Morgan
Mythical Creatures: Mermaids  Lisa Owings
Rapunzel  Bethan Woollvin
The Star Festival  Moni Ritchie Hadley

Elementary School: Folktales
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Our expert team of licensed teachers and certified librarians will create a custom, curated resource list based on the diverse needs of your students and curriculum. The best part – it's all free!

Free Personalized Curation

Find out how the team helped Albuquerque Public Schools bring culturally relevant and bilingual books into student homes.

Learn More
Jo Jo Makoons: The Used-to-Be Best Friend Dawn Quigley • Niki Nakayama: Chef’s Tale in 13 Bites Debbi Michiko Florence and Jamie Michalak
The Paper Boat: A Refugee Story Thao Lam • Stef Soto, Taco Queen Jennifer Torres • My Fate According to the Butterfly Gail D. Villanueva

The Circus Comes to the Village Yutaka Kobayashi • Book Uncle and Me Julianna Swaney • Eyes That Kiss in the Corners Joanna Ho
George Alex Gino • Jigging for Halibut with Tsinii Sara Florence Davidson and Robert Davidson

Elementary School: #OwnVoices
See full list.
Watch Vanessa Brantley-Newton, author and illustrator of *Just Like Me*, *Grandma’s Purse*, and other inclusive works, discuss her inspiration for storytelling and illustrating. She also provides activity ideas to help children celebrate diversity and what makes them each unique.

Watch Video

Find these books and free resources on Titlewave®. Don’t have a Titlewave account? Learn more here.

Popular authors discuss their books and share how to incorporate them into classroom plans.

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Follett Classroom Library Manager is a free tool to help you assess and organize your classroom library, but it’s also a chance to make sure the books you’re offering meet the needs of all your students.

Keep your library organized around diverse and inclusive topics, such as global celebrations, diverse family structure, or different abilities, with Classroom Library Manager. You’ll encourage students to strengthen not only their reading skills but also their emotional literacy.
An Interview with Author

Mượn Thị Văn

and Illustrator

Victo Ngai

Based on events that occurred in the author’s life, Wishes [Orchard Books (Scholastic), May 2021] is a poetic telling of the story of a Vietnamese family’s search for a new home. Written by Mượn Thị Văn and illustrated by Victo Ngai, the story is told through the eyes of a young girl who accompanies her family as they must pack their belongings and leave loved ones behind.

What inspired you to write Wishes?

Mượn Thị Văn: I wrote this story after the Muslim travel ban went into effect in 2017, a ban that has now put the lives of many thousands of refugees in limbo. Many Americans were outraged and saddened by this ban when it was first announced. But there were many others who supported it or who were indifferent to it and who were very suspicious of all migrants in general. Because of this, I wanted to write a story where the reader could see and feel the story from the inside – from inside a family of refugees and from inside the heart of a refugee.
How is the story intertwined with your family's experiences?

Mượn Thị Văn: The story is based on my family’s journey as refugees and migrants from Việt Nam nearly 40 years ago, when I was just a baby. Like many others in our small and close-knit village, we fled to Hong Kong to escape political persecution, poverty, and oppression. I grew up listening to my parents and relatives tell stories of their journeys, and I tried to capture and distill their experiences with these words. Lines like, “The dream wished it was longer” and “The heart wished it was stronger” were written with specific consequential moments in mind, while others like, “The light wished it was brighter” turned out to be more deeply connected than I had thought (a faint light in the distance saved us after we encountered a terrible storm that nearly took our lives).

Tell us about the emotions you were looking to evoke from readers with your illustrations.

Victo Ngai: Home is a central theme in Wishes – being uprooted from it and the wish to build another one somewhere else, somewhere safe. I hope the readers can, for however brief a moment, feel the sense of displacement, loss, fear, and hope as our protagonist does. In order to achieve this, the pages need to carry the warmth, tactility, and beautiful imperfections of home.

A couple winters ago, I went back to China to visit my grandma, who has been living in the same house for decades, the same house where I have spent countless summers as a kid. I took photos of the peeled paint, the cracked walls, the bubbled glass and the rusted doorframes, which eventually found their ways into this book. As my grandma lost her sight and hearing, her favorite pastime has become sunbathing on her patio. I sat there with her one afternoon, quietly watching the sunlight dance across surfaces. Its hazy, transient quality is not unlike memories – despite our effort to hold on to them, their corners soften and their details blur. In the end what's left is an impression, a feeling, and a temperature. I decided this is the kind of mood and tone I would like to achieve with my art for Wishes.
Why? A Conversation About Race
Taye Diggs
Feiwel & Friends
2021 • IL K-3
Why? is a question asked by children daily, and in this striking and timely story, it begins a straightforward and challenging conversation between children of color and the adults in their lives.

Activists Assemble: We Are All Equal!
Shannon Weber
All Because You Matter
Tami Charles
Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls Are Used in War
Jessica Dee Humphreys

Crenshaw
Katherine Applegate
The Name Jar
Yangsook Choi
On Our Street: Our First Talk About Poverty
Jillian Roberts and Jaime Casap
Paper Wishes
Lois Sepahban
The Racial Justice Movement (The Black American Journey)
Kara L. Laughlin

Elementary School: Social Justice
See full list.
TODAY’S READERS ARE TOMORROW’S LEADERS

Engage young readers with these stories of trailblazers.

⭐ “Weatherford and Freeman paint a tender picture of the leader that shows his sensitivity and concern for others, rooted in his religion, that spanned his entire life.”
—Kirkus Reviews, starred review

Nancy Pelosi smashed the marble ceiling and forged a path for so many other women to join her “at the table.”

⭐ “An undeniably indelible woman inspiring readers to reach their own heights.”
—Kirkus Reviews, starred review

⭐ “A timely and inspiring biography of a great woman who broke barriers and used her voice to elevate those around her.”
—Kirkus Reviews

A powerful memoir that reveals the struggles, joys, love, and ongoing resilience it took to grow up Black in segregated America.

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Why Your School Library Needs Mirror and Window Books

Watch our recorded webinar exploring Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop’s concept of mirror and window books, how to analyze your collection for diversity, and ways to incorporate instructional technology, hosted by Michelle Easley.

Michelle Easley has served as a teacher and as a media specialist at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school.
New Titles from Renée Watson

Ways to Grow Love
Renée Watson • Bloomsbury
Children’s Books
2021 • IL 3-6
In the summer before fifth grade, Ryan Hart continues to grow through changes and challenges, such as waiting for a new baby sister to be born, a summer camp trip, and more.

Ways to Make Sunshine
Renée Watson • Bloomsbury
Children’s Books
2021 • IL 3-6
The Hart family of Portland, Oregon, faces many setbacks after Ryan’s father loses his job, but no matter what, Ryan tries to bring sunshine to her loved ones.

Adventures with My Daddies
Gareth Peter

Islandborn
Junot Díaz • Our Own Place: All Kinds of Homes
Lisa Bullard

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

See full list.
New Titles from Yamile Saied Méndez

What Will You Be?
Yamile Saied Méndez • Harper 2021 • IL K-3
What will you be when you grow up? A young girl dreams about all the endless possibilities, sparking a sense of wonder, curiosity, and growth. With her abuela’s loving guidance, she learns her potential is limitless.

Where Are You From?
Yamile Saied Méndez • Harper 2019 • IL K-3
With themes of self-acceptance, identity, and home, this powerful, lyrical picture book tells the story of one girl who constantly gets asked where she’s from – where she’s really from – but none of her answers seems to be the right one.

Rosetown Summer
Cynthia Rylant

Thank You, Omu!
Oge Mora • What's Life Like with a Single Parent?
Patty Swinton

Elementary School: Families
See full list.
Mariama J. Lockington

Watch author Mariama J. Lockington discuss her highly reviewed debut novel, *For Black Girls Like Me*. This #OwnVoices novel about a Black girl adopted into a white family explores themes of identity, family, friendship, bullying, and mental health.

**Watch Video**

Popular authors discuss their books and share how to incorporate them into classroom plans.

**Explore more Author Takeovers.**

**Discussion Questions for *For Black Girls Like Me* by Mariama J. Lockington**

1. When we meet Keda, she is on the road with her mom and sister, moving from Baltimore, Maryland, to Albuquerque, New Mexico. What does Keda notice about the changing landscape as they drive? Describe a time that you moved to a new state or took a road trip with your family. What did you see outside the window?

2. In Keda's family, classical music is legacy—a tradition passed down through generations. What's a legacy or family tradition passed down in your family?

3. Keda's "special day" is the day she was adopted into her family. While Keda loves the story her dad tells her about that day, she feels like "she'll never be whole." Who is missing from Keda's origin story? What's your origin story, and why is it important to have one?

4. Keda describes herself as "not like the rest" of her family, and when she starts her new school kids ask her questions like: "Why do you talk so white?" "Did your parents find you in a trash can?" How do you think these kinds of questions make Keda feel? What are some questions people ask you that make you feel singled out?
Dancing with Daddy  Anitra Rowe Schulte  •  El Deafo  Cece Bell  •  Five Things About Ava Andrews  Margaret Dilloway  
I Am Odd, I Am New  Benjamin Giroux  •  A Kind of Spark  Elle McNicoll

My Art, My World  Rita Winkler  •  My Life with Blindness  Mari Schuh  •  Not If I Can Help It  Carolyn Mackler  
We Can: Portraits of Power  Tyler Gordon  •  Unstopabble: Women with Disabilities  Helen Wolfe

Elementary School: Diversability

See full list.
An Interview with Areli Is a Dreamer Author

Areli Morales
and Illustrator

Luisa Uribe

In the first picture book written by a DACA Dreamer, Areli Morales tells her own powerful immigration story, resonating with millions of immigrants who make up the fabric of our country, of moving from a quiet town in Mexico to the bustling metropolis of New York City.

What inspired you to write and illustrate Areli is a Dreamer?

Areli: Areli Is a Dreamer was inspired by my own immigration story and my experience being a child of two worlds. Through this personal book, I wanted to share all the complexities that come along when one leaves their home country to pursue a better life in a new place. Through my story, I want immigrant children and adults to feel seen, be heard, and know that their stories matter too.

Luisa: I was inspired by Areli’s words. Her story resonated with me because I knew that it was a story shared by many others. And I knew that the book would find a home with many families that have gone through the same thing. I also loved the opportunity to show how hard and brave it is to leave loved ones behind in search of something better.
What was the most difficult part about writing and illustrating *Areli Is a Dreamer*? What part was the easiest?

**Areli:** I became fully aware of my undocumented status at a very young age and was struck with fear when I realized that everything could be taken away at any moment if I spoke about my first home. For many years I kept my status a secret because I thought my silence would keep my family safe and united. It was a challenge to find the courage to break out of that silence and write my story down on paper. It feels liberating to share my true story and meet new people that share similar experiences. Sometimes, I did not have the right words to communicate my experience to a younger audience through the perspective of a child. Thankfully I had the support of my agent, Brenda Bowen, who is also a talented children’s book author. She helped me find the right words to address the complex emotions and circumstances. The easiest part was writing about my relationship with my abuela, my brother, and my parents. However, there are so many wonderful relatives and friends that cared for me and nurtured my growth. I wish I could have included these people and the special moments I shared with them but couldn’t due to the length of the picture book. The famous phrase “it takes a village to raise a child” rings true in my childhood both in Mexico and New York. One day, I hope to write about my lovely aunt Rocío, who brought me lunch every day in kindergarten. My friend Rose, the owner of my first home in New York City who treated my family like her own family, and my late grandfather Jorge, who took my brother and me on rides in his old red pickup truck around our small town in Puebla.

**Luisa:** Getting the moments of emotion were hard for me. I felt that I had to do justice to the sad but hopeful points in the story. When Areli leaves her grandma and arrives in New York, her being so small making such a hard journey, and the embrace of her parents afterward – those images were hard. The easiest drawings were the happy and hopeful moments. Drawing the pictures of Areli thriving was exciting and motivating after drawing her struggles earlier in the book.

For Areli: How do you feel about seeing your story in a picture book? Is there any part of your personal journey that you wished could be included but didn’t work for a picture-book audience or length?

**Areli:** It feels absolutely magical and surreal to see my story documented in a picture book gorgeously illustrated by Luisa Uribe. The pairing of my words and Luisa’s illustrations beautifully captures the hardships, lessons, and triumphs of my immigration story. I also feel privileged to share my story with the world because so many undocumented immigrants still don’t have that privilege. In the book, I focused on my relationship with my abuela, my brother, and my parents. However, there are so many wonderful relatives and friends that cared for me and nurtured my growth. I wish I could have included these people and the special moments I shared with them but couldn’t due to the length of the picture book. The famous phrase “it takes a village to raise a child” rings true in my childhood both in Mexico and New York. One day, I hope to write about my lovely aunt Rocío, who brought me lunch every day in kindergarten. My friend Rose, the owner of my first home in New York City who treated my family like her own family, and my late grandfather Jorge, who took my brother and me on rides in his old red pickup truck around our small town in Puebla.

For Luisa: What character or element of the story do you identify with the most and why? Do you approach visual depictions of a living person and current events differently from fictional stories and characters?

**Luisa:** My sister left Colombia years ago and now lives in the US, and many relatives and good friends live far away – some halfway around the world. They are all looking for a better life for themselves and their families, and I miss them, but I’m happy for them. Coming from a country where opportunities to grow and live well are scarce, I understand the need to look for something better and to make sacrifices so that your family can have a better future.

As for the challenges of depicting a living person’s story, it is a process that requires a lot of research. It’s obviously important to get the characters, the setting, and all details of the story as accurate as possible so that it feels authentic. It was also a challenge to maintain the accuracy of the details, but also be able to add poetry and magic to the images, because it’s something that I like to do. Some of the choices are already made for you, in a way, which is an interesting challenge. And it was helpful to have Areli, who lived the story, to let me know if anything didn’t feel exactly right.
What do you want kids to take away from this story?

Areli: I want this book to be a mirror for immigrant children so they can see themselves reflected in my story and connect with others going through similar experiences. I want this to be a window to those who don’t share this experience but feel encouraged to uplift immigrant voices.

Luisa: Areli said it perfectly. I want immigrant kids and kids who come from immigrant families to have a story that is about them and for them, with characters that look like them, and for other kids to understand what this experience is like so they can be allies in the future.

What books are you currently reading or inspired by?

Areli: I’m currently reading *Miles Morales: Spider-Man* by Jason Reynolds with a student I’m tutoring, and *In the Country We Love: My Family Divided* by Diane Guerrero and Michelle Burford. I will always reread and be inspired by *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros.

Luisa: I just finished reading *Cry, Heart, but Never Break* by Glenn Ringtved and illustrated by Charlotte Pardi, and I am getting ready to start on *Can We All Be Feminists?* edited by June Eric-Udorie. I read a lot of science fiction last year, and Ursula K. Le Guin is a great inspiration.

What would be your dream project to work on?

Areli: I would love to work on a project focused on the experiences of children and youth who were born or raised in the US and returned to Mexico with their parents. I would love to meet them and hopefully collaborate on a children’s book that talks about their experiences living between two countries, cultures, and languages.

Luisa: I’d love to work on a project for children about climate change, which would underline the urgent changes we need to make while being hopeful for the future.
Al otro lado de la bahía (Across the Bay) Carlos Aponte • Jiu Ge 101 Nian Tong Hua Xuan 2012 (101 Fairy Tales 2012) Jiankun Xu
Mi abuela, la loca (My Crazy Grandma) José Ignacio Valenzuela • Mi familia es especial (My Family Is Special) Anna Rayo
Moon Messenger: A Family Reunion During the Mid-Autumn Festival Jie Wei

¡Primera Caida! El enmascarado de terciopelo (First Fall! The Velvet-Masked Wrestler) Diego Mejía Eguiluz
Der Regenbogenfisch (The Rainbow Fish) Marcus Pfister • ¿Sabes quién es Zapata? (Do You Know Who Zapata Is?) Amaranta Leyva
Ga’s (The Train) Jodie Callaghan • Topito Terremoto (Little Mole Quake) Anna Llenas

Elementary School: Native Languages

See full list.
Our Grab & Go Literacy Kits can be customized to fit your needs with the help of our team. You can customize your kits by choosing books with stories featuring a variety of characters, such as those who are differently abled, LGBTQ+, from nontraditional families, and more. You’ll get to customize the sets of books, and we’ll add activity journals and home-to-school activities, sealed in a bag and ready to go. Explore options now. >>
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Building Community: #ClassroomBookADay

Jillian Heise, founder of #ClassroomBookADay, shares how to use daily picture book read-alouds to build classroom community.

Jillian Heise is a Grades K-5 library media teacher in southeastern Wisconsin and is a passionate advocate for student choice in reading and the power of shared stories through picture book read-alouds.

Watch Video

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Featured Book Lists
Check out some of Jillian’s book recommendations!

- Honoring Voices of Native Nations
- Rethinking How We Define Family
- Make Your Read-Alouds a Feast for the Senses
- Celebrations Around the World

View all #ClassroomBookADay book lists on Titlewave®.
A Book for Every Reader

Kwame Alexander, *New York Times* best-selling author, put together a variety of books to choose from so every student will see themselves reflected on the pages. Teachers can set up a book club focused on creative and expressive opportunities that provide engagement and fun.

Coming Soon
Diverse books give teachers, librarians, and booksellers the opportunity to help young people understand themselves and others. We encourage you to look critically at the books you’re sharing with your students and patrons.

AVAILABLE FALL 2021

Visit hc.com/shakeupyourshelves for resources and more information.

Publisher/Producer Advertisement: For more information, visit titlewave.com.
“Eye-opening, thought-provoking history.” — Kirkus, starred
*I, Witness: Accused*
978-1-324-01663-2

“A fantastic way of connecting teens with activism and current events.” — Booklist, starred
*I, Witness: Hurricane*
978-1-324-01665-6

“Radiates warmth and charm.” — Booklist, starred
“A resonant portrait.” — Publishers Weekly, starred
*Dumplings for Lili*
978-1-324-00342-7

*Norton Young Readers*  
An imprint of W. W. Norton & Company  
Independent Publishers Since 1923

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“Richly saturated, dynamic paintings showcase expressive, inclusive community.” — Publishers Weekly, starred
“Full of quiet moments of joy and affirmation.” — Kirkus, starred
*Dad Bakes*
978-1-324-01541-3

“A quiet, thought-provoking story of environmental change.” — Kirkus, starred
*The Old Boat*
978-1-324-0517-9

“Affectionate, pithy, and eloquent.” — Booklist, starred
*The Old Truck* • 978-1-324-00519-3

“A powerful coming-of-age story.” — Kirkus, starred
“A fully fleshed, sensorially detailed narrative.” — Publishers Weekly, starred
*Crossing the Stream*
978-1-324-01709-7

“An entertaining picture of a boy’s life between social classes.” — Kirkus
*Playing a Dangerous Game*
978-1324-01913-8

Publisher/Producer Advertisement: For more information, visit titlewave.com.
An Interview with Author
Kwame Mbalia

Kwame Mbalia, the New York Times best-selling author and editor of *Black Boy Joy*, shares with us what went into this anthology and what he wants readers to take away. Receiving five starred reviews, this collection of stories, comics, and poems from 17 acclaimed Black male and non-binary authors celebrates the power of joy and the wonders of Black boyhood.

What gave you the idea to create this anthology? How did you go about choosing which contributors you wanted to participate?

This idea came about in part due to my wish to work with a lot of the amazing contributors, and also in part due to the constant barrage of negative labels assigned to Black children by the media. This was my attempt to say to those children – and especially those boys like myself when I was younger – that we recognize their happiness, their achievements, and their joy.

What was the most difficult part about writing your story *The Griot of Grover Street*? What part was the easiest?

The hardest part of my story was trying to make sure each part had its own energy, and didn’t require readers to flip back to Parts One and Two to remember what was happening. The easiest part was embellishing Gary the Griot’s (Mr. G) wardrobe. It’s my wardrobe.

continued…
Aside from your short story, is there another short story that you identify with the most, and why?

I think I connected on some level with each of the 16 other stories. Getting dressed for school, relying on my grandmothers/elders for support and encouragement, trying to kickflip, etc. Each of them provided some harmony with my memories of growing up.

What do you want young readers today to take away from this anthology?

I hope they take away a favorite story that they reread over and over. I hope they take away inspiration to find their own joyful safe spaces. I hope they take away an appreciation for short stories, and how they can be about anything, from fantasy to sci-fi to contemporary fiction. I hope they take the book away from the library repeatedly, checking it out over and over because it brings them joy.

What are you currently reading?

I am currently reading The Black Jacobins by C.L.R. James, a book about the Haitian revolution and the events leading up to it.

Interview courtesy of Random House Children’s Books
New books that promote culturally inclusive thinking

Celebrate a street where love is powerful and a nurturing community can make anything possible.

A bilingual story in English and Japanese that shows speaking the same language isn’t a prerequisite to making a new friend.

The pursuit of perfection is thrilling until Ben is forced to give up the things he loves most.

A magical adventure that explores the notion of free will in a world where fate holds all the cards.

Heartbreak pushes a teenager to find her strongest self in this story of personal transformation.

This essential book introduces young readers to the reign of terror against the Osage people in Oklahoma.

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OPEN THEIR EYES TO ALL READING HAS TO OFFER

The transition from easy reader books to chapter books can be tough for some students. Large print is a transitional format that offers an increased font size and more white space. The result? A more enjoyable, less challenging reading experience. Our books feature the same original cover art making the only difference on the inside.

American as Paneer Pie
Supriya Kelker
9781432890087

Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids
Cynthia Leitch Smith
9781432889258

Black Boy Joy
Kwame Mbalia
9781432891749

Efrén Divided
Ernesto Cisneros
97814328888947

From the Desk of Zoe Washington
Janae Marks
9781432878009

Rick
Alex Gino
9781432883294

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Help develop strong, independent English Language Learners with resources that support students at their level. From Spanish dual language resources to books in more than 40 languages, Follett has resources to support students' continued literacy in their native language.
Convenient, Easy Access to All Your Library Resources

Provide every student with a single unified experience to search and access your school library resources with Destiny Discover.

Learn More
New Titles from Erin Yun

Pippa Park Raises Her Game
Erin Yun • Fabled Films Press
2021 • IL 3-6
Readers will cheer on Korean American Pippa Park in this wonderful middle school book about identity, friendships, bullying, crushes, and family. In this relatable story, Pippa discovers who she really is and how to stay true to herself on and off the basketball court.

My Journal About Life
Erin Yun • Fabled Films Press
2021 • IL 3-6
An interactive journal of awesome quizzes, listicles, and writing prompts inspired by Pippa Park that helps tweens celebrate their individuality. The book is packed with over a dozen different writing activities that are inspired by tween obsessions including family, friends, school, and themselves.

Middle School: #OwnVoices

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Esperanza Rising
Pam Muñoz Ryan

Free Lunch
Rex Ogle

Hurricane: My Story of Resilience
Salvador Gómez-Colón

Listen, Slowly
Thanhha Lai

On the Horizon
Lois Lowry

While I Was Away
Waka T. Brown
A Culture of Literacy: How the 20 Book Challenge Revolutionized Our School

Media Specialist Carrie Friday’s 20 Book Challenge is a great way to intentionally read more diverse books, whether your focus is on authors who tell stories from a variety of backgrounds, inclusive characters, or books from a variety of genres.
A coming-of-age story about transgender tween Obie, who didn’t think being himself would cause such a splash.

The first LGBTQIA+ anthology for middle-graders, including realistic, fantasy, and sci-fi stories.

A graphic novel about young love and how it can grow into something strong no matter what obstacles get in the way.

An insightful memoir from a figure skating champion, Karina Manta, about her life as a bisexual professional athlete.

A stunning YA novel that sprints full-force into the big questions our teen years beg—and adeptly unravels their web.

Broken by abuse but connected by love, siblings Ezra and Bea must learn to trust themselves before they can find a way back to each other.

Publisher/Producer Advertisement: For more information, visit titlewave.com.
Shauntee Burns-Simpson (MLIS) currently serves as the 2020-2022 president of BCALA.

Tamela Chambers currently serves as the public library committee chair of the BCALA Services to Children and Families of African Descent.

Donna N. Gray is a library operations and instructional coordinator for the New York City School Library System.

Ensuring Equity and Diversity in School Libraries

Watch our free recorded webinar with experts from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), as they share their Best of the Best Booklist for books written and illustrated by Black authors and artists.

Watch Video

Download the book list. >>
Read Woke Books: Issues in Action Book Set
Elliott Smith • Lerner Publications
2022 • IL 3-6
The Issues in Action series from Read Woke™ Books helps readers Grades 4-8 examine hard topics facing our society—from gun violence to immigration. Learn how problems developed and hear from underrepresented persons involved in these struggles. Reflection questions help readers challenge their perspectives, while an activism toolkit and a Read Woke reading list empower readers to make a difference.

Middle School: Social Justice
See full list.
Take a moment and think about your student population. How many of your students come from diverse backgrounds? How many kiddos speak English as a second language? How many students are homeless or have blended families? How many students are struggling with their identity? How many students have a disability?

Now think about the books on your shelf. Think about the books you spotlight. Do the titles and authors you share reflect the backgrounds of your students and your community?

Years ago, one of my favorite teacher friends and I were having a conversation about books and the importance of representation, and she told me that she was twenty-two years old the first time she ever saw someone like herself as a main character in a book. She said that growing up, Black characters were only included as minor characters in the books she had access to.

This really crushed me because the first time I saw myself in a book with a main character I identified with was when I was in second grade. All our students should have the latter experience, not the former.

As a school media specialist of a diverse school, I have really had to step back and evaluate our collection to make sure that it reflects what matters to my students and is representative of our community. This means:

- Thoughtful placement of books that are displayed
- Thoughtful choices for book-club titles or spotlight books
- Bumping our over-represented groups down a few shelves so that the others can have a turn to shine
- Always having a focus on diversity — not just for a specific month — always

“Now think about the books on your shelf. Think about the books you spotlight. Do the titles and authors you share reflect the backgrounds of your students and your community?”
Having a diverse book collection for a school library or classroom library is essential, not just for our students who need to see themselves in the book, but for us to see others – to really see them. To see the struggles and the joy. To walk in their shoes for just a little while so we can become more empathetic and aware. So we can all be better humans.

Sometimes spotlighting books that reflect diversity can be controversial. How do you handle that? What happens when a parent complains? Here are the things I do to make sure that I’m covered but still show my students that they all matter:

I check the reviews in Titlewave® of books I’m purchasing or using to make sure they are age-appropriate and supported. If you don’t have a Titlewave account, you’ll definitely want one. It’s free and takes two minutes to set up. You get teacher- and librarian-created book lists, professional reviews to help get insight into the title (including if it’s inclusive), free educator guides, and reading-levels information – plus you can use Follett Tags!

I read them myself. This seems like a given, but many people skip this step. Yes, it’s a lot of reading, but it’s worth it. If it’s a class-wide read, I always have a backup book that students can read if their parents are uncomfortable, but I suggest that the parents read the book first.

I have age-appropriate options for book clubs that address the same issues so that students and families have a choice.

I invite the community to join us for our book clubs, which may seem like asking for trouble, but it has been a beautiful thing.

You may experience some pushback from parents. But if you do, I’d suggest following your school or district challenge procedures and moving forward. Encourage parents to read the book in its entirety and then chat again. Be respectful of their wishes. Be a voice for the people who need you.

This isn’t just a quick change. This change takes work. It takes constant evaluation of your books and your curriculum. It means moving things around. It means you stop teaching the same book you’ve taught for 20 years so another group can shine. It means not just having books that show the struggle but books that show the joy and happiness of others. It means putting yourself aside to make sure every kid is seen and valued.
Diversity Resources on Pinterest

Check out our Pinterest board with educational resources for teaching diversity and inclusion. We have book lists, lessons, and activities, and we’re always adding more.

Give us a follow! >>

Stay Connected

Follett Classroom

Follett Learning
DIVERSABILITY
EMPOWERING BOOKS TO CELEBRATE ALL ABILITIES

A stirring debut that draws parallels between the ignorance surrounding autism and the fear that fueled European witch trials.

Seventeen eye-opening essays that offer perspectives on the history, culture, and diverse identities of the diversability community.

★ “A personal story of love, nurture, and individual gifts.”
—Publishers Weekly, starred review

“A heartfelt story about personal courage that shows it is never too late to express kindness and empathy.”
—Kirkus Reviews

★ “This thrilling biography provides excellent representation of the deaf community as well as of a woman in sports.”
—School Library Journal, starred review

Art © 2020 Melissa Sweet

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When planning how to provide your students with the stories and voices of many cultures, abilities, and identities, Collections by Destiny® and Classroom Ready Collections allow you to organize and access your educational materials and resources by topic. Create a space that is dedicated to the topics you want to access frequently.

Making Collaboration Possible Anywhere

When planning how to provide your students with the stories and voices of many cultures, abilities, and identities, Collections by Destiny® and Classroom Ready Collections allow you to organize and access your educational materials and resources by topic. Create a space that is dedicated to the topics you want to access frequently.
Alexandra Diaz

*Santiago’s Road Home* is the heart-wrenching yet hopeful story of a young boy who flees abuse and poverty in Mexico only to get detained by ICE at the United States border. Themes include equality, immigration, social justice, and courage. Watch award-winning author Alexandra Diaz read the first chapter.

Watch Video (English)  Watch Video (Spanish)

Need First Chapter Friday tips? Read our blog. >>
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Middle School: United Nations Sustainability

See full list.
It is a moral imperative of our work with children that we ensure that all children can be affirmed and seen in the books that we read to them. These are what Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop calls “mirrors.”

It is also a moral imperative of the work we do with children to ensure that they are able to see others who are not like themselves and understand their place within the larger global society. This is what Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop calls “windows.”

Curating inclusive collections and making decisions on what books to include and exclude must take into consideration these two moral imperatives of our work as educators. It also must be recognized as a keystone of our obligation as educators to first do no harm. The decisions we make about which texts to include in our classroom communities must serve a purpose of supporting all students and all of our society.

Children deserve to be seen and recognized for their full humanity, and they deserve to have their lived experiences affirmed on the pages of the books that we purchase, promote, highlight, recommend, read aloud, put into curriculum, and share with them. This is the beauty and honor, and obligation, of the work that we do with young people. Using books to build community also strengthens our relationships with one another, enables students to empathize, and provides them with the tools they will need to thrive in a rapidly changing and expanding world.

One of the first steps to curating inclusive collections is to ensure that we move beyond the mindset that says having a diverse book collection is enough. In order to offer stories with a wide range of linguistic, cultural, and ethnic representation to students, educators must learn about what makes some texts authentic representations of cultures outside their own.
Going Beyond Diverse Collections

Jillian Heise and Julia E. Torres

It is still true that many books are published that misrepresent historically marginalized or erased identities and lived realities, which can do harm, reversing the goal of building an inclusive collection. Hence the importance of planning and purchasing with an antibiased and actively inclusive mindset to ensure that we actively promote books that affirm all identities. The best way to do this is to become knowledgeable about authors, publishers, and book distributors that specialize in promoting #OwnVoices stories.

An important part of this work requires that all educators continually work to develop a critical consciousness to ensure we are providing not just representation, but representation that is free of problematic elements that perpetuate negative stereotypes. We must continuously and actively work to become aware of erasure and marginalization in young people’s literature, and of the harm that it causes both to those whose stories are erased and those who see their own lived realities and identities overrepresented, continuously centered, or glorified.

Some of our go-to resources to support us in these efforts:

- Lee and Low – Classroom Library Questionnaire
- Teaching for Change – Ten Quick Ways to Analyze Childrens Books for Sexism and Racism
- Teaching Tolerance – Reading Diversity Lite Tool
- We Are Kid Lit Collective – Summer Reading Lists
- Titlewave – Classroom Diversity Book Lists

In our webinar, we talked about approaching educational communities by asking questions, building connections, and being intentional in our text selections. We hope these resources, and what we shared in the webinar, will support your efforts to provide a welcoming and affirming space for all of your students in your classroom and school communities.

An important part of this work requires that all educators continually work to develop a critical consciousness to ensure that we are providing not just representation, but representation that is free of problematic elements that perpetuate negative stereotypes.

There is no one way to approach the work of curating inclusive collections, but we hope to provide you with some steps that will make the work more approachable in your community.

Watch our free webinar, then download the free guide on how to critically analyze books for representation.
"Perhaps one of the most important things to remember is that educators should work together with students and parents to have conversations about topics like censorship and erasure so that we can all grow as we strive to create a more healing and inclusive approach to the educational experience."

Julia E. Torres is a veteran language arts teacher and librarian within the Far Northeast Region of Denver Public Schools. As a teacher/activist committed to education as a practice of freedom, her work is grounded in the work of empowering students to use literacy to fuel resistance and positive social transformation. In cooperation with The Educator Collaborative, Julia facilitates workshops and professional conversations about antibias/antiracist education, social justice, and culturally sustaining pedagogies in language arts, as well as digital literacy and librarianship. Her work has been featured in several publications, including NCTE’s *The Council Chronicle*, NPR, Al Jazeera’s *The Stream*, PBS Education, KQED *MindShift*, *The New York Times* *The Learning Network*, the *Chicago Tribune*, ASCD’s *Education Update*, *School Library Journal*, and many more.

Jillian Heise, NBCT & MLIS, is currently a Grades K-5 library media teacher in southeastern Wisconsin. She previously taught English Language Arts to Grades 7-8 in the Milwaukee area for 11 years. Jillian is the founder of #ClassroomBookADay, Heise Reads & Recommends, and dedicated to supporting all student identities and lived experiences through access to inclusive literature. She brings her literacy expertise and knowledge of kid lit to her role as chair of the WSRA Children’s Literature Committee.
Ensuring Equal Access to Assets

Take control of your district’s asset management and distribution. Get a clear view of your devices, equipment, and resources in one location and increase visibility into your investment.
The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story
Nikole Hannah-Jones • One World
2021 • IL AD
The New York Times Magazine’s award-winning 1619 Project issue reframed our understanding of American history by placing slavery and its continuing legacy at the center of our national narrative. This book expands on that work, weaving together essays, poems, and works of fiction that explore the legacy of slavery in present-day America and illuminate key moments of oppression, struggle, and resistance. They show how the inheritance of 1619 reaches into every part of contemporary American society.
TURN READING ANGST INTO WIDE-EYED CURIOSITY

Choice can be a powerful motivator for older students. Letting them self-select what they read in the format they prefer is part of that. Large print is a format proven to build strong literacy skills. Stock your shelves with today’s top titles in a format that is easier to read.

Learn more at k12.follett.com/Thorndike
Stories of resistance remain embedded in the collective consciousness of all those who have experienced the aftermath of colonization. This includes most civilizations on our planet. The United States has called itself a “great melting pot” or “salad bowl” of cultures and ethnicities. It is worth noting that we carry within us both subconscious memories of the colonization of this land and the experiences of pre-existing people. We also carry the experiences embedded within the groups of those who came here – by choice or through bondage.

The collection of books shown below weaves together past and present and takes a look at a potential future where children and adults read, discuss, and write about literature that decolonizes notions of what we think is real in the active pursuit of a more inclusive future. In Matt de la Peña’s *Love*, we see how redefining love is a form of resistance. Samira Ahmed’s *Internment* confronts Islamophobia in the present day by imagining an alternative reality. Jason Reynolds, Brendan Kiely, and Angie Thomas place young people at the center of collective action when they explore what it really means to resist the status quo on behalf of those you love in *All American Boys* and *The Hate U Give*.

What can we gain by including stories of resistance within our classroom and central libraries? We know that in order to see forward progress with regard to so many of society’s structures that function as means of oppression, we have to support students in the development of a critical consciousness. In order to evaluate and critique different forms of oppression, we have to equip them with the tools to read and engage

“Language arts teachers and librarians can work together to support students in their development as change agents by including titles representative of the entire human experience, not just the parts that are easy or familiar with which to engage.”
with texts that depict the realities of oppressed people in a way that is as accurate as possible. Furthermore, we have to make sure our students have the language to encounter the text and process their own responses to these encounters in ways that result in personal and communal growth. Language arts teachers and librarians can work together to support students in their development as change agents by including titles representative of the entire human experience, not just the parts that are easy or familiar with which to engage.

So, how do we build bridges between curiosity and empathy in order to make space for activism? Transformational resistance is a method used to empower students to change the world around them for good. It involves learning to evaluate systemic oppression, identify root causes, and a process of becoming empowered to create change for the betterment of all of society.

These are just a few of the titles curated to propel classrooms and communities forward into a future where we learn together to face root causes of deep pain and celebrate moments of triumphant courage together, as a truly inclusive society. Whether these texts are read as a whole class or part of small-group discussions, among these pages, there will be conversations started that carry far beyond the individuals who read them.

Read to discuss, read as resistance, and come together to re-envision our collective past, present, and future.

Shop the book list now. Sign up for a free Titlewave® account.
When the Ground Is Hard
Malla Nunn

The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees
Don Brown

Ronit & Jamil
Pamela L. Laskin

Home Is Beyond the Mountains
Celia Barker Lottridge

How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child
Sandra Uwiringiyimana

The Last Nomad: Coming of Age in the Somali Desert
Shugri Said Salh

The Lovers: Afghanistan's Romeo & Juliet
Rod Nordland

Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood
Marjane Satrapi

Ronit & Jamil
Pamela L. Laskin

The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees
Don Brown

When the Ground Is Hard
Malla Nunn
Flexible Access to Popular Titles

Reach students anywhere they learn with Follett eBooks, your adaptable and affordable reading option – now available in a 90-day assigned-user access model!

As low as $1.29!

Learn More
Analyzing Your Collection of Diverse Books with Titlewave

We’ve developed a suite of integrated diversity and social and emotional learning (SEL) analysis tools to help you discover, manage, and report on over 40 diversity and SEL-related topics. Now you can ensure alignment with the needs of your students while you maximize the impact of your purchases against funding and content goals.

Contact your Follett rep. >>
High School: #OwnVoices

See full list.
Diverse Lives, Diverse Writers, Diverse Books

from PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

Fifty Words For Rain
A Novel
ASHA LEMMIE
Japan, 1948. Eight-year-old Noriko is the child of a Japanese aristocrat and her African American GI lover. Her grandparents conceal her at their estate, where she forms a bond with her half-brother.

Tell Me Who You Are
A Road Map for Cultivating Racial Literacy
WINONA GUO and PRIYA VULCHI
An exploration of race in America as the authors recount their experiences talking to people from all walks of life on a cross-country tour of America.

Transcendent Kingdom
A Novel
YAA GYASI
Gifty studies neuroscience at Stanford while dealing with a suicidal mother and the loss of her brother. She finds herself torn between science and faith.

Sword Stone Table
Old Legends, New Voices
Edited by SWAPNA KRISHNA and JENN NORTHINGTON
An all star anthology of stories retelling the vast lore surrounding the Knights of the Round Table from a gender-bent, race-bent, LGBTQIA+ inclusive perspective.

Born A Crime
Stories from a South African Childhood
TREVOR NOAH
The compelling, inspiring, and comically sublime story of one man’s coming-of-age, set during the twilight of apartheid and the tumultuous days of freedom that followed.

Angel & Hannah
A Novel in Verse
ISHLE YI PARK
The sweeping, unforgettable story of an interracial couple in 1990s New York City who are determined to protect their love against all odds—a reimagining of Romeo and Juliet written in blank verse.

Visit titlewave.com • Free Shipping in the US and Canada
The Language of Liberation: Books as Bridges

In this special Author Takeover, participants will explore inclusive literature as a tool for transformation and liberation.

Download the free educator guide for *Stamped* by Julia E. Torres. >>
Trans Global: Transgender Then, Now and Around the World

Honor Head

Tonight We Rule the World
Zack Smedley

Ruinsong
Julia Ember

Loveless
Alice Oseman

Pet
AkwaEke Emezi

If This Gets Out: A Novel
Sophie Gonzales and Cale Dietrich

The Love Song of Ivy K. Harlowe
Hannah Moskowitz

Be Dazzled
Ryan La Sala

Here's to Us
Becky Albertalli and Adam Silvera

October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard
Lesléa Newman

See full list.

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Trans Global: Transgender Then, Now and Around the World
Honor Head
LGBTQ+ Stories from Around the World

BLACK GIRL, CALL HOME
JASMINE MANS
A love letter to the wandering Black girl and a vital companion to any woman on a journey to find truth, belonging, and healing.

LOT
STORIES
BRYAN WASHINGTON
In Houston, the son of a black mother and a Latino father is coming of age. He’s working at his family’s restaurant, weathering his brother’s blows, and discovering he likes boys.

MAMA’S BOY
A STORY FROM OUR AMERICAS
DUSTIN LANCE BLACK
An Oscar-winning screenwriter and LGBTQ activist relates his origins of being raised by a single mother in a conservative Mormon household in Texas.

MY BROTHER’S HUSBAND, VOLS 1 & 2
GENGOROH TAGAME; Translated by Anne Ishii
The Eisner-award winning manga about the largely still-closeted Japanese gay culture and how the next generation can change the prejudices against it.

TOMORROW WILL BE DIFFERENT
LOVE, LOSS, AND THE FIGHT FOR TRANS EQUALITY
SARAH McBRIDE; Foreword by President Joe Biden
A powerful memoir from the activist elected as the first openly transgender state senator in U.S. history.

THE HEART’S INVISIBLE FURIES
A Novel
JOHN BOYNE
Adoptee Cyril Avery is haunted by not knowing where he comes from. He will spend a lifetime struggling to discover an identity, a home, and much more.

Visit titlewave.com • Free Shipping in the US and Canada
Project Runway goes to Comic Con in this epic queer love story about creativity, passion, and finding the courage to be your most authentic self. Watch author Ryan La Sala read the first chapter of *Be Dazzled*, a book that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and authenticity.

Watch Video

Need First Chapter Friday tips? Read our blog. >>
Rise Up! How You Can Join the Fight Against White Supremacy
Crystal M. Fleming • Henry Holt and Co. 2020 • IL 5-8
Perfect for fans of Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and you: A Remix of the National Book Award-Winning Stamped from the Beginning, this eye-opening nonfiction book for young people explores the roots of racism and its legacy in the modern day, all while empowering readers with actionable ways they can help foster equality.

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
Sherman Alexie

Being Toffee
Sarah Crossan

We Are Displaced
Malala Yousafzai

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FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

March Trilogy
John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, and Nate Powell
Top Shelf Productions • 2013-2016 • IL YA
This graphic novel trilogy is a firsthand account of Congressman John Lewis’s lifelong struggle for civil and human rights. Among the praise this trilogy has received:
• #1 New York Times and Washington Post best-seller
• National Book Award for Young People’s Literature
• ALA’s Printz Award, Coretta Scott King Award, Sibert Medal, and YALSA Nonfiction Award
• Will Eisner Award

Forward Me Back to You
Mitali Perkins

From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry
Paula Yoo

FREE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

High School: Social Justice
See full list.
Ceremony
LESLIE MARMON SILKO
The great Native American Novel of a battered veteran returning home from World War II to heal his mind and spirit.

The Joy Luck Club
AMY TAN
The beloved classic about four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who’s “saying” the stories.

Inheritors
ASAKO SERIZAWA
A kaleidoscopic portrait of five generations of a Japanese family scattered across Asia and the United States by World War II.

The Resisters
GISH JEN
In the not too distant future, a daughter plays baseball in the Olympics as her mother challenges their apartheid-like society in the court.

Mexican Gothic
SILVIA MORENO-GARCIA
Noemi travels to a distant house in the Mexican countryside to help her finds herself caught in a supernatural mystery.

Sabrina & Corina
KALI FAJARDO-ANSTINE
Latinas of Indigenous descent living in the American West take center stage in this story collection—a meditation on friendship, family, and the truths of our homelands.

Visit titlewave.com • Free Shipping in the US and Canada
Follett admires the teachers and librarians who are at the forefront of infusing social justice and equality into their teaching. To ensure you have what you need to support your students and make sure they feel affirmed and included, we’ve partnered with Penguin Young Readers Group to offer digital access to culturally responsive titles and educator guides.* You will find our essential reading list and free downloadable resources below.

Watch our virtual panel discussion featuring four of these popular authors: Speaking Up & Speaking Out: Using Your Voice to Demand Justice.

Promote Equity in Your Classroom or Library

Darius the Great Is Not Okay (Darius the Great, Book 1)
by Adib Khorram

Curriculum Tie-Ins: Family History, Biracial Identity, Coming of Age, Social and Emotional Learning, Mental Health

Darius Kellner speaks better Klingon than Farsi, and he knows more about Hobbit social cues than Persian ones. He’s about to take his first-ever trip to Iran, and it’s pretty overwhelming – especially when he’s also dealing with clinical depression, a disapproving dad, and a chronically anemic social life. In Iran, he gets to know his ailing but still formidable grandfather, his loving grandmother, and the rest of his mom’s family for the first time. And he meets Sohrab, the boy next door who changes everything.

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Download your discussion guide.
Watch Adib Khorram’s Author Takeover.

Dig.
by A.S. King

Curriculum Tie-Ins: White Privilege, Racism, Class and Gender, Coming of Age, Social and Emotional Learning, Mental Health

Five estranged cousins are lost in a maze of their family’s tangled secrets. Their grandparents, former potato farmers Gottfried and Marla Hemmings, managed to trade digging spuds for developing subdivisions, and now they sit atop a million-dollar bank account – wealth they’ve refused to pass on to their adult children or their five teenage grandchildren.

“Because we want them to thrive,” Marla always says. But for the Hemmings cousins, “thriving” feels a lot like slowly dying of a poison they started taking the moment they were born. As the rot beneath the surface of the Hemmings’ white suburban respectability destroys the family from within, the cousins find their ways back to one another, just in time to uncover the terrible cost of maintaining the family name.

Download your free eBook for curriculum consideration.
Download your educator guide.
Frankly in Love
by David Yoon
Curriculum Tie-Ins: Racism, Class and Gender, Coming of Age, Social and Emotional Learning, Parental Expectations

Frank Li has two names. There’s Frank Li, his American name. Then there’s Sung-Min Li, his Korean name. No one uses his Korean name, not even his parents. Frank was born and raised in Southern California and barely speaks any Korean. Even so, his parents still expect him to end up with a nice Korean girl. As Frank falls in love with the girl of his dreams, who is white, he’s forced to confront the fact that while his parents sacrificed everything to raise him in the land of opportunity, their traditional expectations don’t leave a lot of room for him to be a regular American teen. Just when Frank thinks he’s found the solution to all his problems, life throws him a curveball, and he’s left wondering whether he ever really knew anything about love or himself.

Download FREE eBook for curriculum consideration. Download educator guide. Read a chapter excerpt.

Patron Saints of Nothing
by Randy Ribay
Curriculum Tie-Ins: Family History, Biracial Identity, Coming of Age, Drug Addiction, Toxic Masculinity

Jay Reguero plans to spend the last semester of his senior year playing video games before heading to the University of Michigan in the fall. But when he discovers that his Filipino cousin Jun was murdered as part of President Duterte’s war on drugs, and no one in the family wants to talk about what happened, Jay travels to the Philippines to find out the real story. Hoping to uncover more about Jun and the events that led to his death, Jay is forced to reckon with the many sides of his cousin before he can face the whole horrible truth and the part he played in it.

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A Phoenix First Must Burn: Sixteen Stories of Black Girl Magic, Resistance, and Hope
Edited by Patrice Caldwell
Curriculum Tie-Ins: Racism, Class and Gender, Coming of Age, Social and Emotional Learning, Mental Health

A Phoenix First Must Burn will take you on a journey from folktales retold to futuristic societies and everything in between. Filled with stories of love and betrayal, strength and resistance, this collection contains an array of complex and true-to-life characters in which you cannot help but see yourself reflected. This book features sixteen tales by best-selling and award-winning authors that explore the Black experience through fantasy, science fiction, and magic.

Download FREE eBook for curriculum consideration. Download discussion guide. Watch author video.
Shout
by Laurie Halse Anderson

Curriculum Tie-Ins: Racism, Class and Gender, Consent, Poetry, Social and Emotional Learning, Mental Health

Best-selling author Laurie Halse Anderson is known for the unflinching way she writes about and advocates for survivors of sexual assault. Now, inspired by her fans and enraged by how little in our culture has changed since her groundbreaking novel Speak was first published twenty years ago, she has written a poetry memoir that is as vulnerable as it is rallying, as timely as it is timeless. In free verse, Anderson shares reflections, rants, and calls to action woven between deeply personal stories from her life that she’s never written about before. Searing and soul-searching, this important memoir is a denouncement of society’s failures and a love letter to all the people with the courage to say #MeToo and #TimesUp, whether aloud, online, or only in their own hearts.

Download FREE eBook for curriculum consideration. Download educator guide. Watch Laurie Halse Anderson’s Author Takeover.

Change Begins with You
As you strive to promote equity in your classroom or library, consider adding some or all of the featured titles to your curriculum. While resources for building a diverse and inclusive library can be scarce, Follett offers essential titles and educator resources to help you develop the minds of young adults, impacting society for the better. Shop Titlewave® today to purchase the titles listed above and other curated books.

Digital access to the specially curated lists of essential titles uses the NetGalley platform, which will expire December 31, 2021. NetGalley is a free online service and connection point for book publishers, reviewers, media, librarians, booksellers, bloggers, and educators. They offer digital galleys, often called advance reading copies (ARCs), to professional readers to help promote new and upcoming titles. Please see NetGalley’s privacy policy.
With the Fire on High
Elizabeth Acevedo

This One Summer
Mariko Tamaki

No Known Address
Steven Barwin

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter
Erika L. Sánchez

Americanized: Rebel Without a Greencard
Sara Saedi

A Cave in the Clouds: A Young Woman's Escape from ISIS
Badeeah Hassan Ahmed

Losers Bracket
Chris Crutcher

No Known Address
Steven Barwin

Swing
Kwame Alexander

This One Summer
Mariko Tanakaki

American Panda
Gloria Chao

Americanized: Rebel Without a Greencard
Sara Saedi

A Cave in the Clouds: A Young Woman's Escape from ISIS
Badeeah Hassan Ahmed

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter
Erika L. Sánchez

High School: Families
See full list.
Parents, guardians, and educators across the country have been having some pretty tough conversations with kids about social unrest for the past year. For the past few years. For the past decade. For the past...century?

Social protest isn’t new. Cultural upheaval isn’t new. Political differences have been around since ancient times, and the struggle for economic power is as old as currency. When young people ask about protest events happening in the United States and around the world, one of the answers they need to hear is: Let’s take a look at history.

Learning about the people, events, and even music of the Civil Rights Era is one terrific way of offering kids a context for today’s struggles. Before we had Black Lives Matter marches in Washington, DC, and other cities around the world, we had the March on Washington in 1963 and the Selma to Montgomery March in 1965. Before we had lie-ins to protest the killing of George Floyd in the summer of 2020, we had sit-ins at diners across the South in 1960, when Black people took seats at segregated lunch counters in protest of racist policies.

It might seem like the protests and political activity of today are new and fresh, but when kids start looking a little deeper at the past, they find layers and layers of activist history.

It might seem like the protests and political activity of today are new and fresh, but when kids start looking a little deeper at the past, they find layers and layers of activist history.

What does that mean for today’s young people who are interested in moving toward a fully inclusive and equitable society? They have a lot of tools! By learning the history of what came before, young activists can better understand their own roles in the ongoing march toward truth and justice for all. They have a wealth of speeches, quotes, writings, and interviews from leaders who have done this work before. And some of those leaders are still alive to provide encouragement and support as new generations make their own way through a politically active life.
They also have a renewed mission – to do it better. Every generation can learn from the stumbles of the previous generations. How can we do better today, knowing what we know and using the tools people didn’t have 60 years ago, such as social media and easier access to public documents?

In the case of four books from the Civil Rights Era set from Nomad Press, they even have activities that help them structure their plans and brainstorm ways of achieving their goals. Each book pairs deep discussions of various people and topics – such as the work of John Lewis and Fannie Lou Hamer, school segregation, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 – with timelines, research activities, and fast facts. Plus, essential questions placed strategically throughout the books encourage readers to compare and contrast our world today with the world of the 1950s, ’60s, and ’70s. QR code links to relevant online resources, including many primary sources, round out the learning experience.

It can feel like we are facing challenges that have never before been tackled. But as we strive for a diverse and equitable society that welcomes all people to all tables, young activists don’t have to feel alone. The foundation of history is solidly beneath them.

Nomad Press books in The Civil Rights Era series integrate content with participation. Combining engaging narrative with inquiry-based projects stimulates learning and makes it active and alive. Nomad’s unique approach simultaneously grounds kids in factual knowledge while allowing them the space to be curious, creative, and critical thinkers.

The Civil Rights Era series includes these books:

- **Changing Laws: Politics of the Civil Rights Era**
  Explores the key legislative and judicial victories of the civil rights era spanning from 1954 to the early 1970s, including *Brown v. the Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

- **Boycotts, Strikes, and Marches: Protests of the Civil Rights Era**
  Looks at five different marches, protests, and boycotts of the Civil Rights era.

- **Singing for Equality: Musicians of the Civil Rights Era**
  Looks at how the music of Bob Dylan, Mavis Staples and the Staple Singers, Nina Simone, Sam Cooke, and James Brown influenced the Civil Rights Movement.

- **Sitting In, Standing Up: Leaders of the Civil Rights Era**
  Tells the story of one of the most tumultuous and important eras in American history through the lives of five major figures of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.
A Face for Picasso: Coming of Age with Crouzon Syndrome
Ariel Henley • Farrar, Straus and Giroux
2021 • IL YA
At only eight months old, identical twin sisters Ariel and Zan were diagnosed with Crouzon syndrome – a rare condition where the bones in the head fuse prematurely. They were the first twins known to survive it. In this unflinching and powerful memoir, Ariel explores beauty and identity in her young-adult memoir about resilience, sisterhood, and the strength it takes to put your life, and yourself, back together time and time again.

Pantomime
Christopher Sebela
Mad Cave Studios, Inc.
2021 • IL YA
Haley and her brother, alone after their mother’s death, are sent to Wayfair Academy, a special-needs boarding school. Eventually, they find family among other deaf children. One night the group decides to dip their toes into crime…the thrill is too much to leave behind. They soon find stealing from the wrong person has its consequences. With no one to turn to but each other, they must make a difficult choice.

Faceless
Alyssa Sheinmel
Finding Grace
Kim Sigafus
The Lucky Ones
Liz Lawson

The Running Dream
Wendelin Van Draanen
Sitting Pretty: The View from My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body
Rebekah Taussig
A Time to Dance
Padma Venkatraman

High School: Diversability
See full list.
Gripping and Relatable YA Stories Told with Diverse and Authentic Voices

**EVERYTHING IT TAKES**

When Lily Landon joins her school’s environmental club she meets Fiona, a passionate activist who will do everything it takes to protect the planet. How can Lily save the Earth without destroying her future?

**Rising Out**

Anaya knows going to college means leaving behind her best friend, Eri. The two decide to take a cross-country road trip, where Eri is finally able to open up to who she is, and Anaya finds out that she might be in love with her best friend.

**Sick Girl Secrets**

Natalie has a disability that causes chaos to her body on the inside but leaves her unmarked on the outside. After having surgery, Natalie has to decide if the painful consequences of pretending to be healthy are worth keeping the last of her sick girl secrets.

**Tough as Lace**

Lacey “Lace” Stewart knows who she is. She’s the star of her high school’s lacrosse team, she’s confident and brash, and she doesn’t seem to worry about what other people think. But underneath her brave face, she’s battling deep-seated anxiety, and she’s one panic attack away from losing it all.

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Is your library truly diverse? Reading and literacy experiences that open readers up to new perspectives and possibilities are essential. Watch as experts share ways to take an unflinching look at your library to ensure diversity and equity in this recorded webinar.

True Equity and Diversity in the School Library

Craig Seasholes has served for a decade as a teacher librarian in culturally rich, high-poverty Seattle elementary schools.

K.C. Boyd is currently a school librarian with the Washington, DC, public school system.

Watch Video
An Interview with Author

Brandy Colbert

Brandy Colbert is the critically acclaimed author of the young adult novels *Pointe*, *The Voting Booth*, *Finding Yvonne*, *The Revolution of Birdie Randolph*, and Stonewall Award winner *Little & Lion*, as well as the middle grade novel *The Only Black Girls in Town*.

Her new book, *Black Birds in the Sky: The Story and Legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre*, explores the ways in which the story of the Tulsa Race Massacre is the story of America – and by showing us who we are, points to a way forward.

Most readers likely know you as an award-winning writer of novels for kids and teens. What drew you to the idea of writing original nonfiction, and to the story of the Tulsa Race Massacre in particular?

I have a journalism degree, and I’ve been writing and editing shorter-form nonfiction for many years now. After coauthoring and coadapting two works of nonfiction for young readers, I had the itch to work on my own project. I’ve grown especially interested in learning about Black history in the past few years, especially lesser-known people and events that weren’t taught in school. I was particularly drawn to the Tulsa Race Massacre because it occurred only three hours away from where I grew up – so as soon as the idea of writing a nonfiction book about it came to mind, I knew I had to challenge myself.
This would be a thrilling and challenging book to write at any time, but you did it in 2020 – a year defined by the COVID-19 pandemic and historic calls for justice and accountability for Black Americans. Can you tell us a bit about your research and writing process?

I’ve always felt the best way for me to use my voice is through my writing, so although several parts of the book were quite difficult, it seemed like the perfect time to work on a narrative that delves into aspects of American history that have contributed to where we are today. I wanted to tell not only the story of the Tulsa Race Massacre but the events that led up to it, from the complex history of Oklahoma to the gains and failures of Reconstruction to the significant role newspapers played in the early twentieth century. I utilized several sources that were instrumental in crafting Black Birds in the Sky: books, newspaper articles, accounts and quotes from survivors, old photographs, and a detailed report from the Oklahoma legislature, among others.

The story of the Tulsa Race Massacre occurs at the intersection of so many defining aspects of American history, and yet few people are even aware of it. Why do you believe this event was erased and forgotten for most of the last century?

From city and state officials to Tulsa residents, many people actively tried to hide what happened in 1921. Some were ashamed and didn’t want to harm Oklahoma’s reputation, as it was still a relatively new state at the time that was looking to attract new people. Others, especially those who lost family and friends in the massacre, were afraid that if they spoke about it, it might happen again. In reality, it was just one in a long line of massacres targeting Black people that occurred throughout the United States and were rebranded as “race riots,” which falsely placed the blame on Black communities who were defending themselves. We often hear the sentiment that if we don’t know our history we’re bound to repeat it, and I found that especially resonant as I researched this book. The United States has a long history of glossing over or simply ignoring the ugly parts of its past, but knowledge is power; people deserve to know the history of their country so they can do better and educate future generations that will, hopefully, help enact meaningful change.

You speak in your foreword about dreading your high school history classes because of the way in which Black history was taught in your mostly white school. What would it have meant to you to have had a book like Black Birds in the Sky when you were young?

It would have meant the world to me to have a book like this, which is honest about both the triumphs and failures of our country. Most Black Americans first experience some form of racism, prejudice, or microaggressions as children, and it is a disservice to give such a scant overview of the achievements and contributions Black people have made over the centuries. It’s important for non-Black children to soak in this information as well, which would help break the cycle of centering one type of story and work toward a more just, educated, and empathetic society overall.
Black Girl Unlimited: The Remarkable Story of a Teenage Wizard
Echo Brown

Black Is the Body: Stories from My Grandmother’s Time, My Mother’s Time, and Mine
Emily Bernard

Drive-Thru Dreams: A Journey Through the Heart of America’s Fast-Food Kingdom
Adam Chandler

Earth Will Survive (But We May Not)
Katie Coppens

Ingredients: The Strange Chemistry of What We Put in Us and on Us
George Zaidan

The Prince of Venice Beach
Blake Nelson

The Smell of Other People’s Houses
Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
Rebecca Skloot

The Address Book
Deirdre Mask

Black Is the Body
Khaled Hosseini

The Smell of Other People’s Houses
Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock

A Thousand Splendid Suns
Khaled Hosseini

High School: United Nations Sustainability
See full list.

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Imagine the progress students could make when they are able to fully focus on learning. Aspen provides visibility into the unique social, emotional, and academic needs of every student.
Recent events in our country have pulled back the curtains on deeply ingrained systemic and belief systems that have misguided the institutions (and the people in them) that are supposed to serve all.

A global pandemic, civic unrest, and divisive rhetoric have unraveled the frayed illusion of a diverse, equitable, and just society, and there is no time like the present to begin the work of healing. To heal the rifts that divide, the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) must move beyond buzzword status to true integration in the systems and institutions that serve the people. To achieve this end, DEI work must be present in the educational institutions tasked with creating the next wave of thought and reform leaders.

There is a constantly growing and evolving body of literature and research that suggests that a great story or a well-researched and written nonfiction title can foster empathy, encourage tolerance, and cultivate appreciation for the rich diversity in the lived experiences of others. School and public libraries are uniquely positioned to lead the charge of empowering the future leaders and healers, one book at a time. This empowerment starts with a commitment to building collections that support and pay homage to the diverse cultures, traditions, and voices in our country while honoring the shared humanity that links us all.

“School and public libraries are uniquely positioned to lead the charge of empowering the future leaders and healers, one book at a time.”
In an era in which the cries of Black Lives Matter are often met with the response All Lives Matter, there is more work to be done on the path to true equity and inclusion. To this end, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), one of the National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) of the American Library Association (ALA), has created a book list with the principles of DEI in mind. The titles selected for the inaugural Best of the Best list were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Celebrate and honor the diversity of the Black experience (cultural traditions/customs)
- Reflect the triumphs of well and lesser-known African American leaders
- Cover topics relevant to the Black experience (social justice, self-esteem, etc.)

Watch school and public librarians from BCALA discuss these topics in our recorded webinar. You’ll be able to download the Best of the Best book list and other helpful resources, and you will learn how you can use the list as a tool for building an inclusive collection and integrate these titles into your curriculum and programming.

Tamela Chambers currently serves as the public library committee chair of the BCALA services to children and families of African descent and is the children’s department manager at Woodson Regional Library. She is a lifelong learner who found her place in libraries 20 years ago as a children’s library associate at the Chicago Public Library. Tamela’s decades-long career has afforded her the opportunity to work with children, teens, and their families as both a school and public librarian. She has dedicated herself to fostering a love of literacy and inquiry in those she serves. Tamela is a graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a BS in advertising and an MS in library science. She is also a graduate of National Louis University with an EdM in early childhood curriculum and instruction and certificate of advanced studies in education technology.
180 Days: Two Teachers and the Quest to Engage and Empower Adolescents  
Kelly Gallagher and Penny Kittle

Coaching Teachers in Bilingual and Dual-Language Classrooms  
Alexandra Guilamo

Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy  
Gholdy Muhammad

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success  
Sharroky Hollie

Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain  
Zaretta Hammond

Doable Differentiation: 12 Strategies to Meet the Needs of All Learners  
Jane A. G. Kise

Equity by Design: Delivering on the Power and Promise of UDL  
Mirko Chardin

Evident Equity  
Lauryn Mascarenaz

For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood…and the Rest of Y’all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education  
Christopher Emdin

I Wish My Teacher Knew: How One Question Can Change Everything for Our Kids  
Kyle Schwartz

Professional Titles
See full list.
Books do more than tell stories. They introduce students to all types of people, including some who are just like them. Visit #AllBooksForAllKids for book lists and ways to spread a love of reading.

Check out our website!
- Links to blog posts and webinars
- Free downloadables
- Book selections that support the diverse needs of your students and curriculum

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