

African American Booklist for Kids

A Young Child's World

Tickle, Tickle by Dakari Hru. PIC HRU.
A young boy can't resist being tickled by his loving father.

Please, Baby, Please by Spike Lee & Tonya Lewis Lee. PIC LEE.
Rhythmic, rhyming text describes an active toddler's busy day.

I Can Do It, Too! by Karen Baicker. PIC BAI.
From making breakfast to getting dressed and playing pretend, a young girl tells all about the things she can do.

In the Small, Small Night by Jane Kurtz. PIC KUR.
When Kofi has trouble sleeping in his new American home, his sister Abena tells him two folktales from their native country Ghana.

Sing-Along Song by JoAnn Early Macken. PIC MACK.
A young boy celebrates life throughout the day by making up songs from common sounds.

Peekaboo Morning by Rachel Isadora. PIC ISA.
A toddler enjoys playing peekaboo with various members of his family.

My Nana and Me by Irene Smalls. PIC SMA.
A young girl and her grandmother enjoy a fun-filled day together.

Friends and Family

Full, Full, Full of Love by Trish Cooke. PIC COO.
A young boy shares in the family tradition of eating Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house.

The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson. PIC WOO.
A young white girl and a young African-American girl become friends, even though they are separated by a fence that divides their town.

Hot Day on Abbott Avenue by Karen English. PIC ENG.
Two friends have a fight on a very hot day, only to make up during a game of jump rope.

Bucking the Sarge by Christopher Paul Curtis. FIC CUR.
Luther T. Farrel and his best friend Sparky come up with different money-making schemes so they can escape Flint, Michigan and Luther's domineering mother, aka "The Sarge."



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The Real Slam Dunk by Charisse K. Richardson. FIC RIC.

A young boy and his twin sister interview a basketball star and learn the of having more than one goal.

Mr. George Baker by Amy Hest. PIC HES.

Young Harry and elderly Mr. Baker share a front porch and some candy for the bus to take them to school where they are both learning to read.



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A Day With Daddy by Nikki Grimes. EASY GRI.

A young boy who lives with his mother enjoys playing in the park, having lunch, and going to the movies with his father.

Down the Winding Road by Angela Johnson. PIC JOH.

A sister and brother tell about the good times they have on their annual summer visit to the "Old Ones," the great uncles and aunts who raised their dad.

Coming On Home Soon by Jacqueline Woodson. PIC WOO.

During WWII, a young girl misses her mom who's working far away in Chicago.

My Best Friend by Mary Ann Rodman. PIC ROD.

Six-year-old Lily really wants to be best friends with Tamika, who is seven and thinks Lily is too young to be her friend.

Don't Say Ain't by Irene Smalls. INT SMA.

A young girl living in the 1950s learns to fit in with her lifelong friends and the new advanced integrated school she now attends.

Our Gracie Aunt by Jacqueline Woodson. PIC WOO.

An aunt looks after two siblings who miss their neglectful mom.

Mr. Chickee's Funny Money by Christopher Paul Curtis. INT CUR.

With a little help, Steven solves the mystery of a quadrillion dollar bill that has James Brown's picture on it.

Grandmama's Pride by Becky Birtha. PIC BIR.

Two African-American sisters experience segregation when they visit their grandmama in the South during 1956, but see many changes when they visit a year later.

Customs, Cultures & Celebrations

Beauty, Her Basket by Sandra Belton. PIC BEL.

A young girl learns the tradition and history behind her grandmother's beautiful, handmade basket.

Bippity Bop Barbershop by Natasha Tarpley. PIC TAR.

An African-American boy enjoys a visit to the barbershop for his very first haircut.

Rock of Ages: A Tribute to the Black Church by Tonya Bolden. 811.54 B687.
This moving, emotional poem pays tribute to Black Churches everywhere.

Shades of Black: A Celebration of Our Children by Sandra L. Pinkne
Children of various skin tones are shown in colorful, vivid photographs.



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Coming Together: Celebrations for African American Families by
and John Pinderhughes. 306.8 C689.
Ideas for Kwanzaa, Christmas, naming ceremonies and family reunions are explored
with activities, food and traditions for each one.

Seven Spools of Thread: A Kwanzaa Story by Angela Shelf Medearis. PIC MED.
Seven Ashanti brothers learn to get along while learning the principles of Kwanzaa.

Ray and the Best Family Reunion Ever by Mildred Pitts Walter. FIC WAL.
When his family attends a reunion in Louisiana, eleven-year-old Ray learns about his
Creole roots and meets his grandfather for the first time.

Rhythm and Rhyme

Words With Wings: A Treasury of African-American Poetry and Art selected by
Belinda Rochelle. 811.008 W924.
Art and poetry blend beautifully in this stunning work featuring such poets as
Langston Hughes, Alice Walker and Maya Angelou.

Speak to Me: (And I Will Listen Between the Lines) by Karen English.
811.54E585.
Students share their thoughts on the school day through expressive, witty poems.

Blues Journey by Walter Dean Myers. 811.54 M996B.
A tribute to the history of the blues is told with thoughtful words and lush artwork.

Little Stevie Wonder by Quincy Troupe. PIC TRO.
This poetic tribute to Stevie Wonder is done in bright, bold colors and includes a two-
song sound disc.

Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson. 811.54 W898.
Eleven-year-old Lonnie writes poems to help him deal with the death of his parents
and the separation from his younger sister.

Danitra Brown Leaves Town by Nikki Grimes. 811.54 G863DA.
Poems and letters describe Danitra and Zuri's summer apart.

In the Land of Words: New and Selected Poems by Eloise Greenfield. 811.54
G812IN.
Twenty-one poems by iconic children's poet Eloise Greenfield celebrate the power of
words, poetry and language.

Folk Tales

Beautiful Blackbird by Ashley Bryan. 398.2096894 B915.
Blackbird shares his blackness with all the other colorful birds.



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A Pride of African Tales by Donna L. Washington. 398.2096 W317.
Beautiful illustrations highlight this collection of six traditional folktales from various African countries including Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and the Congo.

Roy Makes a Car by Mary E. Lyons. 398.209759 L991.
Roy tries to make a car that will never have an accident.

Wee Winnie Witch's Skinny: An Original African American Scare Tale by Virginia Hamilton. INT HAM.
Uncle Big Anthony is terrorized by Wee Winnie Witch until his wife comes up with a plan to rid the place of her forever.

Bruh Rabbit and the Tar Baby Girl by Virginia Hamilton. 398.208996 H221B.
The Gullah dialect is used to retell the classic tale of Bruh Rabbit outwitting Bruh fox.

Historical Fiction

The Liberation of Gabriel King by K.L. Going. FIC GOI.
Frita, a young African-American girl, and Gabriel, a young white boy, share a unique friendship in 1976 Georgia.

Abby Takes a Stand by Patricia McKissack. FIC MACK.
A grandmother tells her grandchildren about her role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Sweet Music in Harlem by Debbie A. Taylor. PIC TAY.
C.J., an aspiring clarinet player, and a host of famous 1950's Harlem musicians gather to take a photograph.

Goin' Someplace Special by Patricia McKissack. INT MACK.
A young girl must deal with racial segregation while trying to visit her "special" place: the public library.

The Old African by Julius Lester. FIC LES.
Based on legend, this story, with its powerful illustrations, relates the horror of slavery and the dream of freedom seen through the mind of an old African.

Jackie's Bat by Marybeth Lorbiecki. PIC LOR.
In 1947 when Jackie Robinson joins the Brooklyn Dodgers, Joey, the bat boy, overcomes his own prejudice to become friends with this baseball legend.

Singing for Dr. King by Angela Shelf Medearis. EASY MED.

Sheyann is allowed to join the march for civil rights in 1965 after singing freedom songs at church.

Rosa by Nikki Giovanni. 92 P253GI.

A beautiful tribute to Rosa Parks and all those who supported her during boycott in Montgomery, Alabama.



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I, Dred Scott: A Fictional Slave Narrative Based on the Life and Legal Precedent of Dred Scott by Sheila P. Moses. FIC MOS.

Dred Scott spent 11 years trying to get the courts to recognize him as a free slave. This is his story.

Missy Violet & Me by Barbara Hathaway. FIC HAT.

Eleven-year-old Viney learns about "catchin' babies" and a whole lot more during the early 1900s when she spends her summer working for the Midwife.

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue by Julius Lester. FIC LES.

To pay off his gambling debts, Pierce Butler sells off his slaves in the largest slave auction to take place in one day. The story is told from varying perspectives and in dialogue.

Ellington Was Not a Street by Ntozake Shange. PIC SHA.

During the Harlem Renaissance famous people, including Duke Ellington, visit a young girl's home.

From Slave to Soldier: Based on a True Civil War Story by Deborah Hopkinson. EASY HOP.

Johnny, a slave boy, runs away and joins the Union Army.

Happy Feet: The Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hoppers and Me by Richard Michelson. PIC MIC.

A boy nicknamed Happy Feet hears about the day he was born, the same day the famous Savoy Ballroom opened.

Historical Fact

The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights by Russell Freedman. 92A548F.

Chronicles the life, struggles, and successes of famed vocalist Marion Anderson.

Let it Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters by Andrea Davis Pinkney. 923.6 P597.

Profiles ten courageous women, including Shirley Chisholm, Rosa Parks and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, who fought for civil rights.

A Negro League Scrapbook by Carole Boston Weatherford. 796.3576408 W362.
A tribute to the players of the Negro leagues, featuring photographs and memorabilia from the past.

The School Is Not White!: A True Story of the Civil Rights Mover
Rappaport. 379.263 R222.

An accessible story about one family's decision to send their children to school during the 1960s.



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Slavery and the Underground Railroad: Bound for Freedom by Carin T. Ford.
973.7115 F699.

Documents the period in American history when slavery plagued the nation and slaves escaped to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport.
323.092 R221.

Beautiful artwork illustrates this powerful tribute to Dr. King.

My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing Up with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Christine King Farris. 92 K536FAR.

Martin's sister recalls conditions in the South when she and her brothers were growing up and relates family anecdotes that show the strength of family.

Harlem Stomp! A Cultural History of the Harlem Renaissance by Laban Carrick Hill. 810.9896073 H646.

An overview of Harlem culture; the arts, literature and music, from 1900-1924.

The Power of One: Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine by Judith Bloom Fradin & Dennis Brindell Fradin. 323.092 F799.

The story of Daisy Bates, mentor to the nine black students who integrated Little Rock High in 1957.

Powerful Words: More Than 200 Years of Extraordinary Writing by African Americans by Wade Hudson. 081.08996 H886.

A collection of letters, speeches, poetry and more by famous African Americans.

Maritcha: A Nineteenth-Century American Girl by Tonya Bolden. 92 L9918B.

The story of Maritcha Remond Lyons, a black child born free during the days of slavery.