



YES: **Finding Good Books for Use in After-School Programs**

Funded by the Robert Bowne Foundation
Felicia George & Tyler T. Schmidt, Co-Coordinators
New York City Writing Project

Jan Gallagher, Editor

NYCWP

**INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY STUDIES
LEHMAN COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

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DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to all the youth practitioners who were a part of the Youth Education Scholars (YES) program and to their colleagues, friends, and family who worked with them and supported them throughout their careers.

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of Lena Townsend, Executive Director, and Anne Lawrence, Program Officer, of The Robert Bowne Foundation, without whose financial and ideological support this work could not have been possible. We would also like to recognize our friends and colleagues who, as experts in the field of literacy, contributed to the scholars' learning and growth over the course of the program. Among them are: Elaine Avidon, Lehman College Early Childhood and Childhood Education Department, for sharing her amazingly extensive collection of high-quality children's books; Anne Campos, Associate Director of the ILS, for financial guidance; Melissa T. Jenvey, Project Librarian, Nathan Straus Young Adult Center, Donnell Library Center, for her astounding breadth of knowledge that inspired many a YES scholar; Jack Martin, Young Adult Librarian, Nathan Straus Young Adult Center, Donnell Library Center, for his knowledge of young adult literature and willingness to help that led youth educators to their inquiry topics; Nancy Mintz, Director of the New York City Writing Project, for her collection of young adult literature and engaging introduction to the literature; John Peters, Children's Librarian, Donnell Library Center, for his tour of the children's room and introduction to its vast resources; Cathy Smith, Deputy Director of Riverdale Neighborhood House, for her lively presentation of children's literature and ways books can be used in after-school settings; and, finally, to Marcie Wolfe, Executive Director of the ILS, for her enthusiastic commitment to the project since its beginning.



ABOUT the New York City Writing Project

The New York City Writing Project (NYCWP) is a professional-development program of the Institute for Literacy Studies at Lehman College, The City University of New York. NYCWP has been providing support in language arts and literacy education to New York City public schools, after-school programs, teachers, and youth workers for 29 years. During this time, more than 14,000 teachers and youth workers have reached 300,000 students by taking part in Project-sponsored seminars, workshops, graduate courses, and special programs. We anchor our professional development model in the belief that teachers and after-school educators bring knowledge, expertise, and leadership to their practice.

Established in 1978 as a local site of the National Writing Project, NYCWP is part of a network of 199 university-based professional-development programs throughout the country dedicated to improving the teaching of writing and enhancing teacher professionalism. NYCWP's mission, like that of NWP, is to improve literacy-based instruction and promote the use of writing as a tool for learning, thinking, and communicating in and out of school. Through collaborations with teachers, schools, youth workers, and after-school programs, NYCWP seeks to transform the ways in which writing and reading are perceived, taught, and assessed in urban learning environments.



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INTRODUCTION

Good Books, Good Times!

In Lee Bennett Hopkins's playful poem, "Good Books, Good Times," he reminds us that the pleasures of books are the pleasures of life: interesting people, original beginnings, surprising facts, unforgettable fictions. For the last three years we have enjoyed working with after-school educators in a project similarly dedicated to "good books," "good adventures," and "good times." (Hopkins, 1995). This program, the Youth Education Scholars (YES), is our most recent collaboration with The Robert Bowne Foundation (RBF). For almost twenty years, the Institute for Literacy Studies (ILS) and RBF have shared a mission to support the literacy efforts of after-school practitioners. We have offered graduate seminars, a Youth Practitioners Institute, on-site consulting, and workshops for staff in after-school programs. In keeping with the foundation's vision to develop the libraries of after-school programs, the ILS designed YES, using our inquiry model, to support youth workers in identifying quality literature for their programs. Participants in YES shared some common goals: to build their after-school programs' libraries, to strengthen the literacy work at their sites, and to spark a passion for reading in the young people with whom they work.

The YES program was launched in September 2001. This year-long program, offered for three consecutive cycles, served 23 after-school educators from 19 agencies. Those selected for this program are leaders in their agencies who have opportunities to share the results of their inquiry projects with staff and youth in their programs.

The YES program was inquiry-based. Program participants began by identifying a research topic or question that mattered to them. For example, participants posed questions such as, "How do I get reluctant readers in my program excited about reading?" or "Where do I find literature that represents the cultures and varied experiences of the kids in my program?" They then explored a variety of venues to learn more about reading materials related to their topic. They read, discussed books, and read some more. They shared materials, refined their inquiries, and sometimes reconsidered their research to accommodate new ideas. Ultimately they used their findings to create personalized annotated bibliographies, extended annotations that outline ways to use the resources they found, and narrative essays describing their inquiry process.

Program Design

Educators in after-school programs too often work in isolation, consumed with the daily operation of their own programs. They have few opportunities to get together and talk about curriculum, literacy practices, and program challenges. The New York City Writing Project provided opportunities for youth educators to share their after-school work with colleagues. Our programs are experiential; participants try out reading and writing strategies, reflect on their value, and consider adaptations for their own work. The YES program was designed to allow scholars a chance to learn more about other after-school programs, seeing other models for literacy and different approaches to community-based education. Participants took turns hosting monthly meetings at their sites, where scholars had the opportunity to showcase their staffs' and students' work. In order to sustain continuity between our monthly meetings, we also used an online discussion board to share information about our searches and to respond to articles about reading and using literature with students.

Through online investigation, educators' private book collections, and visits to libraries,

YES scholars were introduced to a multitude of picture books, young adult novels, poetry, and non-fiction related to their interests. Internet scavenger hunts allowed participants to learn about reading organizations, publishers, and literacy resources. We also invited colleagues to share their passion for children's literature, reflected in their extensive and unique collections of picture books and young adult stories. These guest presenters shared ideas for categorizing and using these books with children. Our annual visit to the Donnell Library Center, known for its collection of children's and young adult literature, helped many of our scholars define or refine their inquiry topics.

However, good books on the shelf are not enough. Participants tried out literacy strategies to support young people's critical thinking, including book groups, point-of-view writing, and "one pagers," which are visual responses to literature. Each year scholars participated in book groups. During these book groups, a variety of strategies were demonstrated: rewriting captions for pictures in the book, predicting, retelling portions of the story from another character's point of view, and experimenting with roles in discussion groups, using Harvey Daniels's *Literature Circles* (2002). Scholars also formed writing groups to support them through the process of drafting and revising their personal narratives and tried out revision strategies during these workshops. Toward the end of the year, we invited participants to make presentations of literacy strategies and activities they have used with youth. Participants became valued voices for introducing different practices and pedagogy.

What's Here

This publication brings together material from all three years of the YES program, highlighting a variety of topics and experiences with inquiry-based research. Scholars' completed projects contained three sections: an essay narrating the inquiry experience, an annotated bibliography of books found, and extended annotations outlining enrichment activities for two of their texts. In this publication we have included two examples of entire projects, a sampling of narrative essays that capture the range of participants' approaches to the inquiry process, and an annotated bibliography, organized thematically.

The variety of topics—from poetry and visual literacy to artists' biographies and multi-cultural literature—reflects not only the range of interests within the group, but also the very different program needs and youth served. Importantly, the narratives provide the philosophy and motivation behind each scholar's book list. To learn more about the participants' experiences with the inquiry process, we recommend that you read the narratives. If you are looking for resources that you can use in your program, you might go straight to the annotated bibliography.

We designed the YES program because we are dedicated to supporting a community of after-school educators, an enthusiastic, indispensable group who offer the creative, personalized learning too often missing in many schools. We created this publication because we believe these inquiry findings, teaching ideas, and learning narratives are valuable resources for other youth practitioners in after-school education, as well as for classroom teachers. We invite you to explore their projects, urge you to share some of their suggested titles with youth, and hope you will be inspired to begin an inquiry project of your own.

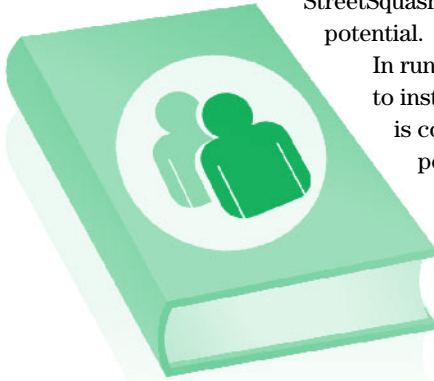
Felicia George
Tyler T. Schmidt
YES Co-Coordinators
Fall 2007

INQUIRY PROJECTS

This section contains samples of two participants' entire projects: an essay that narrates the inquiry experience, an annotated bibliography of the books found, and extended annotations that outline enrichment activities for two of the books.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT MARY CIPOLLONE, STREETSQUASH

StreetSquash is an after-school program that serves middle and high school students from West Harlem. StreetSquash students receive tutoring and homework help, learn to play squash, perform community service, and have the opportunity to be in a one-on-one mentoring relationship. We also have a literacy program, which starts with a book club for seventh and eighth graders and later becomes a college preparatory program for high school students. The StreetSquash mission is to provide consistent and reliable support to the children, families, and schools in West Harlem. By exposing these children to a variety of new experiences and by maintaining high standards, StreetSquash aims to help each child realize his or her academic and personal potential.



In running a book club for middle school students, my primary goal is to instill in these young people a love for reading. A person who reads is constantly engaged in a process of discovery about the world. A person who reads is a better writer and a better communicator.

But communication does not rely solely on the written word. I aspire to enhance my students' ability to communicate orally, both informally and as formal public speakers. This aspiration led me to create a unit on the Civil Rights Movement. I felt that the most exciting way for my students to practice public speaking would be through reading and performing the speeches of one of history's most incredible freedom struggles.

Once I began this inquiry process, I realized that the possibilities were endless. I seized the opportunity to provide the students with interactive historical experiences. Because I work with predominantly African-American and Latino students, I wanted to expose them to the freedom struggles of their own cultures. I initially intended to create a unit on the Civil Rights Movement, 20th-Century Latin American revolutions, and apartheid in South Africa. After beginning my search and finding countless resources on the Civil Rights Movement, I decided to focus primarily there. I also realized that my students had a basic understanding of this era, a good starting point from which I could expand their knowledge and then use that foundation to explore other freedom struggles in less detail. The other movements I would like to eventually explore with them include not only the movements I mentioned above but also the women's movement in the United States and the fight of gays and lesbians to achieve equal rights.

I decided to begin my unit with *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* by Christopher Paul Curtis. Set in 1963, the novel recounts the harsh experiences a black family from the North is forced to confront as they travel to the South, which is plagued by racial violence. The novel ends with the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, in which four young girls attending a Sunday school class were killed. I thought that a historical novel would be a good segue from the lighter books we had been discussing in the book club to the more serious historical topics we would

be exploring in this unit. I thought the novel also would inspire the children's curiosity about the events of the 1960s.

While discussing this novel, I planned to begin our exploration of persuasive speeches from the time period. I originally wanted to have my students read speeches other than the most famous, the "I Have a Dream" speech of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. However, after reading through a variety of speeches from that time period, I found this speech to be both the most inspirational and the best example of techniques for writing persuasive speeches. I also realized that my students would be more excited to perform a speech with which they were already familiar. I imagined that, while they had probably heard excerpts from the speech, they might not have read the speech in its entirety. So though this was not the only speech I planned to work on with my students, I thought it would be a good one with which to start.

The most exciting development in my inquiry was when I began discussing a collaboration with a book club from the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. My contact there was enthusiastic about participating, especially because our unit was about the Civil Rights Movement. She suggested that we view Spike Lee's *4 Little Girls*, a documentary about the 1963 Birmingham church bombing. She also told me that she could bring church members who were active during the Civil Rights Movement and who knew the history of Harlem in the 1960s. This conversation really got me moving.

I realized that I was missing the most important element of learning about the Civil Rights Movement, especially since I was interested in exploring oral communication. I needed to add some oral history to our unit! The best resource for learning about the movement is obviously the many people still alive who were active in and affected by the movement. I decided to have my students act as oral historians by interviewing members of their community who remember the Civil Rights Movement. I was excited to find the book *Oh, Freedom! Kids Talk about the Civil Rights Movement with the People Who Made It Happen*, comprised of interviews done by children on the Civil Rights Movement. The students could read the interviews and use them as examples to develop their own questions for the adults who would be joining us.

Because it was the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board* decision and because I felt that segregated schooling was an issue to which my students could relate, I decided to choose a book about segregation as well. I found *The Dream and the Struggle: Separate, But Not Equal*, by Jim Haskins, which explores the history of African-American education and examines the NAACP-LDF's fight to make school segregation illegal. I also drew on a plethora of newspaper and magazine articles about the *Brown v. Board* anniversary and the state of education for minorities today. In discussing how things have changed since *Brown*, my book club did a simulation in which two groups planned a school year using different budgets. One group had the much larger budget of a suburban school in Manhasset, Long Island, where 98 percent of the students are white. The other group had the smaller budget of an inner-city school in Mott Haven in the Bronx, where 97 percent of the students are black and Latino. The students had the opportunity to explore how race is tied to economics in our social structure and the consequences for the education and lives of members



of minority groups.

Having completed the Civil Rights Movement unit with my students, I feel that it was a success. The students were engaged in learning about their history. They asked thoughtful questions and had inspirational discussions. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* not only taught them about an important moment in U.S. history but was also funny and enjoyable to read. My students loved performing speeches, especially the ones they wrote about topics they are passionate about: “Why we shouldn’t wear uniforms in school,” “Teachers should treat students with respect,” and “Why gays and lesbians should be allowed to get married.” The students had insightful conversations about segregation in education today and learned about inequality from the “Build Your Own School” simulation activity.

The highlight of the unit was definitely the joint book club meeting with the Abyssinian Baptist Church. The adult book club discussed *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* with the students, and then we watched a movie clip from *4 Little Girls*. The clip focused on the day that the 16th Street Baptist Church was bombed and four little girls were killed. It was a disturbing clip that definitely made everyone very emotional. But from these emotions stemmed an incredible conversation about segregation, racism, personal experiences, and how we can move forward. The students had the opportunity to conduct interviews with the adults about their lives during the Civil Rights Movement. The whole day was a truly incredible experience in which different generations, races, and communities came together to make history come alive.

We completed our unit with a field trip to Tony Kushner’s *Caroline, or Change*, a Broadway musical set during 1963 that examines the relationship of an African-American maid and a young Jewish boy. The students obviously loved the music and the dancing, but, having learned about the Civil Rights Movement, they were also able to make unique observations about the themes of racial interaction in the play.

I have really enjoyed participating in the YES program, not only because it enabled me to develop this exciting educational unit for my children, but also because of the connections I made while I was there. I was constantly energized by being surrounded by people who are also working in after-school programs and are full of creativity. I left every session having learned new ideas which I immediately used with my students. Because of the success of my inquiry experience with my students, I have decided to build next year’s book club in thematic units because of the wonderful opportunities they provide for creativity and experiential learning.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cose, Ellis. A Dream Deferred Newsweek, May 17, 2004

This *Newsweek* article reviews the history of the road to the *Brown v. Board* decision, examines the question of whether we have realized the dream of integration in our public schools, and touches on the debate over using vouchers to supplant public education. Though written for adults, the article can be used with advanced readers if you pause to assure comprehension, especially of difficult words. This article provides a wonderful basis for discussing segregation in education and exploring whether we have equality in our school systems today.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*

New York: Yearling, 1995

Curtis tells the story of ten-year-old Kenny and his amusing family, the Watsons, as they leave the world they know, in the North, to visit Grandma in Birmingham, Alabama. Set in 1963, the novel recounts the harsh experiences the Watsons confront as they enter a world plagued by racial violence. This historical novel, which includes an epilogue describing the Civil Rights Movement, serves as a great introduction to the movement. The book is suitable for advanced readers.

210 pp. ISBN 0-440-22800-X Historical fiction

Gottheimer, Josh, editor. *Ripples of Hope*

New York: Basic Books, 2003

This compilation includes a variety of speeches from the civil rights movements of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, gay people, and women. Most of the speeches are preceded by a brief biography of the author and a contextual description of the speech. Historical speeches are a wonderful tool for working on public speaking and persuasive writing with students. This compilation is suitable for readers of all ages.

480 pp. ISBN 0-465-02752-0 Non-fiction

Haskins, Jim. *The Dream and the Struggle: Separate, But Not Equal*

New York: Scholastic, 1998

Haskins begins his book with a startling description of the first day of integration at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. He then rewinds to colonial times and develops the history of African-American education in the United States to create a basis for understanding segregation in the classrooms of the 1960s. Haskins reviews the test cases that led up to the NAACP's success in having segregation defined as illegal in the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision. This book provides a historical narrative that is interesting and easily comprehensible to advanced readers.

174 pp. ISBN 0-590-45911-2 Non-fiction

Kasher, Steven. *The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-68*

New York: Abbeville Press, 1996

This book shows the history of the Civil Rights Movement through a wide variety of moving photographs. Text describes the photos and puts them in historical context. This is a fantastic book to spark students' curiosity, discussion, and emotional ties to history. Please note that there are some very disturbing photographs in this book, so it may not be appropriate for younger readers.

237 pp. ISBN 9-7892-0123-2 Photographs/non-fiction

King, Casey and Linda Barrett Osborne. *Oh, Freedom! Kids Talk about the Civil Rights Movement with the People Who Made It Happen*

New York: Knopf, 1997

This book contains interviews conducted by children with adults who lived through and were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. The interviews are divided into three sections, each beginning with a historical description that is very accessible to young readers. The book also includes photographs that help tell the story of the Civil Rights Movement and spark the interest of young readers. Reading excerpts from this book is a great way to prepare for an oral history project in which students conduct their own interviews of people involved in the Civil Rights Movement—or any period in history. This book is suitable for readers of all ages.

125 pp. ISBN 0-679-89005-X Non-fiction

Levine, Ellen. *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories*

New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1993

This book is a collection of the stories of thirty African Americans who were children and teenagers during the Civil Rights Movement. This book puts a very personal face on the historical period and can inspire young people to realize that they, too, can be involved in important struggles for social justice. This book is appropriate for advanced readers.

156 pp. ISBN 0-399-21893-9 Non-fiction

Lee, Spike. *4 Little Girls*

New York: HBO, 1997

This documentary film examines the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, on September 15, 1963, in which four young girls attending Sunday school were killed. Lee personalizes the tragedy by doing extensive interviews with the family members and friends of those killed. He examines the events of the day and the way the murders were handled by the legal system. The film also provides viewers with an in-depth analysis of the sociopolitical climate during the Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham. This film is suitable for high school students and mature middle school students; graphic footage could be too disturbing for younger audiences.

Documentary, Time: 1 hour, 42 minutes

Schoener, Allen, editor. *Harlem on My Mind: Cultural Capital of Black America, 1900-1968*

New York: Random House, 1969

This compilation of newspaper articles about life in Harlem from 1900 to 1968 provides a wonderful primary source for students learning about history during those years. The articles are accompanied by fantastic photographs that really demonstrate the vibrant energy of Harlem. Most of the articles are short, easy reads for intermediate and advanced readers.

255 pp. ISBN 1565842669 Non-fiction

Smithsonian/Folkway Recording. Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement through Its Songs

Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1992

This album contains a variety of Negro spirituals and other songs sung during the Civil Rights Movement. Students may enjoy singing along and analyzing the lyrics of the songs.

Audio Recording

Southern Poverty Law Center. www.tolerance.org

This comprehensive website provides valuable resources for educating students about inequality and promoting tolerance. It includes educational resources for teachers and parents as well as pages for teens and children where young people tell their stories of hateful experiences. The pages for children also include interactive educational games.

EXTENDED ANNOTATIONS

King, Casey and Linda Barrett Osborne.

Oh, Freedom! Kids Talk about the Civil Rights Movement with the People Who Made It Happen

Summary

This book contains interviews conducted by children with adults who lived through and were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. The interviews are divided into three sections, each beginning with a historical description that is very accessible to young readers. The book also includes photographs that help tell the story of the Civil Rights Movement and spark the interest of young readers. Reading excerpts from this book is a great way to prepare for an oral history project in which students conduct their own interviews of people involved in the Civil Rights Movement—or any period in recent history. This book is suitable for readers of all ages.

Major Themes or Issues

- Civil Rights Movement
- Intergenerational discussion
- Oral history
- Children as oral historians
- Segregation in education
- Protest and social change

Possible Writing Activities and Projects

- Interview adults who were alive during the Civil Rights Movement and write up your interview. Act out the interviews with one student playing each role.
- Conduct interviews with members of your community who were alive during the Civil Rights Movement.
- What historical events have you lived through that people might want to interview you about? Write interview questions and conduct interviews with classmates.
- Research one of the events that are discussed in this book, such as the Freedom Rides. Make a collage, drawing, or poster that represents what the event was about.
- What are you willing to fight for? Write an essay about something you feel so passionately about that you would dedicate time to protesting, even if it was dangerous.

Kasher, Steven.

The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954-68

Summary

This book shows the history of the Civil Rights Movement through a wide variety of moving photographs. The text describes the photos and puts them into a historical context. This is a fantastic book to spark students' curiosity, discussion, and emotional ties to history. Please note that there are some very disturbing photographs in this book, so it may not be appropriate for younger readers.

Major Themes or Issues

- Civil Rights Movement
- Race relations
- Violence
- Non-violent protest
- Life in the 1960s
- Social change
- Integration in the South

Possible Writing Activities and Projects

- Write a story about one of the photographs. Who are the people? Where are they? What are they doing? What would it feel like to be in the photograph?
- Write a diary entry as if you were one of the people in the photograph.
- Pick out a photograph that gives you a very strong emotional reaction. Pick a partner and discuss your reaction or write about what you are feeling.
- Is it easier to sympathize with the African-American people in the photographs than with the white people? But try to think about what the white people are feeling. Write a diary entry from their point of view.
- These photographs give us the opportunity to look at history. Become a historian and take photographs of activities going on in your community today.



CHILDREN'S POETRY

MICHAEL RUSTIN, KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTER

Where to begin? I remember the beginning of our YES program as a time of great expectation. I was new to the field, having started at Kingsbridge Heights Community Center (KHCC) only a few months before. I was eager to use the YES program to learn as many ways as possible to integrate children's literature into our program. My plan was to sit back, observe, take notes, and pick the brains of the facilitators and participants. The idea of a journey was not part of my plan.

Before the program year began, my colleague Naomi Gottschalk and I spent a lot of time going through our library, sorting, cataloging, and throwing away inappropriate material. I realized just how lacking our library was, and we identified library development as a priority. At that time, I didn't notice the lack of poetry in our library, though eventually I would. At the beginning of the year, we gave program participants a survey and used the results to plan lessons and shape our library. I found the process of reviewing the surveys, talking to participants about their reading choices and observing them as they read, very helpful.

For some reason I didn't connect all this library work with the task of finding an inquiry topic for the YES project. I felt mounting anxiety when I could not think of a topic despite having spent a lot of time searching for one. I was positive that everyone else had selected theirs and that I was falling far behind. I spoke to both Naomi and Tyler Schmidt, the YES facilitator, about possible topics, but could not decide on any one.

Eventually my inquiry topic found me. My daughter Michelle, a fourth grader at the time, was required to read for 30 minutes each evening. This usually meant that she sat at one end of the couch and I at the other, both reading silently. One night she asked me to read aloud with her a book her teacher had given her: *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein. I wish I could say that I immediately jumped at this opportunity to read aloud with my daughter, but the fact is that I had never been very interested in poetry. However, Michelle's enthusiasm for the book won me over, and we took turns reading the poems aloud. The 30 minutes of required reading lasted a lot longer, because we both really enjoyed the poems. They were funny, silly, and, at times, close to home. We both identified with several of the vividly described characters and situations. The poems led to a lot of teasing as we shared remembrances of our childhoods.

At this moment, I knew I had finally found my inquiry topic. I decided to focus on poetry with an emphasis on multicultural poems that would reflect the diversity of our program. I hoped that program participants and their families would be able to share some of the closeness that I felt with my daughter during our read-aloud. A quick check of our library at KHCC reaffirmed my decision; our library included very little poetry.

I began my search by looking for more poems by Shel Silverstein, since he was my inspiration. I found *A Light In The Attic* and *Falling Up*. Both were great, but I needed more diversity. I wanted to find works by poets and authors that my participants could relate to, works that reflected their lives and environments. During the October meeting of the YES project, we did a web scavenger hunt that introduced me to several useful websites. Particularly helpful were Lee & Low Books (<http://leeandlow.com/>) and Lisa Bartle's Database of Award-Winning Children's Literature (www.dawcl.com); both were full of materials on multicultural authors, poets, and poems.

Jeannette Mercado, another YES participant, helped me out indirectly during our November meeting by introducing me to Materials for the Arts, an organization that

provides donated arts materials to nonprofit organizations. At its warehouse, I found many old books and materials such as buttons, ribbon, and belt buckles, which I planned to use at KHCC to accentuate the children's writing. I was glad to find this resource, as presentation is half the battle!

At the February YES meeting, as we discussed and practiced how to present books to children, I learned to look at a book as a whole rather than focusing only on content. We took time to study a book's cover, to think about ways to create our own stories without reading a summary of the book, and to ask and generate questions about the book. When I applied what I learned in my own program, the children had a lot of fun. A staff workshop on book presentations was also well received. Books were distributed randomly, and each staff member presented his or her book to the group. My book was *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss. The title expressed the point of the book presentations: to take participants on a journey by being descriptive and expressive.

The Donnell Library was another helpful stop on my journey. I had visited my local public library and taken our participants to the library near KHCC, but neither could offer what was available at the Donnell. The poetry section really helped me out. I took two books to share with our participants. *Bein' With You This Way* introduced our readers to the topic of diversity in a rap format, which they enjoyed. *Soul Looks Back in Wonder* introduced our older readers to works by Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, and others.

An unexpected resource was an organization called Young Audiences. During Black History Month, I arranged with Young Audiences for a performance by an Afro-Brazilian group, Neco Gato, which performed music and dance of Africans forced into slavery in Brazil. In preparation for the performance, the group encouraged the children to learn about different parts of Africa—so I went off in search of poetry from Africa and the Caribbean.

I began this *search* feeling quite anxious and unsure. With a lot of assistance and some trial and error, I was able to find a topic that is both interesting and beneficial to my program. KHCC participants have learned another way to express themselves creatively. Our library now has an expanded poetry section. In June, program participants presented An Evening of Entertainment, an end-of-year series of performances for family, friends, and staff. Several participants performed their original poetry. Others adapted several fairy tales with a Bronx twist. Thanks to the places I visited on my inquiry search, we have expanded and enriched our program.

However, this is just the beginning. As Dr. Seuss says, "Oh, the places you'll go!"



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adedjouma, Davida, editor. Gregory Christie, illustrator. *The Palm of My Heart: Poetry by African-American Children*

New York: Lee and Low Books, 1996

A collection of 20 poems by African-American children celebrating the beauty and uniqueness of their lives and their culture, this book is suitable for children ages 4 and up. 32 pp. ISBN 1-880000-76-8 Poetry

Feelings, Tom, editor and illustrator. *Soul Looks Back in Wonder*

New York: Puffin Books, 1989

This collection of 13 poems by major award-winning artists, including Maya Angelou and Langston Hughes, is suitable for young readers and up. 28 pp. ISBN 0-8037-1001-1 Poetry

Jones-Little, Leslie. Jan Spivey Gilchrist, illustrator. *Children of Long Ago*

New York: Lee and Low Books, 2000

This book, suitable for beginning readers and up, is a collection of 17 poems that celebrate African-American childhood in the early 1900s.

32 pp. ISBN 1-58430-009-4 Poetry

Medina, Tony. R. Gregory Christie, illustrator. *Love to Langston*

New York: Lee and Low Books, 2001

Fourteen original poems offer young readers a look into the life of Langston Hughes, one of America's most beloved poets. This collection shows Hughes throughout his life, as he overcame many obstacles to become a poet. The book is suitable for readers ages 6 and up.

40 pp. ISBN 1-58430-041-8 Poetry

Mora, Pat. Enrique O. Sanchez, illustrator. *Confetti: Poems for Children*

New York: Lee and Low Books, 1998

This collection of poems offers the reader a view of the Southwest through the eyes of Mexican Americans and explores their culture through poetry. This book is suitable for children ages 4 and up.

32 pp. ISBN 1-880000-85-7 Poetry

Mora, Pat. Paula S. Barragan, illustrator. *Love to Mama: A Tribute to Mothers*

New York: Lee and Low Books, 2001

Thirteen Latino poets celebrate their bonds with their mothers, grandmothers, and care-giving women. This book is suitable for beginning readers and up.

32 pp. ISBN 1-58430-019-1 Poetry

**Nikola, Lisa. Michael Bryant, illustrator. Bein' with You This Way
New York: Lee and Low Books, 1994**

A playground rap that introduces young readers to how people are different yet the same, this celebration of cultural diversity is suitable for beginning and young readers.
32 pp. ISBN 1-880000-26-1 Poetry

**Silverstein, Shel, author and illustrator. Where the Sidewalk Ends
New York: HarperCollins Juvenile Books, 1974**

This collection of poems and drawings is generally straightforward, simple, and unforgettable. Poems combine silly words with pen and ink drawings that are funny, touching, or both. This book is suitable for children ages 9 to 12.
176 pp. ISBN 0060248025 Poetry

**Stepanek, Mattie J. T., author and illustrator. Journey through
Heartsongs
New York: Hyperion, VSP Books, 2002**

Mattie, a young boy with a terminal illness, wrote this book of award-winning poetry about life and death, love and loss, faith and hope. Despite the subject matter, I found the book inspiring.
61 pp. ISBN 0-7868-6942-9 Poetry

**Step toe, Javaka, illustrator. In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall:
African- Americans Celebrate Fathers
New York: Lee and Low Books, 1997**

This intergenerational collection of poetry by new and established African- American writers celebrates fatherhood with honor, humor, and grace. It is a testimony to the powerful bond between African-American fathers, children, and grandchildren. This book is suitable for children ages 4 and up.
32 pp. ISBN 1-58430-016-7 Poetry

EXTENDED ANNOTATIONS

**Step toe, Javaka, illustrator.
In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall: African-Americans Celebrate Fathers**

Summary

This collection of poems celebrates the relationship between African-American fathers and their children. The poems represent a wide range of views and perspectives. While the focus is on African-American fathers, the poems embrace all cultures by portraying the bonds that children and their fathers share.

Major Themes

- Love
- Heritage
- Culture
- Tradition
- Roles of men in family life

Possible Writing Activities and Projects

- Have children write a brief poem about an activity or pleasant experience with their father or male family member.
- Have children discuss and write or draw about one thing they like to do as a family that makes them feel special.
- Using construction paper, markers, crayons, and other art materials, have children create a collage depicting their families.
- Ask children to write a letter telling their father or adult male relative how he made them feel special.

Mora, Pat.

Love to Mama: A Tribute to Mothers

Summary

In this book, thirteen poets pay tribute in poetic fashion to their mothers and grandmothers. The poems also reflect their love of their heritage and culture, as well as the roles of these women in passing along the traditions. The poems share the influence of mothers and grandmothers in all areas of children's lives.

Major Themes

- Love
- Heritage
- Culture
- Tradition
- Roles of women in family life
- Extended families

Possible Writing Activities and Projects

- Have children write a brief poem about an activity or pleasant experience with their mothers, grandmothers, or aunts.
- Have children discuss and write or draw about one thing they like to do as a family that makes them feel special.
- Using construction paper, markers, crayons, and other art materials, ask children to create a collage depicting their families.
- Have children write a letter telling their mother, grandmother, aunt, or other adult female family member about a way in which she made them feel special.
- Children can write brief poems about an object, such as a hat, coat, or piece of jewelry, that reminds them of their mother or grandmother.

ESSAYS ON THE INQUIRY PROCESS

This section contains a sampling of six narrative essays that capture a range of participants' approaches to the inquiry process.

READING WITH GROUP 5

NAOMI GOTTSCHALK, KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTER

When I started working in the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center After School Program (ASP), one of the first things I did was to conduct a survey of all the kids and the staff. I wanted to know what they liked and disliked so I could better serve them. My main goal was to get the kids and staff interested and invested in our program's activities in order to create a real connection with and love for different types of learning.

My survey included a variety of questions, from what type of music they liked, what food they loved to eat, and what they wanted to learn at the ASP to what kinds of books they liked. After the surveys were given to each age group and completed, I went over each one. Tallying up what the majority of the children in the program liked and disliked really gave me a solid foundation for shaping the literacy portion of the ASP.

This process ultimately led me to my inquiry focus. From the information I gathered from the survey and my own observations, I felt that Mike Rustin, my program director, and I had already reached a lot of our kids' needs and wants. However, one group seemed to need more support and direction: Group 5, which was composed of 25 fifth through seventh graders.

After discussing my survey results with Mike, I began my inquiry process, working directly with Group 5. The survey showed that reading and writing were the program activities Group 5 hated most. I began thinking of ways to help them grow as writers and readers, to help them *want* to read and write, and, most importantly, to help them become invested in their literacy future. I wanted activities that would be rewarding both for Group 5 and for me.

My first thought was to find books they would like. So I went to our center's library, picked out a lot of books, and had students read them. To my dismay, they hated it. I thought again: "What am I doing wrong? Duh! How can I help the kids become invested in their literacy future if they aren't going through the process of actually finding interesting things to read?"

Keeping the concept of *process* in mind, I thought of the clever idea of having the kids create their own masterpieces—books they wrote and illustrated themselves. This process would meet their goal of doing something fun and interesting, and it would help me meet my goal of getting them invested in learning. The project ended up focusing on ways to support their independence, individuality, and self-worth through literacy, letting their voices be heard in the way they wanted to express them.

That was the first step into our process. The second step began when each student presented her or his masterpiece to the group, and a very interesting and productive question-and-answer session followed. Students loved this part because it allowed them to ask questions about the authors' works and gave the authors the opportunity to express themselves orally. It also allowed me to gather a lot of valuable information about topics in which they showed interest.

This presentation and discussion happened around the same time that the YES

program visited the Donnell Library. That visit changed my program and me. I talked to the Donnell's youth librarian, who had lots of knowledge about the books in the youth department. She helped me choose a variety of books according to the interests I now knew Group 5 had, such as sports and comics. Loaded up with more than 30 books, I was on my way to changing Group 5's attitude toward reading.

These books became the foundation of a wonderful, enlightening book review session. I gave students time to preview lots of books and give their opinion about them. This activity gave them the ownership they needed, letting them have a say in what they were going to read and enjoy. The hard part was to create different activities for each student, because each was reading a different book. Eventually, this task did get easier. I had students tell the group about their book, let them draw pictures about the chapters they read, used graphic organizers to help them understand the story, and many similar activities.

After the successful book review, I decided to try a similar activity called "judging a book by its cover," based on a presentation to the YES group by Nancy Mintz, director of the NYCWP. The procedure was basically the same as a book review, but this time a little more attention was involved in choosing a book. Students chose a book by looking at the cover only and not reading any words. They wrote about what they saw on the cover, not what they imagined the story to be about. For example, one might write, "There is a girl wearing a white shirt sitting on a bench. She has black hair and blue eyes. There is a tree in the background. The tree is green and yellow." Next the students wrote about what they thought the story would be about from looking at the cover only, for example, "I think the girl is very happy, because her mother just gave her \$100 to go shopping. When she goes shopping she..." After writing a few sentences, students opened their books and read to find out what their book was really about, adding their findings to their earlier writing. Lastly, students shared their conclusions. They told the group what they saw initially, thought, and found out about the book they chose. By the end of this process they were so invested in the book they had chosen that they couldn't wait to start reading it.

Being a part of the YES program helped me find an inquiry focus based on the interests of the children in my program. It also helped me process my thoughts and goals around reading and writing, ultimately helping my students reach their goals while I met the goals I had set both for them and for myself. The projects and activities validated the notion that students' voices did matter—that every opinion counts. These activities helped them to change their attitude toward literacy and eventually to take more ownership of their program and themselves.



LITERACY THROUGH ART

DAVID MERTENS, ST. NICHOLAS NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION CORP.

For four years I taught art in the public school system. Through these years—even earlier, during my undergraduate years—I never viewed being an art teacher as a search for the next Picasso. Unfortunately, I faced an entire school community—students, parents, teachers, and administrators—who assumed that my job was to ferret out budding artists and foster their abilities, while at the same time not “failing kids who can’t draw.”

Neither my curriculum nor my philosophy has ever held an expectation for students to improve their remedial (or even promising) draftsmanship. Children who want to be visual artists can, and often do, develop this skill on their own time or seek out “talent” programs, both in and out of school, designed for gifted individuals. I believe—though the idea must be proven to the aforementioned students, teachers, and so on—that all children can grow as learners, thinkers, and, yes, *readers* from art-based experiences. Reading, like looking at or making art, relies on abstract thinking: the ability to create or “crack” codes of communication, solving problems through reasoning.

As a Youth Education Scholar in a program sponsored by the Robert Bowne Foundation, I spent a year investigating the theory and practice of using art to develop literacy skills in children. This was not foreign territory even when we began; I had been working with the concept for years. I saw this study as an opportunity to adequately research and document ways of using art to develop literacy.

My inquiry actually started well before I participated in the YES program. In 1997, I began three years of invaluable experience as a museum educator at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Under the directorship of Phillip Yenawine (whose texts I consulted for this project), I learned how to draw parallels between art and literature; for instance, devices such as allegory, personification, metaphor, and even subtext exist in both. The questioning strategies we used at MoMA—a critical inquiry-based approach that allows for substantiation of personal interpretation—could be carried from discussions of paintings to discussions of books with *no* modification. It was even possible to compare a book with a piece of art.

What we did not do at MoMA was explore the development of reading comprehension through hands-on experiences, since the museum lacked facilities for such activities. Thus, I undertook that effort myself in my YES inquiry, beginning with discovering research-based texts. In *Artful Scribbles: The Significance of Children’s Drawings* (1980), Howard Gardner points out startling parallels between a child’s drawing choices and her command of language. For instance, a child of eight or nine who can represent sadness as a darkened sky using a facial expression can manage similar ambiguity in reading and writing. Decoding the visual world was also the focus of *Primer for Visual Literacy* (1995) by Peter Dondis and others. With provocative chapter titles such as



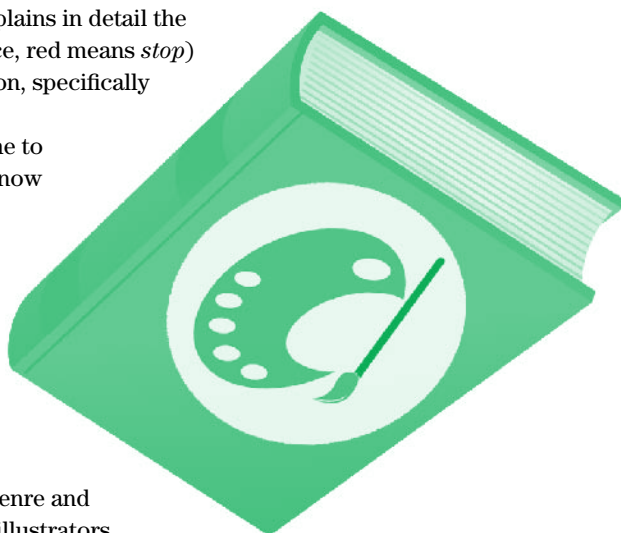
“The Anatomy of a Visual Message,” this book explains in detail the similarities between color symbolism (for instance, red means *stop*) and more advanced forms of visual communication, specifically sign language.

However, while it was fun and interesting for me to absorb new academic ideas, my staff needed to know *how*, not *why*, children can acquire language through visual art. My inquiry became a quest to find tools for the classroom. It ended with an exciting discovery: the wordless picture book.

When I stumbled on Raymond Briggs’s *The Snowman*, a story told exclusively through illustrations, I saw wonderful potential. Staff could use books like this one to work with the children on such skills as predicting, sequencing, and interpreting. I fast became interested in the genre and found that some of my favorite children’s author/illustrators had produced picture-only books, including *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie diPaola, *The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher* by Molly Bang, and *Changes, Changes* by Pat Hutchins. These titles spawned a wave of new literacy activities in my program, proving that a picture is indeed worth a thousand words. The activities included:

- Photocopying several illustrations, detaching them from one another, and asking the children to place them in proper sequence. This activity was especially exciting when the children chose a sequence different from that of the book but could explain the logic of their sequence.
- Having the children write or say what they thought the text of a picture-only book would say if there were any words. Language and interpretation varied *dramatically* from child to child.
- “Dropping out” illustrations at random and having the children guess orally and/or draw what is happening in the missing panels. Answers tended to be uniform, except that each group always had at least one child who found the exercise extremely difficult.
- Reading or telling the children a story and then asking them to draw a scene from that story. I was fascinated at how detail-oriented the children could be. One child, for instance, remembered the exact numbers of buttons on a minor character’s coat.
- Allowing children to create their own stories told exclusively through pictures. I watched as some of them painstakingly revised their work to ensure effective communication.

These exercises are intended for children five or six years of age—in other words, beginning readers. I investigated visual literacy tools for teens as well, such as using photographs as the basis for a caption or poem. However, I felt the inquiry was more successful when I kept it focused on a specific age group. Besides, there are many, many proven ways of getting children who already read to read *better* or enjoy reading *more*. The idea that children who cannot read at all can learn to do so from art-based experiences, by contrast, was exciting, fresh, and even a little controversial.



READING ALOUD WITH CHILDREN

TAINA RIVERA, NEW SETTLEMENT APARTMENTS

I chose my inquiry project based on my observations of the after-school program in which I work at New Settlement. When participants did not have homework, I would ask them to choose a book to read. They acted as if I had asked them to complete the hardest task ever. One time, when I asked Destiny, a nine-year-old Latina, to read a book, she looked at me as if I was crazy. I asked her why she felt that way about reading. She explained that reading was all the children did in school. The first time Destiny and I discussed her education and her future goals, it dawned on me that she was just one of many children who see reading as a chore and not something to do for leisure. So my task was to figure out how to help the children learn to love reading for fun.

However, I felt I needed to start by instilling a love of reading in the children's parents and caretakers. Many parents believe that it's the school's job to teach their children to read. I really wanted to help parents build reading skills and relationships with their children so that they could discover together the wonders a book can offer. At first I was not sure how to approach the parents, or what I could do with them that would give them the skills to read with their children. I thought of holding a reading group once a week, when parents would come in for a half hour of reading with their own children or someone else's. The child could read to the adult or the adult to the child, and the child would choose the books.

To begin the journey, I had to gather information on various ways people have done read-aloud groups. A program called Parents As Reading Partners showed me ways to approach read-alouds. This group helped me realize that read-alouds can be "hands-on" and rewarding for both children and adults. In talking with group members who have children, I found that these families used some of the same techniques I use in reading aloud with my own children: reading to my child or having the child read to me, keeping a daily journal of what we have read, and letting a child who can't yet read tell her version of the story. Other group members had already piloted some of the techniques discussed in the group, with wonderful results. In the YES program's visit to the Donnell Public Library, I discovered a great book with statistics about which children read for pleasure and which do not.

With all this information, I knew how to approach the parents and caregivers in the lives of the children in my program. I was ready to hold a workshop to get feedback



from parents on the ideas I had to offer on how to approach reading aloud in a fun way. When I presented the workshop, the parents were ecstatic. They learned many new techniques, such as “the one pager,” a visual response to a book that includes quotations and questions. They came to understand ways to help kids comprehend what they read or hear read aloud. I presented three books, chosen because they address concerns our children expressed about reading with their parents: *Jubal’s Wish*, a lively, colorful book whose characters have very different personalities; *You Read to Me, I’ll Read to You*, a beginners’ poetry book that gets both the adult and the child involved in the reading; and *Grandma and Me at the Flea*, a book in both English and Spanish that adults and children can enjoy together.

At the end of the workshop, I asked the parents to brainstorm ideas of their own. When I asked what they thought of the idea of weekly read-aloud groups, many thought it was a great idea, while others expressed concern about attending every week. I told them that, while the group would run weekly, they did not have to attend every week. In September we will begin our groups and try to have monthly meetings to see what other input the families have about read-alouds. Once I saw the parents’ reactions, I knew that my inquiry was being accomplished.

Throughout this inquiry I have found many books, some for parents to read with their children and others the parents could read themselves to become better read-aloud partners. I have also discovered that there are many ways to help children and adults learn to appreciate what reading has to offer. Many times people don’t understand that reading opens doors to new adventures that can last a lifetime. If I could travel back into my inquiry journey to change anything, it would be to make many more people realize how valuable reading is in all our lives.

HIGH INTEREST, LOW LEVEL

TRACI SCOTT, SOBRO ADVANTAGE AFTER-SCHOOL

My journey through the YES program was truly one of growth. My first experience in understanding and undertaking my project had to do with the word *inquiry* itself. The YES group did a word-association exercise with the word *inquiry*. I had difficulty for weeks in understanding the connection between *inquiry* and the journey I anticipated taking. I expected simply to compile a small list of books appropriate for the students my program serves. The connection didn't occur until later, when I came to understand that *inquiry* was not a lesson to be learned but a step on a journey.

Once I became aware of the kind of journey I had to take, I encountered another step—deciding on a topic. The reason I applied to the YES program was to learn how to enhance my program's library and make it relevant to the students who would use it. I looked at current problems in my program to aid me in narrowing my three preliminary inquiry topics: female middle school students and self-esteem; bi-cultural self-identification and appreciation; and literature for low reading skills.

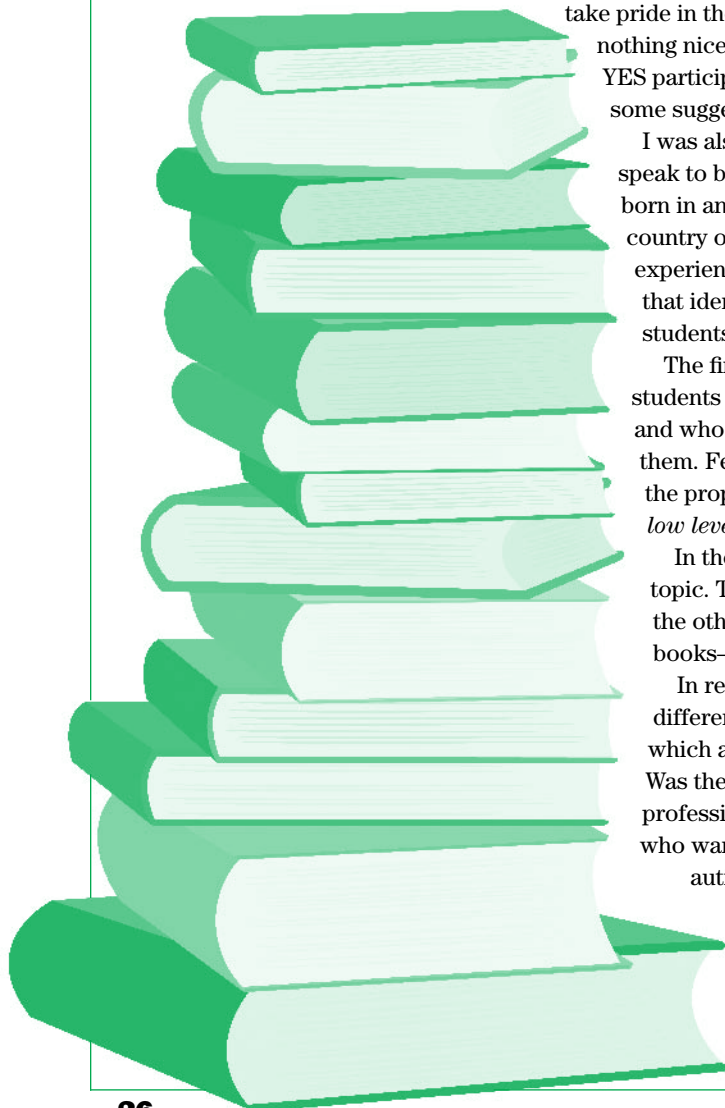
In the girls' group I ran at my program, I noticed that many of the young women didn't take pride in their gender. One student remarked, "There's nothing nice about being a girl." I discussed this idea with YES participants in small-group meetings, and they gave me some suggestions.

I was also weighing the idea of finding books that would speak to bi-cultural students—those whose parents were born in another country. Whether they were born in that country or in the United States, such students often experience a culture clash. My goal was to find books that identified the issues and offered coping skills for the students and their families.

The final topic I was mulling over was to find books for students whose reading competencies were not standard and who nevertheless needed topics that would interest them. Felicia George, YES co-facilitator, helped me learn the proper name for this genre of books: *high interest, low level*.

In the end, I chose *high interest, low level* as my topic. The students I would have targeted by exploring the other two topics also needed high-interest, low-level books—in fact, all the students in the program did.

In researching my topic, I was taken through many different types of literature. I first needed to delineate which audience to target for my compilation of books. Was the compilation for educators interested in professional development—for instance, an educator who wants to read books that would help in teaching autistic children? Or was it for educators looking to share the books I found with their students—for instance, an educator looking for books autistic children can read? I decided to pursue both options: books educators could use



for their own professional development as well as books they could share with their students.

I took a first step toward locating books by using the Donnell Library. I looked for reading comprehension in the online catalog, which presented several options. I first began reading books on techniques for teaching reading, for example, how to determine a child's reading level or the appropriateness of a book. I wanted to educate myself about reading comprehension and teaching methods. My search and research turned up such books as *Teaching Struggling Readers: Articles from The Reading Teacher* by the International Reading Association. This book presented more books for me to read, as well as the journal of a teacher who was teaching a reluctant student in the same age range as my students. I then searched Google for *high-interest, low-level books*. It yielded another list of books to read, as well as an article by Stephanie Spadorcia on reading comprehension and high-interest, low-level texts. The IRA book and Spadorcia's article provided me with a decent list of some 40 books from which I could choose.

One day, while passing time before an appointment, I went into a bookstore to investigate the books that were on my new list. I found two books by Jerry Spinelli, which I read and found interesting and appropriate for my students. I also picked up poetry books Spadorcia suggested, such as *Where The Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein. Spadorcia also suggested biographies of famous individuals. I found a series of books on baseball heroes, such as Roberto Clemente, Lou Gehrig, and Babe Ruth, which I included in my compilation because they were age-appropriate and covered interesting topics.

But I wasn't sure if my opinion was in tune with that of my students. I turned to the students who showed up in my office. Many times students ended up in my office when they couldn't cope in a classroom. One day, I asked a child who had been sent to the office in this way for his help. I explained to him that I was taking a class and wasn't sure what books young urban kids would find interesting. The student agreed to read the books I suggested and give me feedback. Another student also often came to my office, but for a different reason—he came searching for books to read. I asked for his help as well. The venture proved fruitful. I suggested *Cool Salsa* to both of them. They responded that they didn't think it was appropriate because the book's bilingual poems required a grasp of Spanish that many students, though they might be Hispanic or part Hispanic, didn't have.

In reflecting on my journey through the course, I can clearly see my growth in understanding the inquiry process. I have gained an appreciation for children's literature. Before I took the YES course, I had never read children's books, other than the Dr. Seuss and *Maisy* books I occasionally read to my nephew. I can now say that I have a healthy respect for the art.

The class also revived my love for reading in a different way. I discovered more ways to present reading and group activities in the classroom, which in turn helps me to be more supportive in a different way to my teaching staff. As a direct result of this class, I have developed a summer writing workshop for students that focuses on Personal Legends—an idea I got from reading *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho with my YES book group.

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

LAKESH ABREU, THE C.O.V.E AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Beginning is always the hard part
The part of beginning is something I have no clue about
It's hard enough that I don't know what I am doing, but now I don't know where to begin

Always the hard part
But literacy development, ah, a curriculum should be a piece of cake
Or no, it's a bibliography, what am I doing and where do I begin?

The part where "I have no inspiration, no idea," you know, self-doubt is setting in
But wait, I am inspired by the kids
And the kids really don't like reading; but they love talking about their lives
I wonder what the kids think about words, could they think words are fun?
The graffiti on the bathroom wall definitely lets me know they know how to use words
The world of books tells the reader why stories make words come alive
But the kids don't like to read!

Beginning is always the hard part that gets easier
Reading, Reading and More Reading—what did I like to read
Dr. Seuss was the cat in my life, he made reading fun to hear, to see, and the words
rhymed like Patois (Caribbean dialect)

The part I don't know is what to do with what I have learned about reading
Maybe more books, more books, hey, a magazine, I like art, visual art, dance as well, and
various artists too
Beginning is the hard part, but now I have to start and think and focus and think

Where do I begin, hey, I used to read poetry, yeah, I remember, the hard part is how did I
get introduced to it?
What am I doing, the hard part has gotten easier, I like reading but I loved reading poetry
Poems about children who looked like me, families who were going through what my
family was dealing with, and countries abroad that reminded me of home

The beginning is getting closer to the end, and the hard part is finding a method to my madness
Let's see, I will recreate a poetic environment where the lives of the poems will come
alive as the words flow from the kid's mouths
No, no, no, I must think of the reality, start...hey, did I say start? ...the method is
becoming clear

The hard part is the start of the method to my madness
I know but still am unsure about what I am doing, and the beginning is poetry
I think, no wait, I feel it in my gut, it's clear, oh finally I got it
I will use poetry to expose the kids to the world of words that will make writing about
their lives fun

Beginning is always the hard part that becomes easy once you have found an end

How do I introduce poetry to children so they can use the power of words to express themselves?

I hope you enjoyed my introduction to how my inquiry process began. Now I will tell you a story about how I used poetry to build kids' interest in words and eventually allowed them to create their own poems. But before I get into the activities, advice, and artifacts, I want to tell you a little bit about myself and the role I play in my current work.

I am currently the director of the C.O.V.E. Parent Cooperative After-School Program, located in the Northwest Bronx. The after-school program provides literacy and science activities to children ages 7–12, second through sixth grades. My inquiry story began when participants, staff, and parents expressed concern that the C.O.V.E. library wasn't being used. This was the start of my library project. I assessed the needs of the after-school program and began to identify books that would be appropriate for the children we served. After months of informal questionnaires, parent meetings, and meetings with a library consultant, I was able to identify books that could not only increase literacy, but also introduce the children to the wonderful world of books.

As the library continued on the road to success, I was accepted into the YES program, which was a welcomed challenge in my search for books that the kids would enjoy reading over and over again. I identified genres that were not on program participants' requested library list; fortunately one of those genres was poetry.

I Know Literacy, But...

Although literacy is part of everyday life in the Knox-Gates neighborhood, the kids in our program despise it. I have asked them to read street signs and frequently got the response, "You know what it says," or "I read that sign every day." I question why this cloud has come over reading. I guess it is because I know literacy but I have not learned to use what I know to influence the kids as readers and writers.

The first step on my inquiry journey was to find out what I was like as a child reader. I consulted my childhood reading partners, my parents. My mom and dad agreed that I enjoyed reading because they made it fun. I would get rewards for reading books during the summer, and we would have book reading races. My favorite was reading Dr. Seuss aloud. They also told me that as I got older and test-taking became a big part of the school day, I was not as interested in the joy of reading. Of course, I realized that my story and the stories of some of the children in my program had similar themes. I began to think about engaging activities, like reading contests, for kids at the C.O.V.E.

Remembering a Childhood TV Show...

On the way to work one day, as I was reflecting on what my parents had told me, for some reason I had an image of *Pee Wee's Playhouse*—a show I hated but watched only in order to see the characters act crazy when the "word of the day" was used in a sentence. I knew I was on to something, but I could not have the kids acting crazy. Maybe they could clap or something else instead. I could select a "word-of-the-day" writer. It seemed like a step in the right direction. I knew that once one of the kids made a sentence using the "word of the day," all of them were going to at least try. I also thought that if the words included both everyday and more challenging words, the children could begin to see that words can be used in many environments—and be fun. I informed the staff, and we agreed that we should have a student write the word and definition. Any students who could find the word in a book they were reading would receive a prize. This worked really well. In the process I was able to identify what books

they were reading, including Beverly Cleary's *Fudge*, Roald Dahl, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Nickelodeon* and *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, and, of course, J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. Now that I had identified something that worked, how could this activity help me finalize my inquiry topic? How could I ensure that the kids would enjoy the activities and learn at the same time?

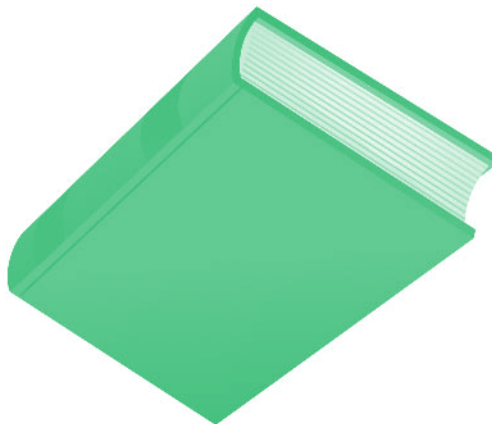
Thinking, Writing, Conversing, and an “ah ha” Moment

I knew that the kids were interested in the “word of the day” and being challenged to learn while participating in a fun activity. I continued to think about possible inquiry topics. I realized, after some critical writing, thinking and more writing, that whatever I chose should encourage participants to use the library. But I also remembered that my parents told me that, after I lost interest in reading, my English teacher introduced the class to poetry, and we loved it. We did a poetry mural and wrote poetry that focused on our everyday lives. My parents pointed out that I was being asked not to read, but to express how I felt about life. In my case, that meant “School Bus Drama,” “My Favorite Teacher,” and “Park Time.” This memory was my “ah ha” moment: I could use poetry! I remembered how curious I had been about the people, places, and things that I was reading about. Before I knew it, I was saying words and understanding what they said. I did not have to read a textbook; I just read poetry. So how could I use poetry to build a friendship with words among the kids in my program?

Everyday Poetry for Everyday Kids...

The kids were still very interested in the “word of the day.” But, I now had another challenge: How could I find poetry that would cater to all the kids at the same time in a space that does not permit operating separate groups? All 30 children had to remain together. I could not assume that they all knew what poetry was and the differences between poetry and other genres. So I asked them. What a wonderful response I received! The kids recited lines from Shel Silverstein. They discussed Jack Prelutsky's books, some of which I had never heard of, and they mentioned that they liked writing poetry as well. Some of the kids had even won their schools' poetry contests.

The kids continued to use the words they learned on a regular basis. I published some of the kids' poetry in our bi-monthly newsletter, and some of the kids read their work at the end-of-the-year performance. As for the program's library, it is still a “work in progress,” but I hope it will be operational soon.





MY JOURNEY TO MY INQUIRY

VANESSA TAYLOR-MALLOY, BOYS AND GIRLS HARBOR

At the first YES meeting, I was unsure what I had volunteered myself for. The YES invitation had suggested that, as an after-school program director, I would do *something* with literacy that would enhance the lives of the young people I am educating.

We did a free-association exercise to define *inquiry*. It seemed like a simple word, but so many synonyms appeared on the board! YES participants threw out such obvious definitions as *ask*, *question*, and *explore*, but then words such as *documentation*, *scientific*, *clarity*, and *detecting* made the list as well. Okay, now what? What does all this mean? What am I going to learn? All these questions clouded my brain, and my curiosity was getting the best of me, as we headed out on our book walk, looking together at an assortment of children's books.

I have to admit that I became more relaxed when some childhood titles jumped out at me. Good feelings overwhelmed me as I browsed through *Little Bear* books, *The Black Snowman*, and *Where the Wild Things Are*. These books reminded me of being read to at bedtime, reading round-robin style on the flat carpet in the kindergarten classroom, and choosing my first book at the New York Public Library. I was introduced to a new book by a familiar author, *Brown Angels* by Walter Dean Myers. It captured my attention because this photographic autobiography tells the history of Myers' ancestors through a family album. The title alone is endearing, especially after you discover that the author is African-American. I wish I could have thought of such a creative title. *Brown Angels* is now a part of the library at my program, Boys and Girls Harbor.

The next YES journey involved examining just how, what, when, and why students in our programs read. Felicia and Tyler, the co-facilitators, were getting us prepared for our literacy inquiry projects. We had specific guidelines for choosing inquiries:

- what books/genres have worked well
- students' interest
- students' needs/age groups
- students' cultures/ethnic groups
- particular class project/theme
- particular readers you want to engage

Collecting all this information was very helpful when it came time to select my inquiry topic. I remember answering questions about immigration, the topic I was considering: *What do I already know about the topic? What would I like to know? How does the topic connect to the needs of the youth in my program?* Exploring these questions brought me closer to the topic and made me feel more confident that I had something to work with.

I was contemplating the topic of immigration and migration in New York City because my program was studying New York from six perspectives: food, architecture, artists, the hip-hop era, entertainment, neighborhoods, and immigration and migration. I had to find a way to get the students involved in the immigration piece. Many of them were taught this history in school in a very boring fashion. Because immigration was part of the theme that tied everything together, I had to find a way to convey the urgency of the topic.

What confirmed my choice of topic was the YES group's visit to the Donnell Library. I kept coming across books about immigration and migration that didn't reflect the cultures of my students. Everything centered on the Irish and Italians and their trip through Ellis Island. I had to find out how Latinos, African Americans, and West Indians came to New York and why. I found the first book I would include in my bibliography:

Shutting Out the Sky: Life in the Tenements of New York, 1880–1924, by Deborah Hopkinson. This book was useful to my inquiry because, although the narrator is Italian, he is a boy about the same age as the students in my program, so his story gives critical information on a kid-friendly level. My students, who are 9–13 years old, were surprised to find how much they had in common with children growing up in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In their spare time, both my students and the children in the story played baseball or stickball and talked with friends—although my students usually did so via cell phone. The girls sometimes combed each other’s hair. Chores for both generations included taking out the garbage, washing dishes, doing laundry, and caring for younger siblings.

Few of my students come from another country, but all could relate to the anxiety of going to a new place and not knowing what to expect. We had discussions about moving from the Dominican Republic or Trinidad to live with a new foster family. Being able to relate to the children in *Shutting Out the Sky* made the students want to learn more. From this book, we explored many different activities. We wrote “Where I’m From” poems and essays, exploring our identities. We made scrapbooks about our immigration experiences and interviewed family members and people in our neighborhoods about their home countries. We learned about street games from different countries. Students shared items that family members brought with them to New York, such as passports, pictures, photo albums and scrapbooks, articles of clothing, and jewelry. The young people created family trees by gathering information from a family member who came to New York, asking when and where this person was born and when, how, and why he or she migrated to New York. Each student made a map that showed the family member’s journey.

The next few books about immigration seemed to drop in my lap. In one activity, the students had to find a book about someone moving to an unfamiliar place and bring it to share with the rest of the group. The students came up with some very good selections—so of course I included several of their books in my annotated bibliography, including *The Dominican Americans* by Christopher Dwyer, *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, and *Bound for the Promised Land* by Michael Cooper.

Though I put a lot of time and work into this literacy course, I am very satisfied with the end results. The inquiry process made me look at themes and books in depth. Exploring activities, finding out what worked and what didn’t, really made the process a scientific experience. My students remembered the names of books, authors, and characters because they could relate to the materials. I would advise all educators to undertake an inquiry study at least once in their teaching life. It can bring you closer to the subject and open up new ideas to use with your students in the classroom.



ANNOTATED LIST OF READING RESOURCES

This section is an annotated bibliography organized thematically.

ARTS & ARTISTS

**Brown, Kevin. Romare Bearden, artist.
New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995**

This book is part of the Chelsea House Publishers' series, *Black Americans of Achievement*. It covers the life and prolific career of artist Romare Bearden, whose colorful paintings and collages have established him as a major figure in American art history. The book begins with Bearden's reflections on his career at the age of 53 and goes on to discuss the artist's life from his youth in the American South to his years of painting in New York, where the people, streets, sounds, and colors often made their way into his work. Much of the information about the artist is set in the context of historical events and the many people and places that influenced his work. Most of the reproductions and photographs are in black and white. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

111 pp. 0-7910-1119-4 Non-fiction/biography

**Carroll, Rebecca. I Know What the Red Clay Looks Like: The Voice
and Vision of Black American Women Writers
New York: Crown Publishing, 1994**

This book, a collection of interviews with black women writers, is suitable for readers ages 15 to 19.

246 pp. 0-517-88261-2 Biography/interview

**Di Cagno, Gabriella. Simone Boni and L.R. Galante, illustrators.
Michelangelo**

New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 2000

This book offers a historical look at the life of the painter, sculptor, and architect Michelangelo Buonarroti, as well as other major artists and artworks of the Italian Renaissance. Cross-referencing timelines, illustrations, and photographs explore Michelangelo's life and works so that readers get a sense of the magnitude of the influence of art on the Italy of the 15th and 16th centuries. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

64 pp. 0-87226-641-9 Non-fiction/biography/history

**Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. Chuck Close: Up Close
New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 1998**

This book follows the career of artist Chuck Close, whose larger-than-life portraits have been a staple of the modern art world since the 1960s. The evolution of Close's work from large-scale photo-realistic paintings and drawings to recent digital-looking works is depicted through numerous prints of the artist at work in his studio as well as reproductions of many of his portraits. Close's boyhood in Tacoma, Washington, his artistic influences, and the spinal artery collapse in 1988 that left him paralyzed are all chronicled in this book. There is even a photograph showing an eight-year-old Close with hand puppets he created out of sawdust and glue. This book is suitable for

advanced readers.

48 pp. 0-7894-2486-X Non-fiction/biography

Greenberg, Jan and Sandra Jordan. Frank O. Gehry: Outside In New York
Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 2000

Best known as the architect of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, Frank O. Gehry produces architecture that stands out in an almost futuristic way. This book follows Gehry from his boyhood in Canada and Los Angeles to the present day. It discusses the emergence of Gehry's distinct architectural style, his influences, and the process he uses to design buildings. Numerous color photographs depict the architect's well-known projects around the world, including the Guggenheim in Bilbao and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in California. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

47 pp. 0-7894-2677-3 Non-fiction/biography

Greenberg, Keith Elliot. Photojournalist: In the Middle of Disaster
Connecticut: Blackbirch Press, 1996

This book is part of the *Risky Business* series on careers that involve an element of danger. It follows United Nations photojournalist John Isaac on assignments to such places as war-torn Bosnia, Lebanon, Rwanda, and the Persian Gulf in the 1990s. The book contains several examples of the photographer's work as well as firsthand accounts of working as a photojournalist on the front lines in places where danger threatened. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

32 pp. 1-56711-157-2 Non-fiction/biography

Lyons, Mary E. Master of Mahogany: Tom Day, Free Black
Cabinetmaker

New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994

Born to an indentured slave in 1801 in Halifax County, Virginia, Thomas Day became a carpenter who created beautiful furniture, mantels, doorways, and woodwork for houses. This story of Day's life recounts the hardships he faced as a free Black man during the time of slavery and his tremendous talent and skill as a carpenter. Many of Day's creations have survived to this day, and his craftsmanship is still highly respected by historians. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

42 pp. 0-684-19675-1 Non-fiction/biography

Nonell, Juan Bassegoda. Antonio Gaudi: Master Architect

New York: Abbeville Press, 2000

This book explores the life and creations of Antonio Gaudi, whose buildings changed the face of architecture during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Through text and large, colorful photographs, readers learn how history, nature, and culture influenced Gaudi's work and artistry. Each phase of the artist's career is chronicled and details of his buildings are shown and discussed throughout. The book comments on Gaudi's philosophy of architecture and contains a map of Gaudi buildings in Barcelona, Spain. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

144 pp. 0-7892-0220-4 Non-fiction/biography

Rennert, Richard, editor. Profiles of Great Black Americans: Jazz
Stars

New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1994

Introduced by Coretta Scott King, this collection of biographies examines the lives of

eight black men and women whose artistry transformed popular music and made jazz one of America's greatest cultural achievements. This book is suitable for readers ages 12 to 19.

60 pp. 0-791-02060-6 Biography

**Ringgold, Faith, author and illustrator. *Dinner at Aunt Connie's House*
New York: Hyperion, 1993**

In this picture book, a young girl named Melody makes a dazzling discovery when she visits the beach house of her Aunt Connie, who is an artist, and her Uncle Bates one summer. The book follows Melody and her cousin Lonnie in their encounter with paintings of famous African-American women in the attic of the house. The two children get a history lesson about the accomplishments and contributions of each of the women. This book is a wonderful introduction to African-American women who may not be featured in mainstream history books, including Madam C. J. Walker, Ida B. Wells, and Maria W. Stewart. This book is suitable for young readers.

25 pp. 1-56282-425-2 Biographical fiction

Rohmer, Harriet, editor. *Just Like Me: Stories and Self-Portraits by Fourteen Artists*

San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1997

Just Like Me is a collection of stories about how artists in different parts of the world see themselves, whether funny, sad, or serious. They write about how they decided to express their talent through writing, painting, singing, or just being themselves. You can use this book as the basis for a discussion about how children see themselves now and in the future. The language used makes this book appropriate for fifth and sixth graders or beginning through intermediate readers.

32 pp. 0-89239-149-9 Non-fiction

**Shange, Ntozake. Romare Bearden, illustrator. *I Live in Music*
New York: Welcome Enterprises, Inc. 1994**

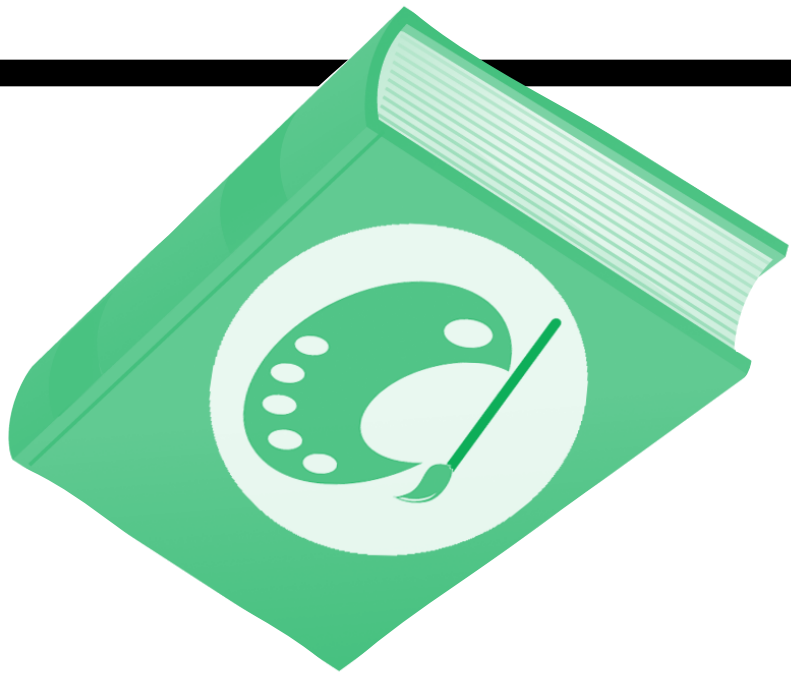
Set to original illustrations by the late artist Romare Bearden, Ntozake Shange's poetry explores the rhythm of words and images. This colorful, lyrical book can be used to help students understand musical terminology, elements of both the visual and literary arts, and how various art disciplines are related. *I Live in Music* is suitable for intermediate readers.

29 pp. 1-55670-372-4 Poetry

**Venezia, Mike, author and illustrator. *Diego Rivera*
Chicago: Children's Press, 1994**

This book explores the life of artist Diego Rivera. Born in Guanajuato, Mexico, in 1886, Rivera was one of the world's best-known muralists. This biography covers his early days in Mexico, his travels to Europe as a young artist in the early 1900s, his return to Mexico, and his commitment to addressing socially relevant issues in his work. The book contains several reproductions of Rivera's paintings as well as photographs of his murals in both Mexico and the United States. It also includes cartoons by the author depicting situations discussed in the book and samples of work by other artists who were Rivera's contemporaries or who influenced his work. This book is appropriate for intermediate readers.

32 pp. 0-516-02299-7 Non-fiction/biography



Venezia, Mike, author and illustrator. Georgia O’Keeffe
Chicago: Children’s Press, 1993

The life of Georgia O’Keeffe, from her birth in Wisconsin in 1887 until her death in 1986, is chronicled in this book filled with colorful reproductions of the artist’s work and photographs of O’Keeffe taken by her husband, the photographer Alfred Stieglitz. The book also contains cartoons by the author illustrating events in the artist’s life. This book, appropriate for intermediate readers, pays homage to the delight with which O’Keeffe approached her subjects and the influence nature had on her work.

32 pp. 0-516-02297-0 Non-fiction/biography

Wallis, Jeremy. Pablo Picasso
Orlando, FL: Heinemann Library, Reed Educational & Professional Publishing, 2002

Part of the *Creative Lives* series, this biography of Pablo Picasso introduces readers to the artist and some of his lesser- and better-known works. Focusing on the artist’s personal life as well as his creative accomplishments, the book uses significant political, cultural, and social events that occurred during Picasso’s life as a backdrop. The book contains a timeline of the artist’s life and a glossary of terms used throughout the book, including those that refer to art, politics, and social situations. There is also a “Places to Visit” section listing museums around the country where the artist’s work can be seen. The book contains an admirable number of color reproductions of the artist’s work as well as black-and-white photographs of the artist throughout his life. This book is appropriate for advanced readers.

64 pp. 158810206-8 Non-fiction/biography

Yenawine, Phillip. How to Show Grown-ups the Museum
New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1985

This book is a young person’s guide to looking critically at the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

80 pp. 0-87070-383-8 Non-fiction/art guide

POETRY

Angelou, Maya. Jean-Michel Basquiat, illustrator. *Life Doesn't Frighten Me Anymore*

New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1993

Maya Angelou, known for groundbreaking novels that speak to various audiences, has once again written a book for children. This book draws on the bravery and strength of children during times of fear. Filled with colorful pictures that look as if a child drew them, the book will be easy for any child to enjoy. This book is great for reading aloud, and it can be used as a resource to study poetry or the author. It is appropriate for intermediate readers age 8–10.

32 pp. 1-556-702-884 Poetry

Driscoll, Michael. Meredith Hamilton, illustrator. *A Child's Introduction to Poetry: Listen While You Learn about the Magic Words That Have Moved Mountains, Won Battles, and Made Us Laugh and Cry*

New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2003

This book would be a wonderful beginning to the study of poetry. It begins with such fairy tales as “The Woman Who Lived in a Shoe” and “Hansel and Gretel.” Each page includes a convenient “words for the wise” box that recaps the words used in the poem on that page. Finally, this book would not be complete without the audio CD, where children will hear the voices of famous authors who explain the process of writing and reading poetry. With this book, children will learn about poetry, build their vocabulary, and explore the magic of words that makes reading poems fun. The book is suitable for intermediate readers age 8–10.

96 pp. 1-579-122-825 Audio/poetry

Fletcher, Ralph. *Poetry Matters: Writing a Poem from the Inside Out*
New York: HarperCollins, 2002

A resource for students interested in writing poetry, this book is divided into two sections. The first, “Lighting the Spark,” contains five short chapters with such headings as “Image” and “Poem Sparks: What to Write About.” Section Two, “Nurturing the Flame,” contains seven chapters about the craft of poetry, including “Crafting Your Poem,” “Wordplay,” and “A Few Words about Forms.” As the author says, “This book focuses more on the ‘inside’ of poetry (ideas, images, feelings) than on the ‘outside’ appearance.” Fletcher nevertheless covers appearance and form in this book, paying special attention to what he calls the three pillars of poetry: emotion, image, and music. Interviews with three writers of children’s poetry—Kristine O’Connell George, Janet S. Wong, and J. Patrick Lewis—strengthen the book. The many poems include some written by children. This book, Fletcher’s fourth children’s book about writing, would not only be suitable for individual readers but could also serve as a tool in working with groups of people of all ages to help them express themselves in poetry.

160 pp. 0380797038 Poetry

Gordon, Elizabeth. *Bird Children*
New York: Random House, 2001

This illustrated book of rhythmic short poems about children dressed up as various birds introduces the characters of the birds and would make a great introduction to rhyming and poetry. It is suitable for readers age 8–10.

93 pp. 0517163624 Poetry

Greenfield, Eloise. Leo and Diane Dillon, illustrators.

Honey, I Love

New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 1986

The sixteen poems in this book speak of the simple joys that children experience: playing with a friend, skipping rope, riding on a train, keeping a mother company. This book would provide a good resource for activities in which students write their own simple poems about everyday experiences. They can begin to learn that poetry is universal and has been adopted to record the extent of human experience, from mundane activities to great thought on social and political issues. The book is appropriate for readers age 7–11.

46pp. 0-060-091231 Poetry

Grimes, Nikki. Meet Danitra Brown

New York: William Morrow and Co., 1997

This book, a collection of 13 poems about Danitra Brown and her best friend Zuri Jackson, is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 0-688-15471-9 Poetry

Hines, Anna Grossnickle. Pieces: A Year in Poems and Quilts

New York: Greenwillow Books, 2001

This book's 20 poems about nature are accompanied by beautiful and delicate visual imagery embodied in quilts created by the author. This book can be used to discuss the natural beauty found in poetry. It is appropriate for readers of all ages.

32 pp. 0688169635 Poetry

Hoberman, Mary Ann. You Read to Me, I'll Read to You

New York: Little, Brown & Company, 2001

In this unique book, all the poems and rhymes are "told in two voices," inviting young readers to read along with an adult. The book features child-appropriate themes such as friendship, family, and pets. It's full of wonderful wordplay and humor. This book is suitable for beginning and young readers.

27 pp. 0-316-36350-2 Poetry

Hopkins, Lee Bennett. My America: What My Country Means to Me by 150 Americans from All Walks of Life

New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Books, 2000

This book is a collection of poems from different regions of the United States. For example, one of the poems is Nikki Giovanni's "Knoxville, Tennessee." Each poem is accompanied by a map and information on the region reflected in the poem, so that readers can get a sense of what that place is like. This book is suitable for readers age 9–12.

96 pp. 0-689-812477 Poetry

Hopkins, Lee. Karen Barbour, illustrator. Wonderful Words: Poems about Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening
New York: Simon & Schuster Children's, 2004

Author Lee Hopkins and illustrator Karen Barbour explore the language wordsmiths use in their daily lives. Because the poems are short, with vivid “eye candy” pictures, children will never get tired of hearing you read this book. It is a great complement to the study of poetry, as well as a tool for building everyday listening, speaking, and writing skills. The book is appropriate for young readers age 6–8.

32 pp. 0-689-835-884 Poetry

Hubbell, Patricia. Teresa Flavin, illustrator. City Kids: Poems
Hong Kong: Marshall Cavendish Inc., 2001

This book is perfect to use when one of the children in your program has a hard time on the school bus or just feel no one understands him or her. With poems like “City Kid” and “The Doing Days,” the magic that happens when kids write their own poetry comes alive. Children can use this book as a resource for writing about their everyday challenges and triumphs. It's good for use with young readers age 6–8.

32 pp. 0-761-450-793 Poetry

Janeczko, Paul B. Chris Raschka, illustrator. Poke in the I
Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2001

Thirty concrete poems—poems arranged in a shape that reflects the poem's meaning—are accompanied by amusing collages created by Chris Raschka. Some poems are only one word, illustrating how one-word emotions can be expressed in one-word poetic form. Children of all ages can enjoy this book.

48 pp. 0763606618 Poetry

Joseph, Lynn. Sandra Speidel, illustrator. Coconut Kind of a Day: Island Poems
Minneapolis: Sagebrush Education Resources, 1992

This book is a great resource not only for exploring poetry but also for exposing children to a world that may not be part of their everyday lives. The poems are about a girl from the Caribbean island of Trinidad. As she travels through the place she calls home, poems entitled “Mama Gone to the Market,” “The Jumbi Man,” and “Night Songs” provide the reader with a clear child's-eye vision of what life in Trinidad is like. The book is suitable for young readers age 6–9.

25 pp. 0-833-588-621 Poetry

Lansky, Bruce. Stephen Carpenter, illustrator. A Bad Case of the Giggles
New York: Simon & Schuster Children's, 1994

Bruce Lansky gives readers the opportunity to laugh at life from a kid's perspective. The poems, with such titles as “Stinky Feet,” “All About Me,” and “My Noisy Brother,” were written by children. Children will definitely identify with these everyday jumbles. The illustrations directly reflect the poems, so the kids can enjoy not only reading the poetry, but also having a great visual presentation of how kids' poetry is written. This book would be a good addition to your library as a resource to introduce intermediate readers, age 8–12, to poetry that is written for kids by kids.

115 pp. 0-671-899-821 Poetry

**Lear, Edward. Paul Galdone, illustrator. *The Owl and the Pussy Cat*
Minneapolis: Sagebrush Education Resources, 1989**

In this rhymed story, the owl and the pussycat sail off “for a year and a day” and eventually are married by a turkey who lives on a hill. The many rhyming words will give students the opportunity to practice the long *o* sound. Developing students’ ability to recognize rhyme requires equipping them with the awareness that rhyming words end with the same group of sounds.

32 pp. 0062050109 Poetry

Miller, Ethelbert. *In Search of Color Everywhere: A Collection of African American Poetry*

New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1994

This poetic chronicle is divided into five sections: love, family, music, healing, and a celebration of blackness. The poetry makes for great conversation with both younger and older students. The book is easy reading suitable for all ages, though younger readers may need supervision and clarification when the subjects of racism and prejudice arise.

253 pp. 1556704518 Poetry

Mora, Pat. *Confetti Poems for Children*

New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc., 1999

This collection of poems in free verse captures the rhythms and uniqueness of the Southwest and its culture as seen through the eyes of a Mexican-American girl. The pictures are very simple but say so much. This book is suitable for young or intermediate readers.

26 pp. 1-880000-7 Poetry



Okutoro, Lydia Omolola. *Quiet Storm: Voices of Young Black Poets*
New York: Jump At The Sun, Hyperion Books, 2002

This book is a collection of voices (poems) from around the world about people's experiences of growing up. Young adults of various African ancestries—West Indian, Haitian, Panamanian, Nigerian, and African-American—express themselves in poetry covering a wide range of topics including Black pride, spirituality, the fight for freedom, and paying homage to ancestors. This book is an excellent resource for activities that expose children to diversity, individuality, and the similarities and differences among cultures. Students may share their own experiences in prose or poetry as a means of expressing their feelings and thoughts. *Quiet Storm* is appropriate for intermediate to advanced readers.

102 pp. 0786804610 Poetry

Prelutsky, Jack. James Stevenson, illustrator. *A Pizza the Size of the Sun*

New York: Greenwillow Books, 1996

Jack Prelutsky gives new meaning to writing about poetry and food in a book filled with vibrant pictures. Who could ignore poems like “Eyes for Sale” and “Miss Misinformation”? The children will enjoy the convenient “Ingredient Label,” otherwise known as the table of contents. This book is a great resource for imaginative children, age 5–11, who also create stories about crayons that come alive or who chat with their imaginary friends every now and then.

160 pp. 0-688-132-359 Poetry

Rosen, Michael. Paul Howard, illustrator. *Classic Poetry: An Illustrated Collection*

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1998

This collection can serve as an introduction to many well-known poets, including Shakespeare, Longfellow, Poe, Lear, Whitman, Dickinson, Stevenson, and Hughes, among others. The book, suitable for teens, includes portraits and brief biographies of the poets. Students can collaboratively learn about the poetry if each student chooses one poet and his or her work to write about and present to the group.

160 pp. 0-553-525786 Poetry

Rue, Nancy. *The Chase*

Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family, 1999

An amusing action-and-adventure tale about a dog *versus* a cat, this book repeats high-frequency words and uses rhyme and rhythm. It also uses words that may be difficult for some students, such as *spat, field, flowers, hours, covered, crud, leapt, flash, splash, swam, quickly, otter, meadow*. A target strategy might be using rhyme to decode words whose meaning and pronunciation may not be apparent. The book is suitable for children age 6–10.

unpaged 1561797359 Fiction

Shields, Carol. Paul Meisel, illustrator. *Lunch Money & Other Poems about School*

New York: Puffin Books, 1998

This is a wonderful resource that illustrates to children how their everyday lives can inspire them to write poetry. Any school-aged child can relate to poems like “Math My Way” and “Book Report” after a rough day at school. This book is appropriate for young readers age 6–8.

40 pp. 0-140-558-90X Poetry

**Silverstein, Shel, author and illustrator. *A Light in the Attic*
New York: HarperCollins, 1981**

Poems are an effective way to help students develop better reading speed and comprehension. Silverstein has the ability to write on topics that only a child, or an adult with a mind of a child, could understand and appreciate. Subjects such as superstition, things under the bed, and others lend wonderful opportunities for projects. Silverstein's poetry is suitable for intermediate and advanced readers.

169 pp. 0060256737 Poetry

**Stevenson, James. *Corn Chowder*
New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2003**

This book caters to the more mature children—you know, the ones with the cell phones and the latest-in-fashion backpacks, the ones who on some days feel they are too old for your program. The poetry in this book is a good “reality check” for such kids. They'll feel you understand their growing process when they read, “When you think everything is falling apart, look how many ways there are of holding things together.” This book not only speaks to the spirit but also encourages critical thinking. Use it with intermediate readers age 8–12.

30 pp. 0-060-530-60X Poetry

**Thompson, Kim. Mark Paskiet, illustrator. *I'd Like to Be a Zoologist: Learning about Mammals, Reptiles and Amphibians*
Peoria, IL: Twin Sisters Productions, 1997**

This book of poems uses common high-frequency words and simple sentence structures to describe various occupations. Though the format is poetry, the book lends itself to helping students become aware of grammatical conventions such as contractions and punctuation, as well as of rhyme. The rhymes are always the same: *be*, *sea*, and so on. This book is appropriate for readers age 7–12.

24 pp 1575830205 Fiction

**Williams, Vera B. *Amber Was Brave, Essie Was Smart*
New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2004**

Vera B. Williams does it again with a touching collection of poems that explores the dynamic of living in a single-parent household. Two sisters have to band together to deal with day-to-day living. This book is a great read that encourages reflection on the fact that family relations are a great topic for poetry. It lets kids know that they are not alone in a world of strange places and interesting people. This book, a great addition to any library, is suitable for intermediate readers age 8–12.

72 pp. 0-060-571-8299 Poetry

PICTURE BOOKS

Aardema, Verna. Beatriz Vidal, illustrator. Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain

New York: Penguin Book, 1983

In this Nandi tale, the hero, Kipat, saves his environment from drought. The book is filled with colorful illustrations of African wildlife and myths. Although this book seems appropriate for younger readers because of its relatively short pages and direct story line, it will also work for struggling readers; the rhythmic repeating lines will build vocabulary and confidence.

32 pp. 0064405788 Folk tale

Adoff, Arnold. Emily Arnold McCully, illustrator. Black Is Brown Is Tan

New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1973

Black Is Brown Is Tan concerns a family in which the father is white, the mother is black, and the children are tan. The book is the color of a rainbow, and the family is filled with love. It's a great book to read aloud; the reading will generate a vast amount of questions. Children from 4 to 8 years old will enjoy reading this book or having it read to them.

40 pp. 0-06-020083-9 Picture book

Bang, Molly. The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher

New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980

One of many books by photo-storyteller Molly Bang, *The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher* is full of color symbolism that conveys simple moral messages—but it contains no text. It is therefore appropriate for the youngest children and most reluctant readers in your program.

48 pp. 0-027-08140-0 Picture book

Briggs, Raymond. The Snowman

New York: Random House, 1978

This award-winning picture-only book explores the transient friendship of a young boy and his own creation, his snowman.

30 pp. 0-394-88466-3 Picture book

dePaola, Tomie. Pancakes for Breakfast

New York: Voyager Books, 1990

This wordless book by an award-winning author-illustrator is great for building predicting and sequencing skills with children up to age 8. It also involves some simple math.

32 pp. 0-156-70768-3 Picture book

Dr. Seuss. The Cat in the Hat

New York: Random House, 1957

The Cat with the hat steps into two children's rainy day to shake things up a bit. Both children, bored, are searching for something to do, but the Cat takes all that away with a recipe for chaos. Words with similar phonics are a great help to the beginning or struggling reader looking to build confidence and vocabulary.

61pp. 039480001 Beginning Reader

Dr. Seuss. Green Eggs and Ham**New York: Random House, 1976**

The protagonist of the story is perpetually challenged by the antagonist, Sam-I-Am, to try something new and alien. The reader journeys through the simple but imaginative mind of Dr. Seuss until the protagonist decides that he does after all like things that are new and different. *Green Eggs and Ham* is excellent for beginning and struggling readers because of its recurring lines that rhyme.

72 pp. 0394800168 Beginning Reader

Hutchins, Pat. Changes, Changes**New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1987 (new edition)**

One of many books by an author-illustrator of early literacy books, this story told through changing structures of blocks is good for teaching shapes. It includes no text.

30 pp. 0-689-71137-9 Picture book

Talley, Carol. Papa Piccolo**New York: Marsh Media, 1992**

Papa Piccolo, a tomcat, leads a life of adventure on the canals of Venice until he adopts two homeless kittens. Piccolo tries to push the kittens off on a neighborhood female cat, but he eventually comes to relish his role as a surrogate father. This book is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 1-559-42028-6 Fiction

Wood, Audrey. Jubal's Wish**New York: The Blue Sky Press, 2000**

A bullfrog named Jubal wants to share the joy of a beautiful day. When he goes to his friends to ask them to have a picnic with him, they all seem to be too busy or too unhappy to join him. Jubal wishes he could do something to make his friends happy on this glorious day. This book, which includes beautiful, vibrant photos and endearing characters, is suitable for young and intermediate readers.

30 pp. 0-439-1696-X Fiction



GRAPHIC NOVELS (High Interest/Low Level)

Macchio, Ralph. X-Men: The Movie Adaptation

New York: Marvel Comics, 1991

In the officially adapted story of Professor X's team of mutant heroes, the X-Men race to stop Magneto and his evil brotherhood, who want to destroy the human race. This book is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

210 pp. 0-7851-0749-5 Graphic novel

Marvel Comics. Fantastic Four

New York: Marvel Comics

This comic book of stories about the Fantastic Four and their adventures fighting evil is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

30 pp. Comics (Monthly publication)

Marvel Comics. New X-Men

New York: Marvel Comics

The stories in this comic book are about and located in the New York City area. Each page is filled with the adventures of the New Evolution of X-Men. This book is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

30 pp. Comics (Monthly publication)

Marvel Comics. Xtreme X-men

New York: Marvel Comics

This comic book is about the X-Men and their extreme adventures—both good and bad—as they protect both the human race and their own race. It is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

30 pp. Comics (Monthly publication)

McCloud, Scott. Superman: Adventures of the Man of Steel

New York: DC Comics, 1997

Clark Kent leads a double life: one as a dorky reporter for the *Daily Planet* and the other as one of America's favorite superheroes. This graphic novel is filled with Superman's many adventures of solving crimes and helping innocent people. This book is suitable for young to advanced readers.

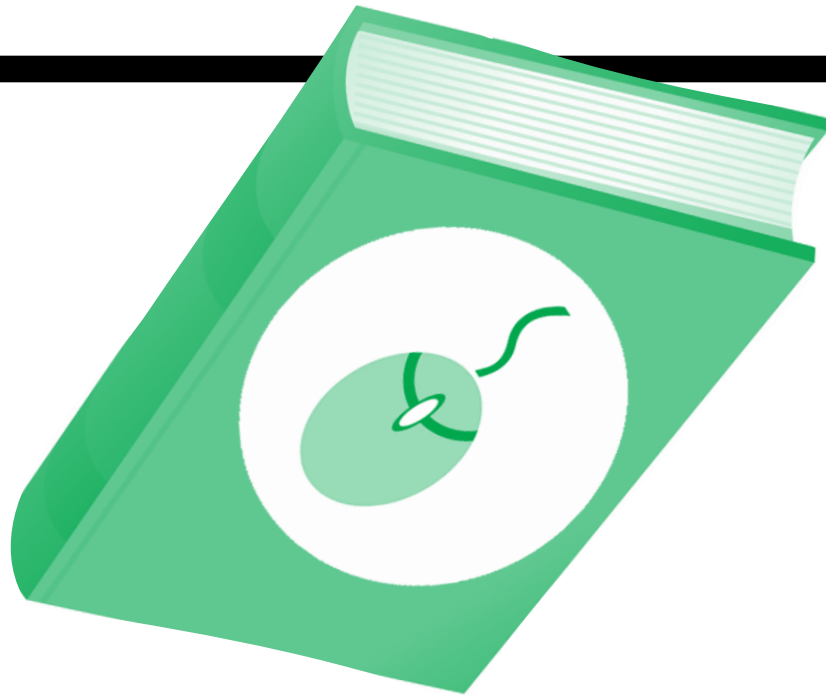
144 pp. 1-56389-429-7 Graphic novel

Motter, Dean. Terminal City: Dream of Tomorrow

New York: DC Comics, 1997

The main character in this graphic novel is the city itself. Terminal City is an urban zoo that barely contains the predators of the asphalt jungle. There are no trees, no flowers, no children, no Flower Children, no hope. Its heroes are ghosts: cast-off daredevils, disgraced champions, and left-for-dead explorers. They must rise from the tombs of their forgotten pasts to struggle against the swarms of riffraff, scum, and psychopaths who crawl out of the rotting core of this corrupted metropolis. This book is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

222 pp. 1-56389-391-6. Graphic novel



**Pasko, Martin. *The Batman Adventures*
New York: Scholastic Press, 1993**

This book depicts Batman as you've always known him. Batman's world is dark, but not dismal; the villains are wicked, but not horrific; the action is thrilling, but not brutal. This book is suitable for young to advanced readers.

143 pp. 1-56389-098-4 Graphic novel

**Rieber, John Ney. *Books of Magic: Transformations*
New York: DC Comics, 1998**

This book tells the story of an average teenager whose greatest aspiration is to complete a perfect skateboard run until he learns that he has the potential to become the most powerful magician in history. Tim has yet to accept his destiny, and it's uncertain he will survive to claim it. All around him, powerful forces have emerged—some seemingly content to watch and wait to see what form his magical heritage will take, while others seek a more direct role in Tim's ultimate fate. This book is suitable for young to advanced readers.

127 pp. 1-56389-417-3 Graphic novel

TEEN/YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

Bauer, Joan. *Hope Was Here*

New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 2000

Sixteen-year-old Hope moves to Mulhoney, Wisconsin with her aunt. For Hope, who has moved many times, this most recent move begins a life adventure as she gets caught in the town's corrupt politics. The book is lighthearted, fun, and easy to understand. Teens ages 12 to 16 would enjoy this book.

186 pp. 0-399-23142-0 Fiction

Block, Francesca Lia. *Missing Angel Juan*

New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 1995

Witch Baby follows the Angel Juan to New York City and finds danger and intrigue. This book is suitable for older readers age 15–19.

135 pp. 0-064-47120-9 Fiction

Blume, Judy. *Forever*

New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976

This book deals with a story of first love. Katherine and Michael find it hard to maintain their love for each other when it is tested. The story also touches on suicide, homosexuality, and losing someone to death. This book is suitable for teens ages 15 to 19.

223 pp. 0-671-69530-4 Fiction

Blume, Judy. *Tiger Eyes*

New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1981

When Davey's father is killed, Davey and her family move to New Mexico. Davey is hoping that she will be able to move on and heal.

217 pp. 0-440-98469-6 Fiction

Covey, Sean and Debra Harris. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens*

New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002

The mostly blank pages of this journal include brief passages that can be used for writing exercises. For example, "Before you go to bed tonight, write a simple note of apology to someone you may have offended" can spark a writing session in which a reluctant reader can identify and write his or her thoughts and feelings. This book is suitable for intermediate readers.

210 pp. 0743237072 Journal

Crutcher, Chris. *Ironman*

New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1996

Bo Brewster has a bad temper, which gets him in trouble at school. Bo gets sent to Mr. Nak's anger management group. There he meets people who help him change, and he falls in love. Readers ages 13 to 15 will enjoy this book.

228 pp. 0-440-21971-X Fiction

Curtis, Christopher. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963*

New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Books for Young Readers, 1995

The Watsons take a family trip to visit their grandmother in Birmingham, Alabama. The year is 1963, one of the darkest moments in America's history. This book is for readers ages 12 to 16.

210 pp. 0-440-41412 Historical fiction

Diaz, Junot. *Drown*

New York: Riverhead Books, 1997

In this collection of ten short stories, Diaz takes readers through the 'hoods of New Jersey to the slums of Santo Domingo, making each story more interesting than the last. He writes, for example, of the struggle of a father trying to make it in the U.S. and of a young child trying his best to help his mom to keep her head up and her mind focused.

208 pp. 1573226068 Fiction

Gaskins, Pearl Fuyo. *What Are You? Voices of Mixed-Race Young People*

New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999

In *What Are You?*, we hear stories of over sixty mixed-race young people, who talk in their own words about everything from dating and dieting to identity and prejudice. These interviews, poems, and essays will have readers in stitches on one page and in tears on another. More than just a compendium of the real-life accounts and struggles of multicultural people, this book is also a kaleidoscope of the human spirit. What defines who we are? After reading this book, readers will appreciate the delicateness of heritage, while uncovering the truth about how hard it is to be biracial or multicultural in America. These are the lives of people trying to find, in their own way, an answer to the question they can't seem to escape: *What Are You?*

273pp. 0805059687 Non-fiction/biography

Levithan, David. *Boy Meets Boy*

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003

This complex story with even more complex characters is colorful and filled with suspenseful twists and turns to the very end. A high school sophomore discovers that love has no straight path and that friendship is more powerful than anything he can understand. This book addresses issues of identity, sexuality, and faith through the lens of a gay teenager who struggles to find himself. Though this book is great read for any young adolescent, it has a specific audience in mind and delivers with force and insight.

185 pp. 0375924000 Fiction

Myers, Walter Dean. *Monster*

New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2001

Sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon has been charged as an adult accomplice to murder. Feeling the surrealism of the stark reality he is facing, Steve resorts to his passion for filmmaking to make sense of his ordeal. His trial is presented as a film script. The reader feels his panic over the possibility of spending life in prison and his fears of being beaten and sexually abused. As the attorneys present their cases before the jury, the drama builds just as it would in a movie. The reader is drawn into the trial, trying to determine, as is Steve himself, if he is the Monster the prosecutor depicts or a victim of circumstance. The film script concept works well on many levels. The illustrations, intermittently placed, give an added sense of reality by presenting Steve in photos

with his mother, on the drugstore surveillance camera, in a courtroom drawing, and in mug shots. This is a powerful, intense, and thought-provoking story. It is great for sparking discussions about the judicial system, pre-judging, self-perception, parent-child relationships, and our prison system.

288 pp. 0064407314 Fiction

Myers, Walter Dean. *Slam*

New York: Scholastic Inc., 1996

A Harlem teenager learns how to apply the will he has to win at hoops to other important parts of his life. *Slam* is suitable for readers age 12–19.

266 pp. 0-590-48668-3 Fiction

Quiñonez, Ernesto. *Bodega Dreams*

New York: Knopf, 2000

Bodega Dreams, though confusing at times, is an interesting read. The beginning of the story is dramatic, action-packed, and hilarious. In the middle, the action takes off; some killings occur and drug lords do their thing. Most of the story is about who you should trust when it comes to where you live.

213 pp. 0375705899 Fiction

Rodríguez, Luis J. Daniel Galvez, illustrator. *It Doesn't Have to Be This Way*

San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1999

It Doesn't Have to Be This Way is an excellent book to use as a read-aloud for students with behavioral problems in school. Written in both English and Spanish, it is the story of a boy who, at the age of 11, goes down the wrong path and gets involved in a gang. By the time he realizes what is happening to him, most of his friends have been hurt or killed. Monchi describes how he disobeys his parents and leaves the house by climbing out the window to hang out with his homeboys. He is excited about the role he plays in the gang that steals cars, writes on buildings, and causes trouble in school so that Monchi's teachers are afraid of him and his crew. The words on these pages are so true to life. Where do we begin to educate our youth? How do we make them understand that violence is not the answer? This book can be a critical tool in middle and high schools plagued by violence.

32 pp. 0-89239-161-8 Fiction

Sapphire. *Push*

New York: Random House, 1997

Precious Jones, an illiterate, HIV-positive girl who is pregnant with a second child by her father, tells her story and finds herself.

140 pp. 0679766758 Fiction

Soto, Gary. *Baseball in April and Other Stories*

New York: Harcourt Books, 2000

This is a book of short stories about young Mexicans living in Fresno, California, and sharing their life experiences. It is suitable for intermediate readers.

134 pp. 0-15-205721-8 Fiction

Spinelli, Jerry. Crash**New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997**

We meet John Coogan, nicknamed Crash, as a bully in elementary school. Crash's favorite person to bully and pin jokes on is his misfit new neighbor, Penn Webb. The book takes readers through Crash's personal growth within himself and with his family, contrasting Crash's detached, busy, dual-income family with Penn's bland, passive, supportive family. This book is for advanced readers.

162 pp. 0679885501 Fiction

Spinelli, Jerry. Wringer**New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998**

Wringer is the story of Palmer, who struggles between listening to his heart or to his friends. The story begins with Palmer's joy at finally being accepted among a motley crew of bullies in his neighborhood on his ninth birthday. But Palmer has a secret: He does not enjoy his town's annual celebration of Pigeon Day; worse yet, they have a spot for him to participate next year—as one of the ten-year-olds who wrings the necks of the pigeons. Mutto and the other bullies Palmer idolizes have two targets of pleasure: Palmer's neighbor Dorothy and the pigeons. When Palmer befriends both, the feathers start to fly! Issues of peer pressure, animal rights, and family trust and expectations make this book a sure hit with pre-teens with advanced reading skills.

228 pp. 0064405788 Fiction

Wilber, Jessica. Totally Private and Personal: Journaling Ideas for Girls and Young Women**Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1996**

Journals are important for pre-adolescent and adolescent girls. In this book, covering such subjects as menstruation and crushes, girls will immediately recognize words they often see, and the journal entries can prompt them to begin writing. An instructor can capitalize on the importance of private journals to engage reluctant or struggling readers. Written by a 15-year-old this book is suitable for young readers.

168 pp. 1575420058 Journal



EXPLORING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES FOR YOUNG READERS

**Ada, Alma Flor. *Gathering the Sun*
New York: HarperCollins Children Books, 1997**

This bilingual picture book is a series of poetic pieces on the lives of migrant farm workers, arranged according to the Spanish alphabet. It is suitable for young readers.
44 pp. 0-688-13903-5 Fiction

**Ancona, George. *Cuban Kids*
Hong Kong: Marshall Cavendish, 2000**

The children in my program have little understanding of different cultures, seeming to recognize only two. This book can introduce them to the daily life of children from another culture; it includes pictures of children in school uniforms involved in school activities. *Cuban Kids* is appropriate for intermediate readers.
40 pp. 0-7614-5077-7 Non-fiction

**Bryan, Ashley. Abelard Martinez, illustrator. *A Beautiful Blackbird*
New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003**

In this tale from the Ila-speaking people of Zambia, Blackbird is voted the most beautiful bird in the forest. The other birds all feel inferior to Blackbird, so they ask Blackbird to paint their feathers black too. Though Blackbird tries to tell them that beauty comes from within, they will not listen. After they all have black feathers, they realize that they do not feel any different on the inside and that Blackbird was right after all. This beautiful metaphor teaches children that, regardless of appearance or cultural background, they can shine bright and excel with the right attitude. This book is for beginning to intermediate readers.

32 pp. 0-689-84731-9 African Folklore

**Bunting, Eve. David Diaz, illustrator. *Going Home*
New York: HarperCollins Books, 1996**

Carlos' parents move to Los Angeles to gain more opportunities for their children. Carlos doesn't understand their reasoning, because they work extra hard as sharecroppers and are exhausted every night. He is still confused as the parents become very excited about going home to Mexico for Christmas. But Carlos soon learns a lesson about opportunities and sacrifices, realizing that "home is where the heart is." This book is suitable for young and intermediate readers.

28 pp. 0-06-026296-6 Fiction

**Casteneda, Omar S. *Abuela's Weave*
New York: Random House Incorporated, 1997**

This story is about a young girl named Esperanza and her grandmother (*abuela*) who work together to create hand-woven tablecloths, which they hope to sell at the Fiesta de Pueblos in Guatemala. Esperanza's grandmother has a birthmark on her face that she is afraid will scare off customers, so, on the day of the festival, Esperanza travels alone to set up her stand. Customers love the handmade items, which are better than those made in factories. This book is suitable for young readers.

32 pp. 1-880-00020-2 Fiction

Cisneros, Sandra. *Hair/Pelitos*

New York: Lee & Lows Books Inc., 1998

A girl describes how each person in her family has hair that looks and acts differently. Her father's hair is like a broom, while Kiki's is like fur. The girl's real focus is on her mother's hair, whose sweet smell of bread before it's baked symbolizes warmth and love. This book is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 0-679-89007-6 Fiction

Davis, Lucile. *Puerto Rico*

Chicago: Children's Press, 1993

This book, in the *America the Beautiful* series, answers questions for children of Puerto Rican ancestry who were born in mainland U.S. It helps them to understand the early discoverers and the complexity of Latino culture. Though the book includes a lot of pictures that aid visual comprehension, it is suitable for intermediate or advanced readers fifth grade or above.

144 pp. 0-516-21042-4 Non-fiction

Delacre, Lulu. *Vejigante Masquerader*

New York: Scholastic, 1993

Ramon, who lives in Puerto Rico, wants to be part of the traditional Vejigante carnival, but he must help Doña Ana and Don Miguel so that he can have his costume. After hard, long work, Ramon finally gets his costume complete so he can join the carnival and do "tricky" things. Ramon learns that sometimes persistence gets you a long way. This book is suitable for young intermediate bilingual readers.

36 pp. 0-590-45776-4 Fiction

Demi, Hitz. *The Stonecutter*

New York: Random House, 1995

Based on an old Chinese tale, this is the story of an ambitious stonecutter who dreams of being rich. An angel grants him a wish; he then decides he'd rather be a governor. The tale continues with the stonecutter realizing the wish he's granted isn't what he really wants. When a succession of wishes eventually leads him to become a stonecutter's rock, the man decides that "being a stonecutter is best after all!" This book is suitable for young readers.

36pp. 0-517-59864-7 Fiction

English, Karen. Jonathan Weiner, illustrator. *Nadia's Hands*

Pennsylvania: Boyds Mill Press, 1999

In every culture, we question the traditions and practices of our families. Are these our traditions, our beliefs? Sometimes we don't understand why we do what we do or eat what we eat. *Nadia's Hands* is a wonderful story about a young Pakistani-American girl who is going to be a flower girl in her cousin's wedding. Her aunt paints traditional Pakistani symbols on her hands with mehndi, a paste made from the leaves of the henna tree, in preparation for the wedding. Everyone around her seems to look at her hands and instinctively grasp the meaning behind their purpose—everyone except Nadia. Only when she practices *sabr*, which means *patience* in Arabic, while her hands dry, does she develop a sense of connection to her traditions. Nadia teaches us through her story what it means to have cultural pride and identity. This book is suitable for reading aloud.

32 pp. 1563976776 Picture book/Fiction

**Garza, Carmen Lomas. Family Pictures/Cuadros de Familia
San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1993**

This book is about the author's experiences growing up in a Hispanic community in Texas. Bilingual text accompanies illustrations. The book is suitable for intermediate readers.

32 pp. 89-27845 Picture Book

**Garza, Carmen Lomas. In My Family/En Mi Familia
San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1996**

This bilingual English-Spanish book is filled with bright, vivid, and detailed writing and artwork about Garza's childhood memories of a Latino community somewhere in the heart of Texas. She takes the reader on a journey not only through time but also through Hispanic traditions, cultures, and belief. The pictures are ageless, capturing moments of Garza's heritage and life. Garza has created a wonderful book suitable to share with anyone interested in answering the question, "What is Hispanic heritage about?" This book is suitable to read aloud to young children.

31pp. 0892391634 Picture book/non-fiction

**Herrera, Juan Felipe. Grandma and Me at the Flea
San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 2002**

In this vibrant picture book, Herrera describes how a boy named Juanito helps his grandma sell old clothes every Sunday at the *remate*, or flea market. Juanito and his friends help grandma with her vision of the flea market as a place for helping and sharing. As the boys make their runs through the market, Juanito receives gifts for grandma for her good deeds. This book is suitable for intermediate readers.

31 pp. 0-89239-171-5 Fiction

**Igus, Toyomi. Daryl Wells, illustrator. Two Mrs. Gibsons
San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1996**

This story is about two women who share the same last name but come from different countries. Grandmother Gibson is African-American and Mother Gibson is Japanese. This book is for young readers.

32 pp. 0-89239-170-7 Picture book

**Keller, Holley. Grandfather's Dream
New York: Greenwillow Books, 1994**

Nam's grandfather and the older people in their village of Tam Nong in Viet Nam worry that if the wetlands are cleaned out, the cranes that have been there for years will not be able to survive. Nam's parents agree with the majority of the village that they can use this land to harvest food for the village. Nam is caught between both sides, understanding that everyone has a valid point. The family is soon drawn together by a series of events in which the needs of both sides are met. This story is appropriate for young to intermediate readers.

28 pp. 0-688-12340-6 Fiction

**Kuklin, Susan. How My Family Lives in America
New York: Bradbury Press, Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992**

This picture-filled book is told in first person by three children who were born and live in New York, but whose parents are from totally different cultures. Sanu, who is named for an African princess, talks about the customs her father brought from Senegal in West

Africa. Chin Lan, whose name means “admire the child” and whose American name is April, tells of the Taiwanese customs her family follows in their New York apartment. Eric, whose ancestry derives from Puerto Rico, describes how his parents and extended family all speak both English and Spanish—even the parrot. This book is a great way for young readers to read about the lifestyles of different people they encounter daily in New York. The book, suitable for beginning and young readers, also has great pictures.
40 pp. 0-02-751239-8 Non-fiction

Morris, Ann. Peter Linenthal, photographer. What Was It Like Grandma? Grandma Francisca Remembers: A Hispanic-American Family Story

Brookfield, CT: The Millbrook Press, 2002

Eight-year-old Angelica lives in the housing projects in San Francisco with her parents. Grandma Francisca lives next door to them, but she grew up in Spain. Although Grandma grew up poor, she shares stories, songs, games, and activities with Angelica that are full of rich cultural tradition. Photos depict the fun-filled days Angelica shares with Grandma Francisca. This book is appropriate for young to intermediate readers.
33 pp. 0-7613-2315-5 Non-fiction

Murphy Payne, Lauren. Martha Rivers, illustrator. We Can Get Along: A Child's Book of Choices

Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 1997

This book describes how it feels both when people get along well together and when they do not. It also explains that one has control over how one reacts in both situations. *We Can Get Along* is suitable for beginning and young readers.

32 pp. 1-575-42-013-9 Multicultural literature

Namioka, Lensey. Kees DeKieft, illustrator. Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear

New York: Bantam, 1994

This book deals with differing customs and the adjustments made by an Asian boy who befriends an American boy and finds out they have interesting things in common. This story will give children insight into how it feels to be the new kid in another culture and make adjustments to fit into a strange environment. It is suitable for intermediate readers.

134 pp. 0-440-409-17-9 Multicultural literature

Pomerantz, Charlotte. The Chalk Doll

New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993

In this picture book, Rose's mother tells stories about her childhood in Jamaica while Rose is in bed with a cold. Her mother describes how she made rag dolls from scraps of material. As one memory leads to another, Rose's mother recalls the condensed milk they used in their tea, the birthday when she received three pennies to buy sweets, the pink taffeta dress her mother could not finish until a month after her birthday, and the high heels that school children made from mango pits and tar. This book is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 0-064-43333-1 Fiction

Say, Allen. Grandfather's Journey

New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1993

This is an autobiographical book about the author's grandfather. When the grandfather was a young man, he journeyed from Japan to America. After settling in San Francisco and raising his family, a yearning for his homeland compelled him to take them back to Japan. There his grown daughter married and gave birth to Allen Say. Say visited and came to love America. Like his grandfather, he has found that the moment he was in one country, he was homesick for the other. This book is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 0-395-57035-2 Non-fiction

Soto, Gary. Too Many Tamales

New York: Putman Publishing, 1996

This story is about a young girl, Maria, who helps her mother prepare the tamales for Christmas dinner. When Maria's mother removes her diamond ring to mix the *masa*, Maria slips it onto her finger. Suddenly, the ring is missing! Maria thinks that it was cooked in with the tamales, so she and her cousin, Danny, eat two dozen tamales in search of the ring. The closest they come to finding the ring is Danny's suspicion that he swallowed something hard. When Maria goes to confess to her mother, she finds the ring right where it belongs. This book is suitable for young readers.

32pp. 0-698-11412-4 Fiction

Stewart, Sarah. David Small, illustrator. The Journey

New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2001

In this book, a young Amish girl describes in her diary the adventures she has when she leaves her small Amish village to go on a trip to the big city. She has a wonderful time exploring the city and is excited at the end of each day. Although there is so much to see and do in the city, she is pleased to return home to her aunt and her family. Intermediate readers can enjoy this book.

40 pp. 0-374-33905-8 Fiction

Waters, Kate and Madeline Slovenz-Low. Martha Cooper, illustrator. Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year

New York: Scholastic, 1991

The *Lion Dancer* is a book about a little boy who shares his customs and beliefs. This book teaches children about cultures different from their own. This book, full of colorful and exciting pictures, is suitable for beginning and young readers.

26 pp. 0590-43047-5 Multicultural literature

Yu, Ling. Chen Ming-Jeng, photographer. Family in Taiwan

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1990

This book tells the story of 12-year-old Chang Fang-Hsin, who lives in Taipei with her parents and siblings. The book details the daily lives of Fang-Hsin's family from morning to night. The reader is introduced to the ways of life of a different culture and to the customs of another country. The book also discusses how products made in factories in Taiwan by people who are paid very low wages are sold in the USA for expensive prices. The descriptive photos add life to the book.

32 pp. 0-8225-1685-3 Non-fiction



CELEBRATING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES FOR TEENS

Adler, C.S. Youn Hee and Me
Hong Kong: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1995

What defines a family? Is it the clothes you wear, the food you eat, or the shape of your nose or eyes? How is a family created? In this story, an American family adopts Youn Hee, a Korean girl. Youn Hee is a stranger in a strange place, struggling to hold on to what she believes is her only identity and true family, her Korean family. Through experience and love, she is transformed by everything around her. With the support of her brother Simon or Si Won and her stepsister Caitlin, she learns that a family isn't what we see on the outside but rather what we feel on the inside. "We are different, like most people in a family are different, but our hearts are bound up together. We belong together...you can just look at us and tell" (p. 183).

183 pp. 0152000739 Fiction

Boudalika, Litsa. If You Could Be My Friend: Letters of Mervet
Akram Sha'ban and Galit Fink
Paris: Gallimard Publications, 1992 Translated from French by Orchard Books
(London), 1998

This is a collection of letters written by two girls whose countries are at war with each other in the Middle East. Galit lives in Jerusalem and wants to be in the Israeli Army, while Mervet lives in Dheisheh in a guerilla refugee camp with her family. Both girls are proud of their heritage and feel that their countries are right in fighting the war. However, through their letters, they find a common bond that helps them to understand that no matter what side you are on, you can still learn to respect the people on the other side—and sometimes learn to love them too. This book is suitable for intermediate and advanced readers.

118 pp. 0-531-30110-3 YA Non-Fiction

Cofer, Judith Ortiz. An Island Like You: Stories of the Barrio
New York: Puffin Books, 1995

Every flower in a garden is different from the next; each one growing at its own pace in its own fashion. How can you compare one bloom to another? In this book, four teenagers living in the barrios of New York and Puerto Rico brilliantly and creatively tell stories of the garden beds that are their backyards and neighborhoods. We see four flowers growing in the sun, four different lives growing as one, as we peek into the cultural traditions of a people through the identities of its young generation. Rita dreams to be free; Luis tries to make his father proud; and Sandra searches the faces of her people to define her beauty, which she discovers within. Meanwhile Arturo makes plans to escape his cultural stigma. Four flowers blooming take us on a journey of self-discovery, with lessons learned along the way.

165 pp. 014038068 Non-Fiction

Gayle, Sharon Shavers. Glenn Turnstull, illustrator. Girlhood
Journeys
New York: Aladdin Paperbacks, 1997

This is a series of four books that encompass the journeys of four girls from different ethnic backgrounds and different eras. Although there are many differences in the girls' lives, they all share a spirit for adventure and mystery. These books are wonderfully

entertaining and share wonderful secrets as the girls journey to self-discovery. The series is suitable for advanced readers.

71 pp. 0-689-80990-5 Fiction.

Holiday, Laurel. Sandy Young, illustrator. *Dreaming in Color, Living in Black and White: Our Own Stories of Growing Up Black in America*
New York: Simon Pulse, 2000

At first I was a little skeptical about the contents of this book; however, after reading some of the stories, I was relieved to find it is an anthology of stories about African-American children from across the United States. These children share information about their traditions and about their experiences growing up. They are stigmatized by the color of their skin, yet they are often proud of their heritage, their culture, and community. The writer tells us how to turn injustices around through determination. The book is appropriate for advanced readers.

199 pp. 677-04127-4 Fiction

Mazer, Anne, editor. *America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories*

New York: Persea Books, 1993

This book is a small anthology of 14 stories from some of the best writers in America. Their stories embrace the complex experiences of growing up in a diverse society and push the boundaries of cultural identity. This collection gives life to the question everyone wants answered: “Where do I belong?” “The Wrong Lunch Line” by Nicholasa Mohr is a great story about knowing the difference between right and wrong—although, when it comes to where you sit for lunch, does it really matter? Sometimes we forget how the mind of a child works and how children take in information. *America Street* revisits childhood places long forgotten and reminds adults of the challenges we faced as children. In this mini-universe, everything is about trying to be “normal.”

152 pp. 08922551909 Fiction

Mazer, Anne, editor. *Going Where I’m Coming From: Memoirs of American Youth (A Multicultural Anthology)*

New York: Persea Books, 1995

Mazer is a strong editor, audaciously taking on the task of bringing together 14 stories that explore an array of cultural issues, including identity, tolerance, forgiveness, survival, prejudice, and more. This anthology is a collection of memoirs telling the stories of how young people experience the collisions of their own cultures with American values. These cultures include Sioux, Polish, Japanese, Hispanic, African American, Jewish, Indian, and Chinese. The book is a cultural road map from Hawaii to New York, taking the reader on a journey of self-discovery and learning through the eyes and senses of these “American” writers and storytellers.

166 pp. 0892552069 Fiction

Mazer, Anne, editor. *A Walk in My World: International Short Stories about Youth*

New York: Persea, 1998

Once upon a time we were all children and the world seemed infinite. The gift of the young is that tomorrow seems far away and that it takes a lifetime to grow up. However, growing up is inevitable, and the innocence we knew as children has faded away, gone forever. Where did our innocence go, and why does the world take it away? In this



collection, Mazer does it again, although this time the short stories she's selected focus on youth from around the world in their own countries and their own backyards. These stories focus on lost innocence, growing pains, and injustices in the young people's lives. Although we may look different and speak diverse languages, the pain and struggle of growing up is universal. *A Walk In My World* opens our eyes to everyone's question: Why are we here?

223 pp. 0892552379 Non-fiction

Myers, Walter Dean. *Glory Fields*
New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1985

Walter Dean Myers traces the history of an African-American family over 240 years. He begins with the stories of Muhammad, who travels from West Africa on a slave ship, and his descendant Lizzy, who breaks the bonds of slavery. The novel, suitable for advanced readers, follows six generations of the Lewis family.

288pp. 0-590-45898-1 Fiction

Naidoo, Beverly. *Eric Velasquez, illustrator. Journey to Jo'burg: A South African Story*
Philadelphia and London: J. P. Lippincott, 1985

This story covers the coming-of-age plights of 13-year-old Naledi and her 9-year-old brother Tiro as they set out on a journey to find their mother, who is working in Johannesburg. She needs to come home to care for her youngest child, who is critically ill. Along the way Naledi and Tiro realize the true meaning of a chant they have heard in school about the cruelty of the South African police against blacks. Their encounters are similar to the plights of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. Although the countries are far apart, the cry for freedom has the same effect on the heart. This book is for advanced readers.

96 pp. 0-397-32168-6 Fiction

Potok, Chaim. *The Chosen*

New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967

The Chosen recounts experiences significant both to 20th-century world history and to the life of its author, Chaim Potok. Potok includes autobiographical details in both of the main characters in this novel. Danny Saunders, born around the beginning of the Great Depression, is raised in an Orthodox household but later is drawn to a less restrictive Jewish doctrine. Like the novel's narrator, Reuven Malter, Potok studied theology and was ordained as a conservative rabbi. A full appreciation of the novel depends on historical knowledge about the end of the Second World War as well as working knowledge of Jewish and Hasidic culture. This story is full of rich history and creativity that brings alive the Jewish tradition. How do religious beliefs affect our lives, and how do we grow with them? These questions are cunningly answered in Potok's novel, which is an excellent piece of literature for the modern thinker.

412 pp. 0783884508 Fiction

Sullivan, Charles. *Here Is My Kingdom, Hispanic American Literature and Art for Young People*

New York: Times Mirror Co., 1994

This book is full of color in the words as well as the artwork. The many poems and essays take readers from the origins of Latin history to the present day. One particular poem, called "Home," sums it all up. It speaks for an immigrant who longs for the traditions of home. This book, which can be used to cover an array of subjects, is suitable for intermediate readers.

119 pp. 0810934221 Fiction/Non-fiction/Poetry

Tashlik, Phyllis, editor. *Hispanic, Female and Young: An Anthology*
Houston: Piñata Books, 1996

Poems, stories, essays, and interviews comprise this extraordinary book. Uplifting and heartfelt, the book takes readers through the lives of Hispanic girls, from past to present. These young writers express their thoughts and dreams of exactly what it means to be Hispanic, female, and young in *el barrio*. The book is suitable for intermediate readers.

217 pp. 1-55885-072-4 Fiction/Non-fiction/Poetry

IMMIGRATION

Alvarez, Julia. *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*

New York: Plume Printing, 1992

The García girls' story of growing up in the 1960s is in many ways the same as, yet different from, the perspectives of other teenage girls. Often caught between their two worlds, the United States and the Dominican Republic, in terms of language, morals, gender roles, and religion, they struggle and somehow find their way to what best suits them. Full of experiences that most people go through, this novel is engaging and the characters are very distinct. It is suitable for intermediate readers.

290 pp. 0-452-26806-0 Fiction

Berger, Melvin, Gilda Berger and Robert Quackenbush. *Where Did Your Family Come From?: A Book about Immigrants*

Nashville, TN: Ideals Children's Books, 1993

This book is suitable for young readers or those who are intimidated by reading. Students enjoy this book because of the cartoon characters and bright colors in the illustrations. This easy read tells the story of four children from four different countries—Russia, Mexico, Italy, and Korea—and why they immigrated to the U.S.

48 pp. 082-498-610-5 Fiction

Bode, Janet. *The Color of Freedom: Immigrant Stories*

London: Franklin Watts, 1999

This book, suitable for all ages, worked well in my program because the students could relate to the teens in this compilation, which includes both immigrant biographies and stories from young people whose families have been in the U.S. for generations. *The Color of Freedom* is a unique book that captures readers' attention not only through the stories, but also with traditional recipes from different regions such as Mexico, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. Photographs from the teens' family albums really tell the story. The students' writings, interviews, poems, and artwork make this book a great way to introduce immigration and migration.

144 pp. 0531115305 Non-fiction

Bode, Janet. *New Kids in Town: Oral Histories of Immigrant Teens*

New York: Scholastic, 1991

The words of these eleven teenagers show how they felt as new kids on the block, so many teens can relate to these stories. At one point or another, every teen is a new kid somewhere. Adjusting to change can be difficult at this crucial age. Bode hit the jackpot with this book, showing that the journey from war, poverty, and repression to a new life in America wasn't easy for these young people. This book is suitable for teenagers.

126 pp. 0590441442 Non-fiction

Budhos, Marina. *Remix: Conversations with Immigrant Teenagers*

New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1999

The title of this book could not be more appropriate. *Remix* is a collection of stories about young men and women confronting social and cultural issues of survival, solitude, dreams, and empowerment. It uses music as a symbol and form of expression to unite the entire text. From rap to rock, from baggy pants to sexual independence, from hatred to love, from being lost to finally being found—this book has it all. These timeless

stories about young lives brought together through dialogue and music proves just how universal music is and how similar the issues in our lives really are. This book is fantastic read for anyone, especially musicians.

145 pp. 0805051139 Non-fiction

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*

New York: Vintage Books, 1984

Esperanza is a Latina girl growing up in a neighborhood in Chicago that teaches her lessons: Heritage, culture, and heart are where the home is. Conforming to mainstream society but holding fast to her culture, Esperanza becomes a successful young woman who learns that you can be yourself and still succeed. This book, suitable for intermediate readers, will be especially entertaining for middle-school-aged Latina girls.

110 pp. 0-679-734-775 Fiction

Cooper, Michael L. *Bound for the Promised Land*

New York: Lodestar Books, 1995

Southern African-Americans tell the story of why they migrated to the Midwest and Northeast and what happened after they moved to new cities. Stories of the workforce and black neighborhoods in Harlem and Chicago from 1915 to 1930 are vividly explored. This book about the Great Migration is an engaging experience suitable for all readers.

72 pp. 0-525-67476-4 Non-fiction

Dwyer, Christopher. *The Dominican Americans*

New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1991

7.3 million people from the Dominican Republic have come into the U.S. since 1960. This book explores many aspects of Dominican traditions and the changes these immigrants experienced once here. Famous celebrities give their accounts of adjusting to the new land. Readers will see the similarities and differences in, for instance, religious practices and how major holidays are celebrated in the U.S. and the Dominican Republic. This book is suitable for all readers.

107 pp. 0-87754-872-2 Non-fiction

Granfield, Linda. *97 Orchard Street, New York Stories of Immigrant Life, Lower Eastside Tenement Museum*

Plattsburgh, NY: Tundra Books, 2001

97 Orchard Street comes to life through the photos by Arlene Alda. Linda Granfield tells the stories of four families who lived at that address during the 19th century. The stories are not only emotional and heartfelt but also necessary to understanding the history that New York is built on. The book is suitable for intermediate readers.

55 pp. 088-776-580-7 Non-fiction

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Shutting Out the Sky: Life in the Tenements of New York, 1880–1924*

London: Orchard Books, 2003

Leonard Covello and four of his friends share their experiences of coming to a strange new land and adapting to the environment. The stories of education, leisure, and religion all come to life through the black-and-white photos in this book. My students enjoyed this book because it was told from a child's point of view. It is suitable for all readers.

134 pp. 0-439-37590-8 Non-fiction

Knight, Margy Burns. Anne Sibley O'Brien, illustrator. Who Belongs Here? An American Story

Gardiner, ME: Tilbury House Publishers, 2003

Nary's grandparents escape from a Cambodian refugee camp and move with him to the United States. When Nary goes to school, he feels out of place. No matter how much he tries to make friends, the other children call him names. Every day Nary goes home crying. His grandparents explain to him that most people don't understand what a refugee camp is. Then Nary tells his teacher what the children are saying about him and how it makes him feel. During a social studies lesson, the teacher tells the class where Cambodia is located and what a refugee is, inviting Nary to assist her. Nary has the opportunity to tell the class why his appearance is different from theirs. This is an excellent book to teach about cultural differences. It is suitable for intermediate and advanced readers.

40 pp. 0-88448-169-7 Historical fiction

Mohr, Nicholasa. Ray Cruz, illustrator. Felita

New York: Puffin, 1999

The story is about a Puerto Rican girl named Felita who moves to New York from Puerto Rico. She experiences confusing and difficult changes in her new environment. She is taunted and teased because she is different. This book can be enjoyed by children of all ages, though it is most suitable for intermediate and advanced readers.

112 pp. 0440-41295-1 Fiction

Rosenberg, Maxine B. George Ancong, photographer. Making a New Home in America

New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shephard Books, 1986

This book presents the stories of five children who came to the U.S. from other countries. It introduces children to the concepts of emigration and immigration. The reader will find out how people become citizens of the U.S. The five children, who are from Japan, Cuba, India, Guyana, and Vietnam, discuss the changes they had to make in moving to the U.S. They also share their feelings of fear, sadness, and anger about having to make the change. The book also shows how the children learned to adjust to their new environments, so that most of the negative feelings changed to feelings of happiness and excitement. This book is appropriate for young to intermediate readers.

48 pp. 0-688-05824-8 Non-fiction

Santiago, Esmeralda. When I Was Puerto Rican

New York: Vintage Books, 1994

This book is the author's account of what it was like to learn the traditions of the barrios of Puerto Rico in the 1950s, as well as how to survive. The eldest of her siblings, Santiago feels obligated to steer her sisters and brothers in the right direction. But just when she thinks she understands all she needs to know about life, she is uprooted to New York and a whole new world. Comparing a green guava to a ripe yellow one, Santiago travels from childhood to adulthood. *When I Was Puerto Rican* is a success story for all people who have migrated to America, proving that "A ship that doesn't sail never reaches port." Santiago reaches her port triumphantly. Her book is suitable for intermediate readers.

270 pp. 0-679-75676-0 Non-fiction

Soto, Gary. Taking Sides

New York: Harcourt Brace, 1991

When a young Latino boy moves into a suburban area, people don't like him initially because of his culture. This Latino lad finds his way on and off the basketball court and through life. In his old neighborhood, everyone accepts him. In his new neighborhood, people accept him eventually, but the dilemma is that the old friends have reservations about the new and the new have reservations about the old. Finding a solution to bring both his worlds together is a journey. This book is suitable for all ages.

168 pp. 0-15-284076-1 Fiction

NON-FICTION

**Beyer, Rick. *The Greatest Stories Never Told: 100 Tales from History to Astonish, Bewilder, and Stupefy*
New York: HarperCollins, 2003**

This book is based on a popular show on the History Channel, *Timelab 2000*, hosted by Sam Waterston. This small book is packed with a fascinating collection of historical tidbits that made me shake my head in wonder. I was quite interested to discover that the stethoscope was created because a woman's breasts made it difficult to hear her heartbeat. In the age of modesty, a doctor couldn't listen to a woman's heart in the traditional way, by putting his ear against the chest cavity. Hence, the stethoscope was created! This book is awesome because the facts are incredible. Readers learn that the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock because they ran out of beer and that three cigars changed the course of the Civil War. The kids in my program, from nine-year-olds to junior teens, enjoyed reading the unbelievable facts in this book.

214 pp. 0060014016 Non-fiction

**Bunnett, Rochelle. *Matt Brown, photographer. Friends at School*
Long Island City, NY: Star Bright Books, 1995**

Friends at School is a wonderful picture book for children in kindergarten through third grade. It's about children from different parts of the world who attend a school for children with disabilities. The children have a good relationship with each other and learn to cope with their disabilities while making friends. This is a great book to use in class as motivation for a writing assignment in which students express their feelings about a person they know who has a disability. Students should know that, as they grow up, they will encounter others in school who are different from them. Another writing assignment might be to cover the words and ask students to write what they think is happening in the pictures. This book is appropriate for beginning and young readers.

32 pp. 1-887734-01-5 Non-fiction

**Kent, Deborah. *New York City*
Chicago: Children's Press, 1996**

This is a great book that represents the different cultures found in New York City. You could use this book to teach about different foods and the games that children create and play by themselves. This book can be used with students in the fourth through sixth grades, depending on their reading abilities.

64 pp. 516-20025-9 Non-fiction

**Lambert, David. *The World's Population*
Hove, England: Wayland Publishing Ltd, 1993**

This book chronicles the world's population and how it changed from 1600 to 1992. The author discusses the development of the different forms of transportation all over the world. The book also explores the customs of places such as Brazil, India, and South Africa. In an after-school setting, this book can be used to discuss the harvests of developing countries such as Zimbabwe, the Chinese Birth Control Act of the 1970s, or the quality of life of residents in North America, Asia, Europe, and other continents. This rich resource for after-school programs is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

32 pp. 1-56847-050-9 Non-fiction

**Van Riper, Guernsey. Paul Laune and Jerry Robinson, illustrators.
Lou Gehrig: One of Baseball's Greatest
New York: Aladdin Library, 1986**

Van Riper introduces us to the Lou Gehrig—humble and focused—whom we never met until his farewell speech. Individuals who love baseball will immediately gravitate to this story because of Gehrig's undying love for and desire to play baseball despite his talents in other sports. Gehrig's strong family ties and commitment to his family responsibilities are a breath of needed fresh air and a nice alternative to books about pop icons. The setting of the book, upper Manhattan and the Bronx, keeps the story relevant to students who live in the area. The book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

192 pp. 0020419309 Non-fiction

**Various Authors. Game Informer
Eden Prairie, MN: Sunrise Publication**

Video game highlights and upcoming creations are the main focus of this magazine. It discusses the challenges of making video games and analyzes video games currently on the market, rating graphics as well as overall game likeability and structure. This magazine is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

120 pp. Bi-monthly periodical—computer games

**Various Authors. Sports Americas Premier Sports Annual Pro
Basketball Edition
Nashville, TN: Athlon Sports, Annual Publication**

Pro basketball players are rated on their ability in defense, scoring, rebounding, athleticism, coaching, and "intangibles." Good details are given on the top players and their teammates. This publication is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

191 pp. Sports

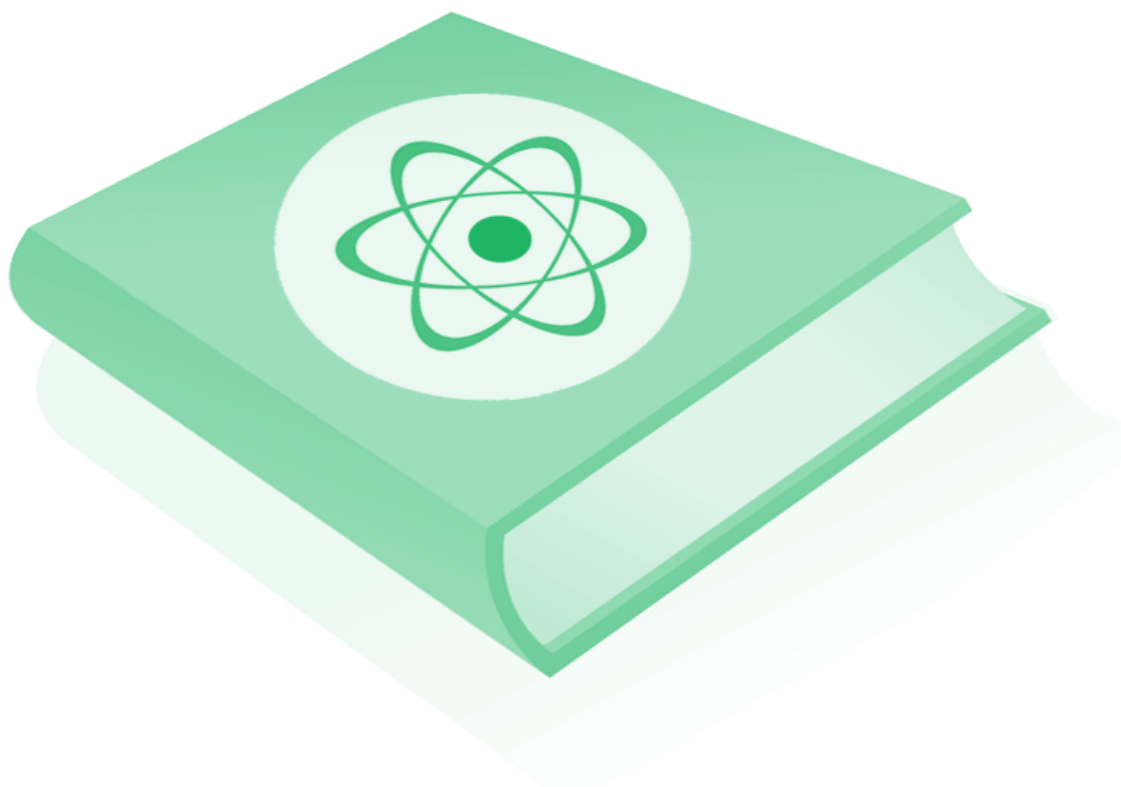
SCIENCE

Masoff, Joy. Terry Sirrell, illustrator. Oh Yuck! The Encyclopedia of Everything Nasty

New York: Workman Publishing Company, 2000

My kids wanted to read this book based on the cover alone, which shows a kid with his finger up his nose! From A to Z, this book is a collection of information about disgusting things. From acne, ants, and bacteria to worms, X-periments, and zits—the author took a list of the nastiest things on earth and created a book about them. Real-life pictures as well as cool cartoon-like graphics support the text. Middle-school kids especially love the gross, but all age groups can get something valuable out of this book. It is also a neat tool to teach kids how to use an encyclopedia.

212 pp. 0761107711 Non-fiction



ASTRONOMY

Branley, Franklyn. *The Sun: Our Nearest Star*

New York: Harper and Row, 1988

The Sun: Our Nearest Star is a wonderfully illustrated book that discusses the importance of the sun. Without it there would be no plants or animals or any life on Earth. Readers will learn how close the sun is and how hot it is. Branley even includes an experiment that proves we need light from the sun to make things grow. Other books in the Let's-Read-and-Find-Out series on astronomy include *The Planets in Our Solar System*, *The Moon Seems to Change*, and *The Sky Is Full of Stars*, to name just a few. This book is suitable for beginning and young readers.

32 pp. 0064452026 Non-fiction

Carle, Eric. *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*

New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999

In this delightful picture book, we travel with a father on his journey up mountains and ladders to bring the moon back for his daughter. Children will love how the pages unfold upward and outward. This story is a wonderful introduction to the phases of the moon. It is suitable for beginning readers.

32 pp. 0-68-982959-0 Picture book

Lewellen, John. *Moon, Sun, and Stars*

Chicago: Children's Press, 1981

This book introduces the moon, the earth, and the sun. Lewellen uses illustrations along with photos to explain the answers to many questions, from how the moon moves to why we need the sun, moon, and stars. With large text and great pictures, this book is perfect for beginning readers.

45pp. 0-516-41637-5 Non-fiction

COLOR

Lionni, Leo. A Color of His Own

New York: Pantheon Books, 1975

A sad chameleon begins the story by listing different animals that have their own color. All of them have their own color, but the chameleon changes color wherever he goes. Lionni does a wonderful job of introducing each color, using simple language. Each page has its own animal and its own color. This book is suitable for beginning readers.

32 pp. 0-394-93231-5 Picture Book

Lionni, Leo. Little Blue and Little Yellow

New York: Harper Trophy, 1995

Little Blue and Little Yellow are best friends. They go to school together; they play and have fun together. One day they are so happy to see each other that they hug too hard and come together as green. When they go home, their parents do not recognize them. They are so sad that they start crying big blue and yellow tears until they became Little Blue and Little Yellow again. This book is suitable for beginning readers.

48 pp. 0688132855 Picture Book

Walsh, Ellen Stoll. Mouse Paint

New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1989

Three white mice learn what happens when you mix red, blue, and yellow as they dance and play in puddles of paint. This book is a perfect choice for learning about mixing colors. The illustrations are wonderfully made out of cut-paper collages. This book is suitable for beginning readers.

34 pp. 0-15-200118-2 Picture Book



FORENSIC SCIENCE

Adler, David. *Young Cam Jansen and the Dinosaur Game*

New York: Penguin Putnam, 1996

Jennifer “Cam” Jansen is a girl with a photographic memory who loves to solve mysteries. In this book, she solves the case of the dinosaur game. While at a party playing games, she uses her photographic memory to expose another guest who cheated to win the dinosaur game. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

32 pp. 0670863998 Fiction

Bender, Lionel. *Forensic Detection through the Microscope*

New York: Gloucester Press, 1990

The author depicts how a microscope can provide details that are necessary to help law enforcement professionals to solve crimes. Techniques on the collection of evidence, science background, and pictures are used to highlight such aspects of forensic science as fingerprints, fibers, bullets, knives, ink, skin, hairs, and forgeries. Pictures of various microscopes with diagrams of their parts and how they work are provided, along with some hands-on activities for using a microscope. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

31pp. 0-531-17250-3 Science

Bowers, Vivien. *Crime Science: How Investigators Use Science to Track Down the Bad Guys*

Toronto: Greedy de Pencier Books, Inc., 1997

Crime Science uses three different cases to illustrate how clues are collected and evidence is matched. The three cases include “The Case of the Mysterious Bones,” “The Case of the Cyberspace Crook,” and “The Case of the Smoking Thief.” The three cases delve into clues such as forgeries, counterfeits, chromatography, bad checks, hackers, DNA, profiling criminals, and more. Each case includes sidebars of activities for readers to perform. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

64 pp. 1895688698 Science

Cann, Jonathan. *The Case of the Crooked Candles*

Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company, 1997

This book is by a sixth grader who started to write mystery stories in the second grade. In *The Case of the Crooked Candle*, a dog detective and his team, consisting of a frog, a mouse, a cat, a duck, and a spider, solve the case of the jewels stolen from a jewelry store. Through a series of clues, the team nabs the crooks, Rocky Fruit Bat and his batty brother, Muggsy. The whimsical illustrations add charming characteristics to the detective team. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

32 pp. 0817244328 Fiction

Friedlander, Mark P. *When Objects Talk: Solving a Crime with Science*

Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 2001

In order to illustrate how law enforcement professionals use forensic science to solve crime, the author uses a fictional murder case to present the wide range of scientific techniques employed to solve the murder. Each chapter begins with an excerpt of the crime and then highlights the specific technique used to analyze and solve that aspect

of the crime. The book continues this way, with each chapter focusing on a specific science method so that readers go along for the journey as if they were physically on the site solving the crime. This book is suitable for intermediate to advanced readers.

120 pp. 0822506491 Non-fiction

Jackson, Donna M. Bone. Charlie Fellenbaum, illustrator.
Detectives: How Forensic Anthropologists Solve Crimes and Uncover Mysteries of the Dead.

New York: Little, Brown & Company, 1996

This book follows actual murder investigations step by step. It shows how forensic anthropologists can determine a person's vital statistics and cause of death by studying his or her bones and teeth. I was fascinated to discover that forensic scientists can determine the occupation of a skeleton. In one interesting story, detectives solved a murder that occurred many years ago with nothing to go on but a badly decomposed skeleton. Investigators determined that the skeleton was female and reconstructed her face with clay. Near where she was found, they also found denim jeans, which they traced to a company in Southeast Asia that no longer existed. Through company records, they discovered where these jeans were sold and so narrowed their scope. They then searched through missing-persons records in that area to further narrow their search. The story was so interesting and detailed, and the pictures added so much, that my teens loved it! The book even includes profiles of famous forensic cases throughout history. Anyone who loves science, and particularly inquisitive teenagers, will enjoy this book.

48 pp. 0316829358 Non-fiction

Owen, David and Antonio Mendez. Police Lab: How Forensic Science Tracks Down and Convicts Criminals
Richmond Hill, Ontario: Firefly Books, 2002

The author presents twenty famous crimes—including John F. Kennedy's assassination, the O. J. Simpson murders, and the World Trade Center bombing—with factual forensic investigations on how each crime was solved. Readers can explore such specific aspects of forensics as poisoning, forgery, suffocation, shooting, stabbing, bites, and facial reconstruction, to name a few. This book is suitable for advanced readers.

128 pp. 155297619X Non-fiction

Roy, Ron. A to Z, The Bald Bandit
New York: Random House, 1997

A detective squad consisting of three third graders, Dink, Josh, and Rose, is asked to assist in the case of a bank robbery. A tall redhead was videotaping as a bank robbery was taking place. A detective enlists the junior trio to help find the redhead and obtain the video, offering a reward on delivery. This chapter book with nice black-and-white illustrations is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

80 pp. 0679984496 Fiction

Sobol, Donald. Encyclopedia Brown and the Case of the Treasure Hunt
New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1988

Encyclopedia Brown is a ten-year-old boy detective for hire. He charges 25 cents a day plus expenses to solve crimes in his neighborhood. This book in the *Encyclopedia Brown* series contains ten short mystery stories. Each five- to eight-page story includes clues that will enable readers to solve the cases themselves. At the end, Encyclopedia Brown reveals the logic behind each crime that he solves.

91pp. 0553156500 Fiction

Sobol, Donald. Encyclopedia Brown's Book of Wacky Crimes
New York: E. P. Dutton, Inc., 1982

Ten-year-old Encyclopedia Brown, owner of the Brown Detective Agency, has collected eccentric but true crime stories from the newspapers. The crime stories are extremely funny. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

113 pp 0-525-66786-5 Non-fiction

Sobol, Donald J. and Rose Sobol. Encyclopedia Brown's Book of Strange but True Crimes

New York: Scholastic Inc., 1991

Encyclopedia Brown solves the case of the two-headed toothbrush, giving the solution at the end of the book. The rest of the book consists of humorous true anecdotes about crime, law enforcement, and detective work. A collection of unbelievable stories right out of Encyclopedia Brown's notebooks includes tales of blowtorch-wielding safecrackers, a purse-snatching elephant, and the groom who got himself arrested in order to miss his own wedding. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

113 pp. 0590441485 Non-Fiction

Teitelbaum, Michael. Batman's Guide to Crime and Detection
London: Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2003

This book in the series *Justice League of America Readers* reviews the processes that both Batman and law enforcement agencies employ to solve crimes, using parallel methods. For example, Batman's suit is made of the same materials as a bulletproof vest. Batman is part of the *Justice League of America Reader Series*, a team of superheroes, while law enforcement professionals often are part of specialty teams such as S.W.A.T or frogmen. Batman's belt contains crime fighting equipment like the tools in the crime science kits police officers use at the scene of a crime. Batman's bat cave is as well equipped to analyze clues as a forensics laboratory. This book also gives background information on the history of the first crime committed, the first methods of punishments for criminals, and the first police force in France. This book is appropriate for intermediate and advanced readers.

48 pp. 0789498790 Comics

HUMAN BODY

Avison, Brigid. *I Wonder Why I Blink*

New York: Kingfisher, 1993

I Wonder Why I Blink is a perfect introduction to the human body for young readers. Information is combined with exceptional artwork guaranteed to awe and inspire. The text is simple and the illustrations are clear. This book can be read to emergent readers and is perfect for seven- and eight-year-olds to read out loud.

31 pp. 0-7534-5610-9 Non-fiction

Barnes, Kate and Steve Weston. *Inside the Human Body*

Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Publishing, 2001

I liked the use of children as models for all the systems, especially in the large, cutaway illustrations. I think it's helpful for children to "see themselves" when teaching such broad topics as the human body. The language is simple and informative. This book is ideal for young readers.

46 pp. 0-7607-0428-7 Non-fiction

Berger, Melvin. Marilyn Hafner, illustrator. *Germs Make Me Sick!*

New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 1995

This book explains how bacteria and viruses affect the human body and how the body fights them. It is very kid friendly because it uses simple illustrations that make the complex simple. Using everyday examples of how we get sick, the book gives children rules for good health. This is just one book in the publisher's series *Let's-Read-and-Find-Out. Germs Make Me Sick!* can be used for all age groups, but seems to target beginning readers.

32 pp. 0064451542 Non-fiction

Cole, Joanna. Bruce Degen, illustrator. *The Magic School Bus: Inside the Human Body*

New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1990

Ms. Frizzle's class takes a trip to the museum on a "yellow cheese bus," but they end up going through a human body. This book presents the topic in a way kids can understand, but it might not work well as a read-aloud because most pages have supplemental side boxes. For instance, while the bus goes through the heart, the box includes a fact about the human heart, so the kids get the facts without interrupting the story line. In reading aloud with my group, I skipped those side boxes, but the kids noticed and said, "Why didn't you read that?" A read-aloud might work better if each child has a copy and can follow along. The book is small, and if your group is large, they can't see all that there is to see. Also, the language and descriptions in the book seem to be geared toward kids 9 and older— for young kids, the book is really long.

56 pp. 0590414275 Fiction

Colombo, Luann. Craig Zuckerman and Jennifer Young Fairman, illustrators. *Uncover the Human Body.*

San Diego, CA: Silver Dolphin Books, 2002

This book is great for visual learners because it includes a 3-D model of the human body and all its important parts. I especially liked how simple the text was. The author guides the reader through the body's systems, describing how each system functions and how the systems work together. This book would complement any lesson on the human body with children as young as six and as old as eighteen!

16 pp. 1-57145-789-5 Non-fiction

Nadler, Beth. *The Magic School Bus Inside Ralphie: A Book about Germs*

New York: Scholastic Inc., 1995

Ms. Frizzle and her class travel inside the blood stream of a sick child, Ralphie, to discover how the body fights germs. This book is a great picture book, with simple, clear illustrations, and the story line is simple enough for even the very young to follow. However, the book doesn't lend itself well to read-alouds because of all the side boxes on the pages. This book will work best with kids age 9 and up.

30 pp. 0590400258 Non-fiction

Parker, Steve and Deni Brown. *Human Body (Eyewitness Explorer Series)*

New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 1998

This visual dictionary covers the human body from the inside out. The authors touch on such things as cells and the functions of body systems; for example, in discussing the digestive system, the book describes how we digest food. Since many kids learn by doing, they will love this book for its fun interactive features. The book includes a press out 3-D skeletal model that is great for visual learners, as well as a growth chart. Kids will have fun seeing how tall they are in relation to their classmates (and teacher). This book would lend itself to any age group.

61 pp. 0789429829 Non-fiction

Royston, Angela. *What's Inside? My Body*

New York: Dorling Kindersley Publishing, 1991

What's Inside? My Body is just one of the books in the *What's Inside?* series, which uses photography along with colorful illustrations to look at objects from the inside out. This book is an excellent introduction to anatomy. It discusses an array of topics, from what's under your skin to what's in your head. This book is suitable for beginning young readers.

17 pp. 0-7894-42930 Non-fiction

**Seuling, Barbara. Edward Miller, illustrator. From Head to Toe: The Amazing Body and How It Works
New York: Holiday House, 2002**

I love this book because it not only teaches young kids how their bodies work, but also includes some really fun (and easy) experiments to help kids visualize a particular organ's function. The book is extensive, too, covering bones, muscles, the brain, and organs, to name a few. The text is easy to follow, inviting readers to connect personally: "You might think your belly button has no purpose....It doesn't anymore, but once it was your lifeline." Rainbow colors show internal organs. My students thought the book was funny, too, so we really enjoyed it. Though the book is advertised as being for kids age 5–8 and uses simple language appropriate for that age range, I think all ages would enjoy learning from this book about their bodies.

32 pp. 0823416992 Non-fiction

**Solheim, James. Eric Brace, illustrator. It's Disgusting and We Ate It! True Food Facts from Around the World and Throughout History
New York: Simon and Schuster Children's, 1998**

The author speaks to the "toilet humor" that kids love! This book explores edible grub (larvae and otherwise) from around the world—both past and present. It is divided into three sections. "People Eat the Wildest Things" looks at some of the less common foods people eat today, such as frog legs, earthworms, snakes, insects, flowers, and seaweed. "From Mammoth Meatballs to Squirrel Stew" introduces readers to weird dishes served in the past: fourteen oxen and fifty swans, rat stew, and robins. Finally, "If You Think That's Sick, Look in Your Fridge" looks at how many common edibles, such as milk, cheese, honey, and mushrooms, are grown or produced. Readers are treated to a myriad of facts and lots of interesting trivia. The book also includes poems, such as a haiku celebrating the joys of sushi, and some recipes. The pages are filled with colorful characters who make wry observations about the text. Kids will absolutely love the amusing way this book is written. It is ideal for all young kids, particularly those in grades 3–6.

48 pp. 0689843933 Non-fiction

**Suhr, Mandy. Mike Gordon, illustrator. When I Eat
Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1991**

The *I'm Alive* series includes this title, *When I Eat*, which looks at how the human body works and develops. The book discusses why we need food, where the food goes after we eat it, and what foods help us grow and give us energy. It's great that each book in the series has activities at the end that parents or teachers can do after reading the book. This book is suitable for beginning and young readers.

24 pp. 0-87614-737-6 Non-fiction

PLANTS

Carle, Eric. The Tiny Seed

New York: Simon & Schuster Children's, 1991

This wonderful picture book describes the adventures of a tiny seed throughout the seasons. It tells readers what seeds need to grow, where they can't grow, and the dangers plants and seeds face. In the end, the tiny seed grows into a giant flower, its seeds fall, and the cycle starts all over again. This book is suitable for beginning and young readers.

36 pp. 088708155X Picture book

Hickman, Pamela. A Seed Grows

Toronto: Kids Can Press Ltd., 1997

Sam plants a seed, and the book takes us through its life cycle. Each page has a fold-over flap with interesting facts about plants. Children will be amazed at how the tiny seed transforms into a huge watermelon. The repetition in this book is great for beginning readers.

20 pp 1550742000 Non-fiction

Wexler, Jerome. Flowers, Fruits, Seeds

New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987

Wexler uses brightly colored photographs to show the many kinds of plants that have flowers. Some even grow fruit that contain seeds, which then grow into new plants. Each photograph is accompanied by a brief description that is great for beginning readers.

29 pp 0-13-322397-3 Non-fiction



RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

VISUAL LITERACY

Dondis, Peter A., et al. Primer of Visual Literacy
Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995

This decoding device for the “anatomy of visual messages” looks at how learners interpret colors and symbols and acquire visual language, including sign language.
206 pp. 0-262-54029-0 Non-fiction/textbook

Gardner, Howard. Artful Scribbles
New York: Basic Books, 1982

This book by a foremost educational psychologist explores the significance of children’s drawings.
269 pp. 0-465-00455-5 Non-fiction/textbook

Gardner, Howard. Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences
New York: Basic Books, 1985

Gardner’s groundbreaking study of the mind explores its separate domains and their operations.
393 pp. 0-465-02510-2 Non-fiction/textbook

Lowenfeld, Viktor. Creative and Mental Growth
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1987

This book provides a detailed explanation of the importance of age-appropriateness in art education.
479 pp. 0-02-372110-3 Non-fiction/textbook

Petty, Walter T., et al. Experiences in Language
New York: Allyn and Bacon, 1994

This book offers tools and techniques for integrating language arts curricula and creative instruction, providing many visuals.
468 pp. 0-205-07176-7 Non-fiction/manual

Yenawine, Phillip. Key Art Terms for Beginners
New York: Harry Abrams, 1995

This illustrated dictionary outlines the “latent vocabulary” children possess about fine art.
160 pp. 0-81091-225-2 Non-fiction/textbook

READING

Allington, Richard, editor. Teaching Struggling Readers
The Reading Teacher. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1998

This helpful resource is for the reading teacher who has just been hit with the realization that her students read at an extremely low level. The authors relate their personal experiences in working with such a population, introducing, confirming, and dispelling some traditional thoughts about why a student cannot read. The book also comes with a “gift”—some suggested books and their reading levels, as well as strategies to get a searcher started in compiling books and building a curriculum.
311 pp. 0872071839 Professional article/Educator Resource

**Clinard, Linda. *The Reading Triangle*
Farmington Hills, MI.: Focus Publishing Co., 1981**

This book for parents who are interested in helping their children succeed in reading suggests ways to encourage children to listen, read, think, speak, and write. The book is suitable for both parents and youth educators.

132 pp. 0-822-45815-2 Education/Reading

**Special Committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers
& The Children's Services Division, American Library Association.
Let's Read Together: Books for Family Enjoyment-3rd edition
Chicago: American Library Association, 1981**

This annotated guide to the best books for family sharing includes all sorts of books, from timeless classics to contemporary favorites. The book is suitable for parents and youth educators.

103 pp. 8-389-3096-4 Resource guide/Reading

**Spadorcia, Stephanie. *Looking More Closely at High Interest, Low
Level Texts: Do They Support Comprehension?*
Perspectives (Quarterly), 2001, vol.27, No.2**

Spadorcia's article helps the average layperson who teaches literacy to better understand and evaluate how books are effective in teaching comprehension according to students' abilities. This article is a great resource to help youth educators quickly, albeit superficially, attain the skills needed to choose appropriate works to individualize reading instruction for struggling readers.

Professional article/educator Resource

International Dyslexia Association, pp. 32-33.

**Trelease, Jim. *The New Read-Aloud Handbook*
New York: Penguin Books, 1989**

This is a great book for teaching parents and educators how to read aloud to children of all ages. Besides offering many techniques and hundreds of excellent resources, it also talks about many different experiences parents and educators have had in reading aloud. This book is suitable for parents and youth educators.

290 pp. 0-14-046881-1 Parent/Educator Resource

**Wagstaff, Janiel. *Phonics That Work*
New York: Scholastic, 1999**

This book can help K-3 teachers incorporate pictures and hands-on art lessons into the reading curriculum.

112 pp. 0-590-49624-7 Non-fiction/manual



Designed by Beth Benzaquin