

ISTE21



Encouraging DEI Through Critical Thinking with Literature

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Darshell Silva,
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Sunday, June 27, 2021

DEI Book Club

Suggested Book List





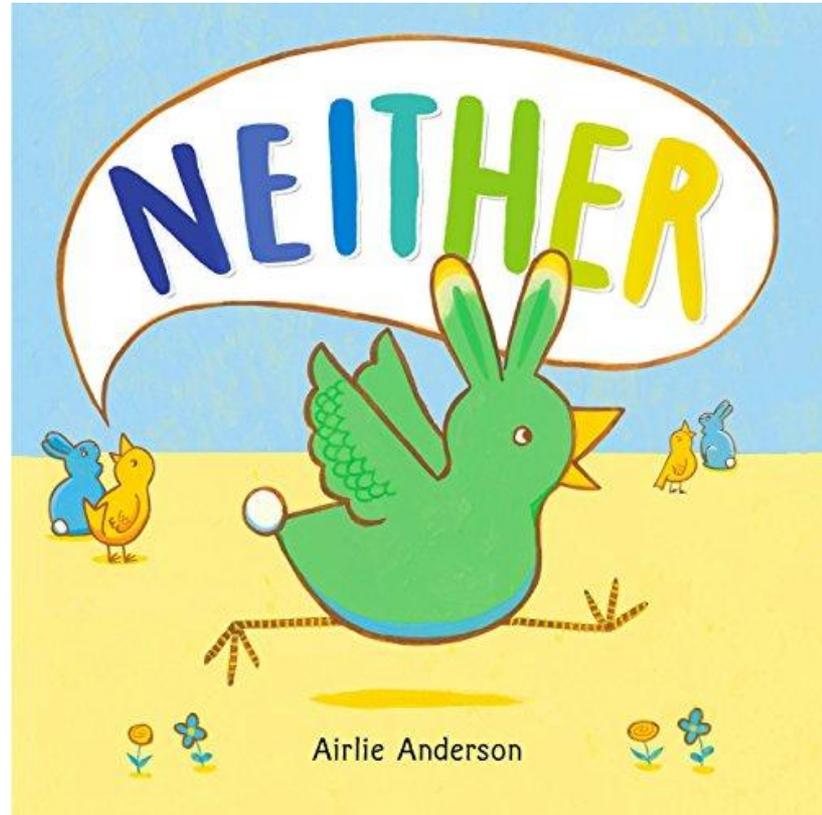
Elementary

Neither by Airlie Anderson

In the Land of This and That, there are only two kinds: blue bunnies and yellow birds. But one day a funny green egg hatches, and a little creature that's not quite a bird and not quite a bunny pops out. It's neither!

Neither tries hard to fit in, but its bird legs aren't good for jumping like the other bunnies, and its fluffy tail isn't good for flapping like the other birds. It sets out to find a new home and discovers a very different place, one with endless colors and shapes and creatures of all kinds. But when a blue bunny and a yellow bird with some hidden differences of their own arrive, it's up to Neither to decide if they are welcome in the Land of All.

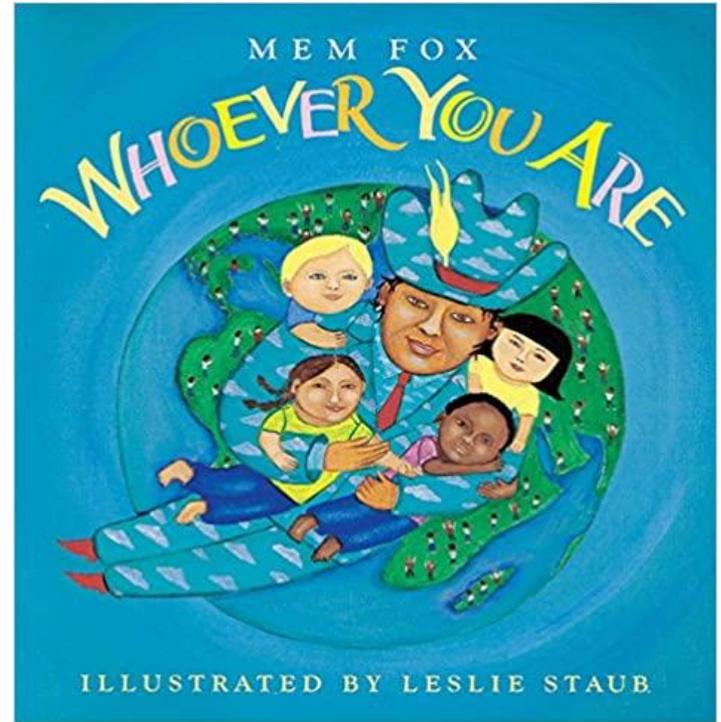
This colorful, simple, and touching story promotes diversity and offers a valuable lesson to the youngest of audiences: it is our differences that unite us.



Whoever You Are by Mem Fox

A celebration of diverse childhoods, and the essential things that make us all the same.

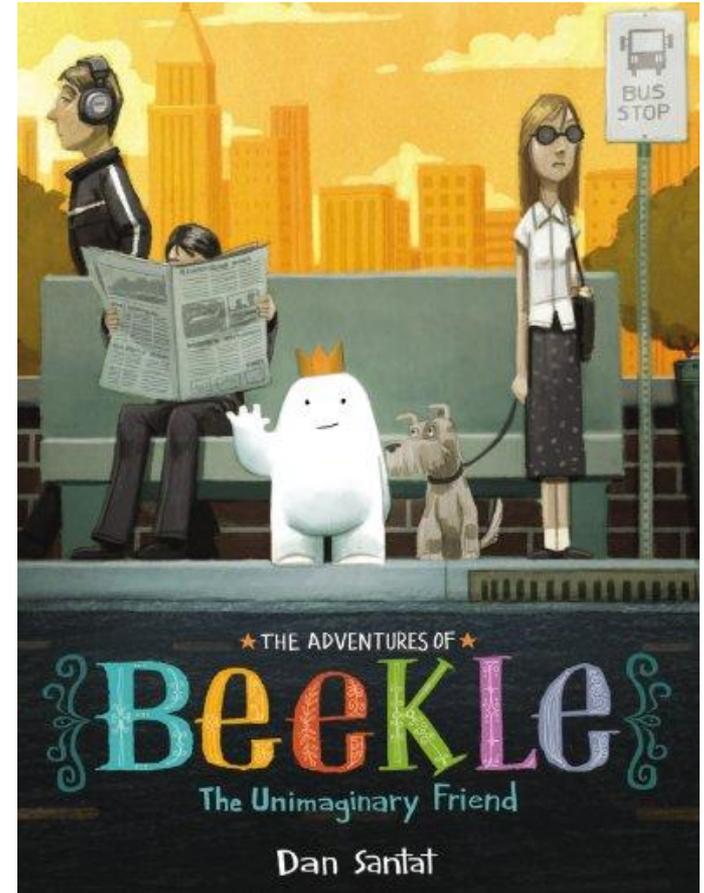
Every day all over the world, children are laughing and crying, playing and learning, eating and sleeping. They may not look the same. They may not speak the same language. Their lives may be quite different from each other. But inside, they are all alike. Stirring words and bold paintings weave their way around our earth, across cultures and generations and remind children to accept differences, to recognize similarities, and--most importantly--to rejoice in both.



The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend by Dan Santat

This magical story begins on an island far away where an imaginary friend is born. He patiently waits his turn to be chosen by a real child, but when he is overlooked time and again, he sets off on an incredible journey to the bustling city, where he finally meets his perfect match and--at long last--is given his special name: Beekle.

The #1 New York Times bestselling and award-winning author and illustrator Dan Santat--creator of *After the Fall* and *Are We There Yet?*--combines classic storytelling with breathtaking art in an unforgettable tale about friendship, imagination, and the courage to find one's place in the world.



Listening with My Heart: A story of kindness and self-compassion by Gabi Garcia

We talk to kids a lot about how to be friends to others. Not much about how to be friends to themselves.

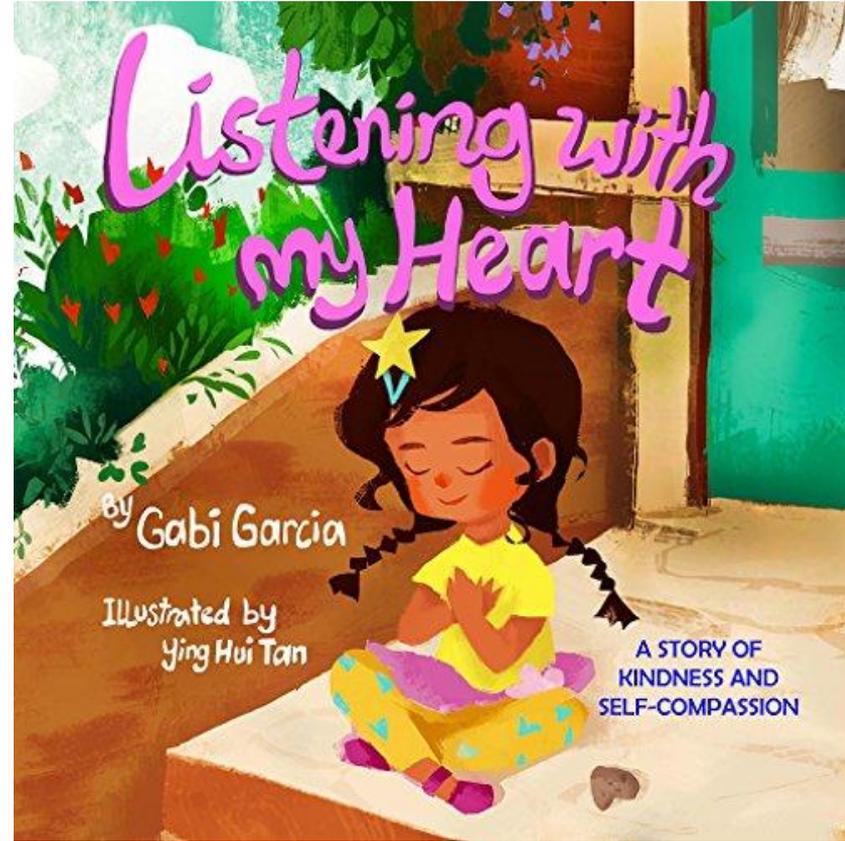
Yet, positive self-talk and self-acceptance help build emotional resilience, happiness, and well-being.

Your child can follow along as Esperanza learns the importance of being a friend to herself!

Listening with my Heart also touches on the universal themes of friendship, empathy, and kindness. Includes kid-friendly mindfulness and self-compassion activities.

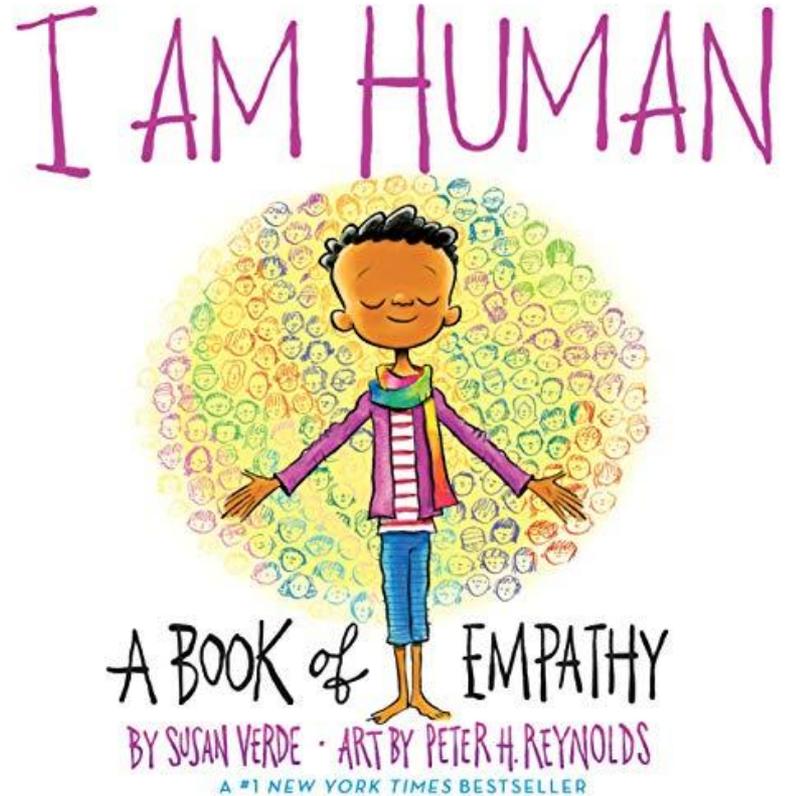
A wonderful addition to any home or school social-emotional library! FREE resources to accompany this book can be found at <http://bit.ly/gabigarciabooksheart>.

(Available in Spanish as Escuchando Con Mi Corazon).



I Am Human: A Book of Empathy by Susan Verde

From the bestselling team that created *I Am Yoga* and *I Am Peace* comes a hopeful celebration of the human family, which affirms that although we may make mistakes, we can make good choices by acting with compassion and having empathy for others and ourselves.

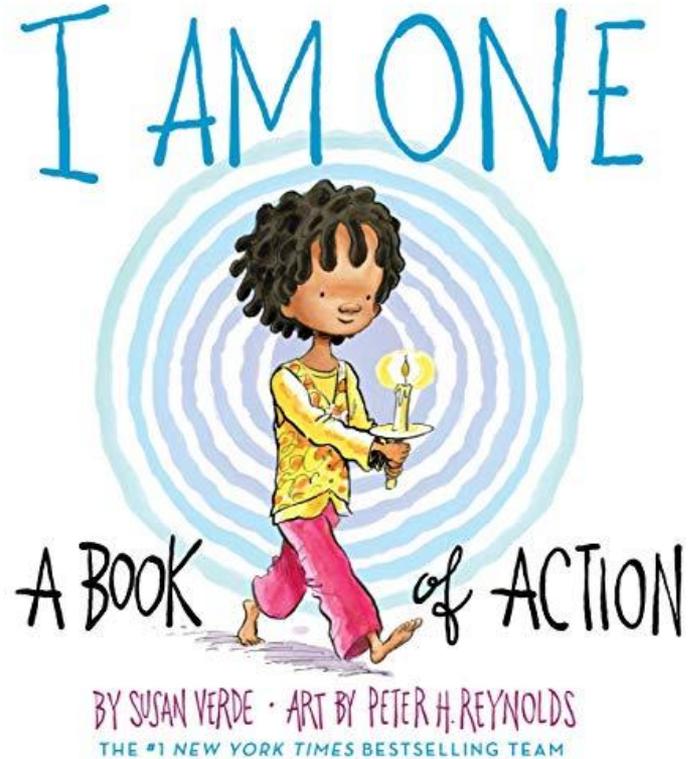


I Am One: A Book of Action by Susan Verde

One seed to start a garden, one note to start a melody, one brick to start breaking down walls: Every movement and moment of change starts with purpose, with intention, with one. With me. With you.

From the #1 New York Times bestselling team behind *I Am Yoga*, *I Am Peace*, *I Am Human*, and *I Am Love* comes a powerful call to action, encouraging each reader to raise their voice, extend a hand, and take that one first step to start something beautiful and move toward a better world.

Includes a guided meditation and self-reflection activity.



Seeds and Trees: A children's book about the power of words by Brandon Walden

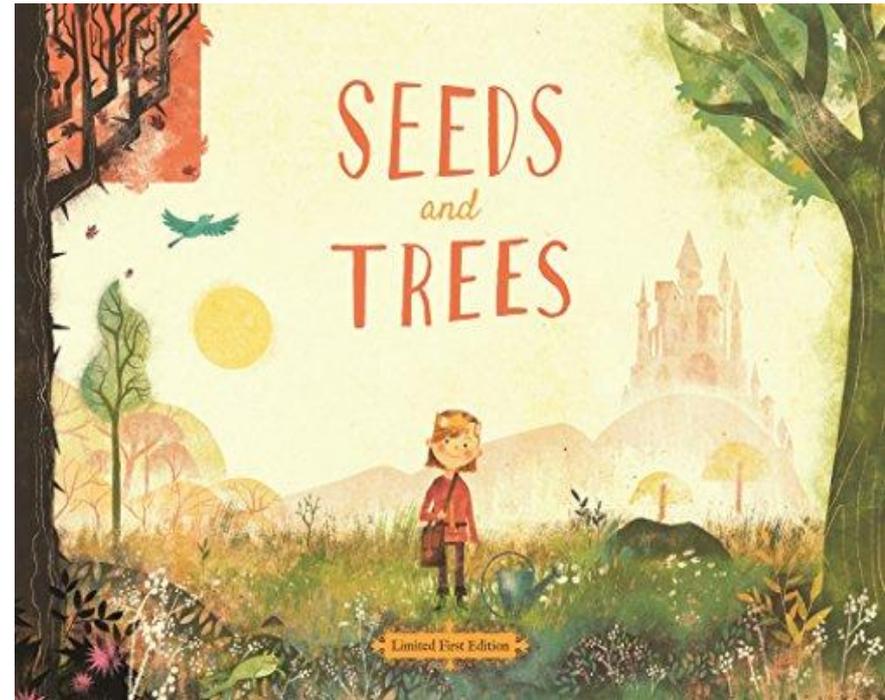
Words are powerful. They can hurt or they can heal.

In *Seeds and Trees*, discover a young prince who gathers seeds both green and dark from those he encounters, and then gifts them forward. He faithfully plants and waters all those seeds daily, but comes to realize that the dark trees harm the green ones. With the help of a kind friend he discovers he can cut down, uproot, and then replace those dark trees with green seeds, creating a beautiful vibrant garden.

He had one special friend who always spoke true, words filled with candor as good friends will do. She never spoke harshly and never spoke lies. She always spoke lovingly; with gentle replies. *Grow Your Own Green Garden*

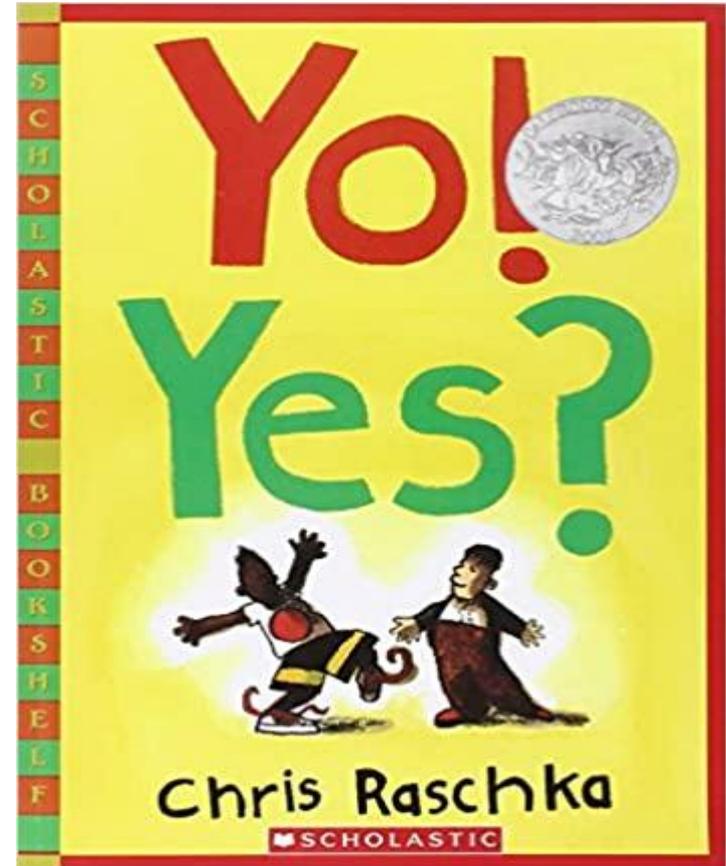
All of us have received bad seeds throughout our life. However, it is our sincere hope that the words and beautiful illustrations in *Seeds and Trees* will guide you to and through a process that will bring you hope, encouragement and freedom. We believe words are powerful. They can hurt or they can heal.

Be careful what you water, for it will surely grow.



Yo! Yes? by Chris Raschka

This Caldecott Honor classic is a simple yet important story about friendship. Two kids meet on a street. "Yo!" says one. "Yes?" says the other. And so begins a conversation that turns strangers into friends. With vibrant illustrations, Chris Raschka's rhythmic read-aloud is a celebration of differences -- and how it just takes a few words to overcome them. This 1993 Caldecott Award-winning classic is more relevant than ever in our divided world.





Middle Grade

Clean Getaway by Nick Stone

How to Go on an Unplanned Road Trip with Your Grandma:

Grab a Suitcase: Prepacked from the big spring break trip that got CANCELLED.

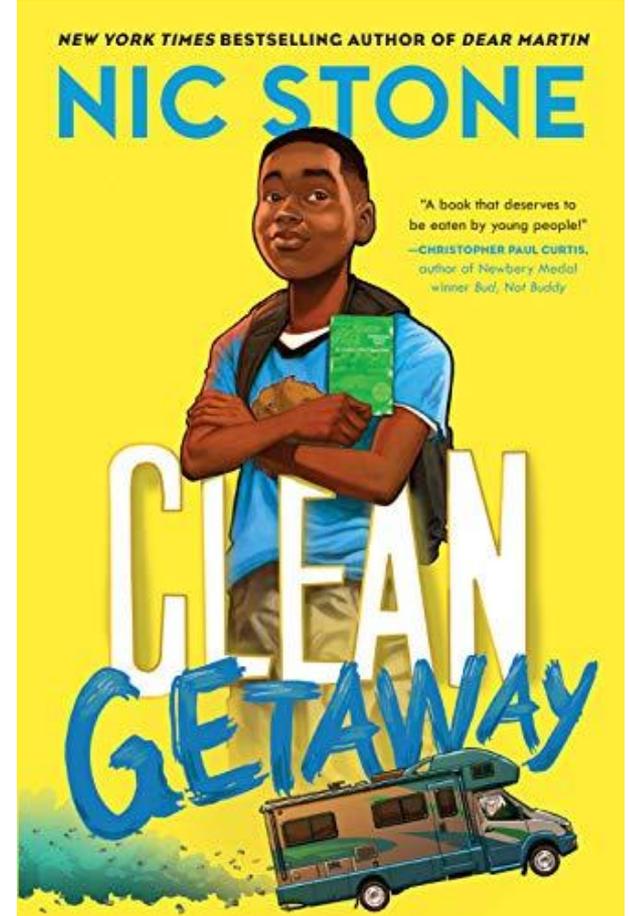
Fasten Your Seatbelt: G'ma's never conventional, so this trip won't be either.

Use the Green Book: G'ma's most treasured possession. It holds history, memories, and most important, the way home.

What Not to Bring:

A Cell Phone: Avoid contact with Dad at all costs. Even when G'ma starts acting stranger than usual.

Set against the backdrop of the segregation history of the American South, take a trip with this New York Times bestseller and an eleven-year-old boy who is about to discover that the world hasn't always been a welcoming place for kids like him, and things aren't always what they seem--his G'ma included.

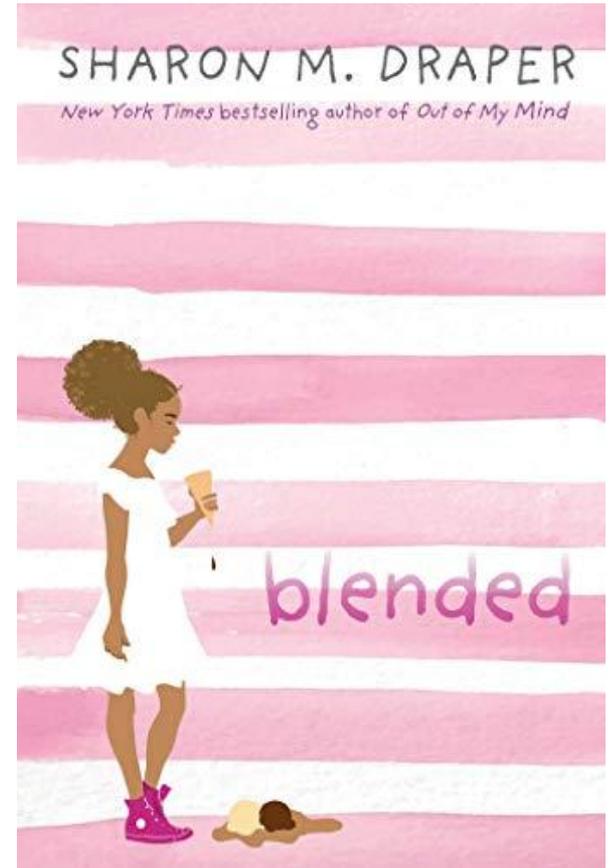


Blended by Sharon Draper

Eleven-year-old Isabella's parents are divorced, so she has to switch lives every week: One week she's Isabella with her dad, his girlfriend Anastasia, and her son Darren living in a fancy house where they are one of the only black families in the neighborhood. The next week she's Izzy with her mom and her boyfriend John-Mark in a small, not-so-fancy house that she loves.

Because of this, Isabella has always felt pulled between two worlds. And now that her parents are divorced, it seems their fights are even worse, and they're always about HER. And she is beginning to realize that being split between Mom and Dad involves more than switching houses, switching nicknames, switching backpacks: it's also about switching identities. Her dad is black, her mom is white, and strangers are always commenting: "You're so exotic!" "You look so unusual." "But what are you really?" She knows what they're really saying: "You don't look like your parents." "You're different." "What race are you really?" And when her parents, who both get engaged at the same time, get in their biggest fight ever, Isabella doesn't just feel divided, she feels ripped in two. What does it mean to be half white or half black? To belong to half mom and half dad? And if you're only seen as half of this and half of that, how can you ever feel whole?

It seems like nothing can bring Isabella's family together again—until the worst thing happens. Isabella and Darren are stopped by the police. A cell phone is mistaken for a gun. And shots are fired.

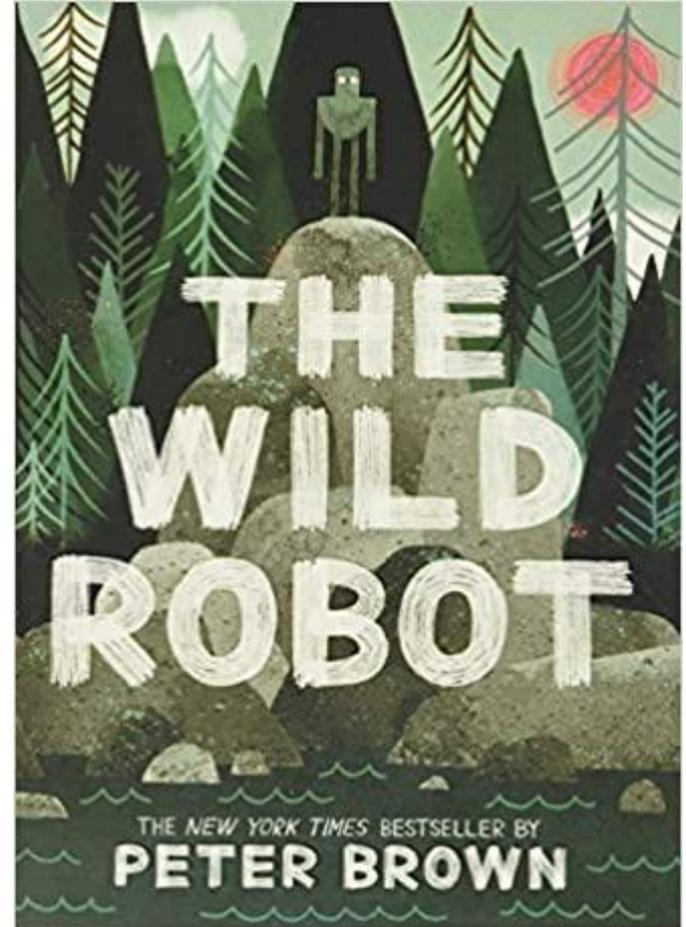


The Wild Robot by Peter Brown

Can a robot survive in the wilderness?

When robot Roz opens her eyes for the first time, she discovers that she is all alone on a remote, wild island. She has no idea how she got there or what her purpose is--but she knows she needs to survive. After battling a violent storm and escaping a vicious bear attack, she realizes that her only hope for survival is to adapt to her surroundings and learn from the island's unwelcoming animal inhabitants.

As Roz slowly befriends the animals, the island starts to feel like home--until, one day, the robot's mysterious past comes back to haunt her.

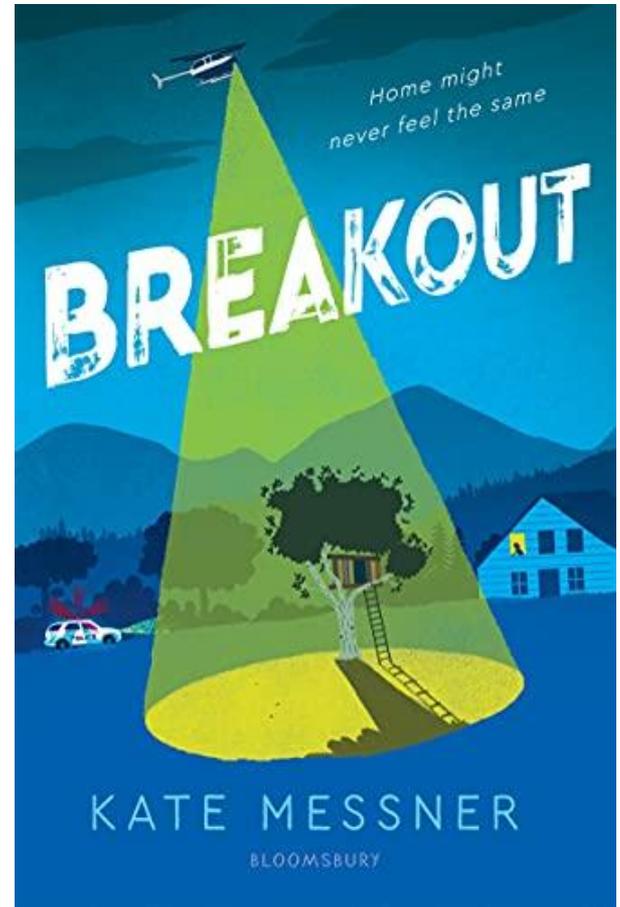


Breakout by Kate Messner

Told in letters, poems, text messages, news stories, and comics--a series of documents Nora collects for the Wolf Creek Community Time Capsule Project--Breakout is a thrilling story that will leave readers thinking about who's really welcome in the places we call home.

Nora Tucker is looking forward to summer vacation in Wolf Creek--two months of swimming, popsicles, and brushing up on her journalism skills for the school paper. But when two inmates break out of the town's maximum security prison, everything changes. Doors are locked, helicopters fly over the woods, and police patrol the school grounds. Worst of all, everyone is on edge, and fear brings out the worst in some people Nora has known her whole life. Even if the inmates are caught, she worries that home might never feel the same.

A Mighty Girl Best Book of the Year



Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks by Jason Reynolds

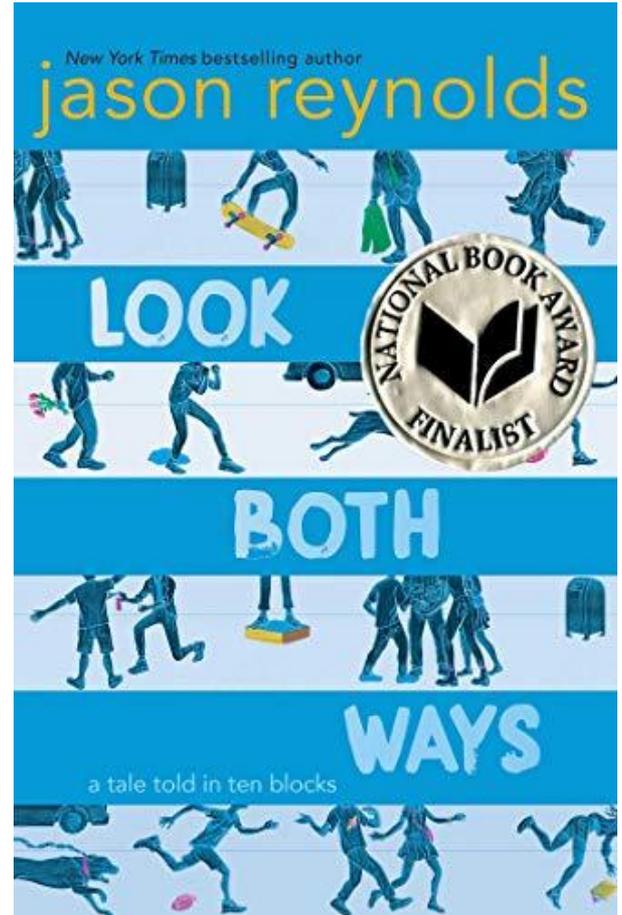
From National Book Award finalist and #1 New York Times bestselling author Jason Reynolds comes a novel told in ten blocks, showing all the different directions kids' walks home can take.

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy—

Talking about boogers. - Stealing pocket change. - Skateboarding. - Wiping out. - Braving up. - Executing complicated handshakes. - Planning an escape. - Making jokes. - Lotioning up. - Finding comfort.

But mostly, too busy walking home.

Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life.



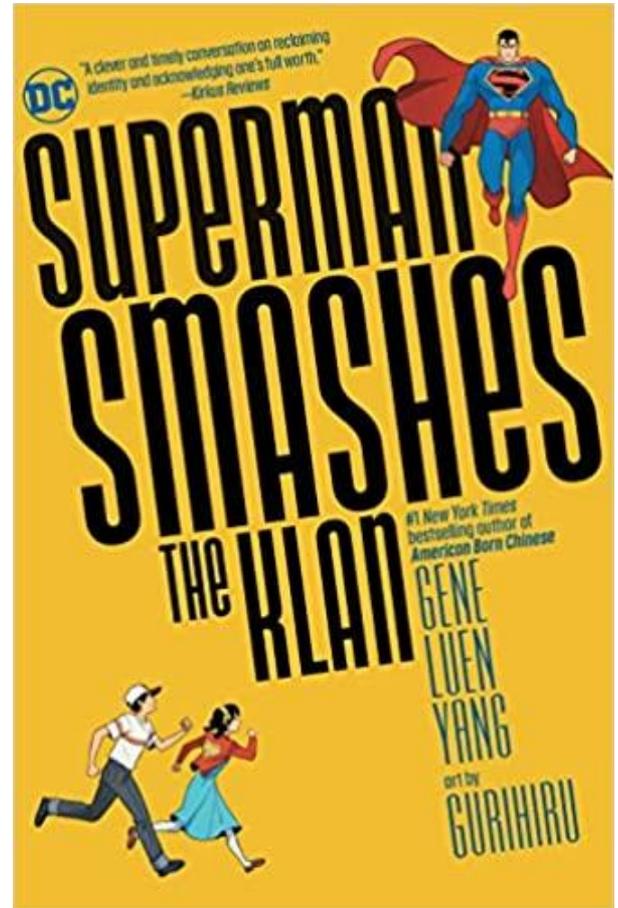
High School



Superman Smashes the Klan by Gene Luen Yang

The year is 1946. Teenagers Roberta and Tommy Lee just moved with their parents from Chinatown to the center of Metropolis, home to the famous hero, Superman. Tommy makes friends quickly, while Roberta pines for home. Then one night, the family awakens to find their house surrounded by the Klan of the Fiery Cross! Superman leaps into action, but his exposure to a mysterious green rock has left him weak. Can Roberta and Tommy help him smash the Klan?

Inspired by the 1940s Superman radio serial "Clan of the Fiery Cross," New York Times bestselling author Gene Luen Yang (American Born Chinese, Boxers and Saints, The Terrifics, New Super-Man) and artist Gurihiru (Avatar: The Last Airbender, The Unstoppable Wasp) bring us a personal retelling of two different immigrants finding ways to belong.



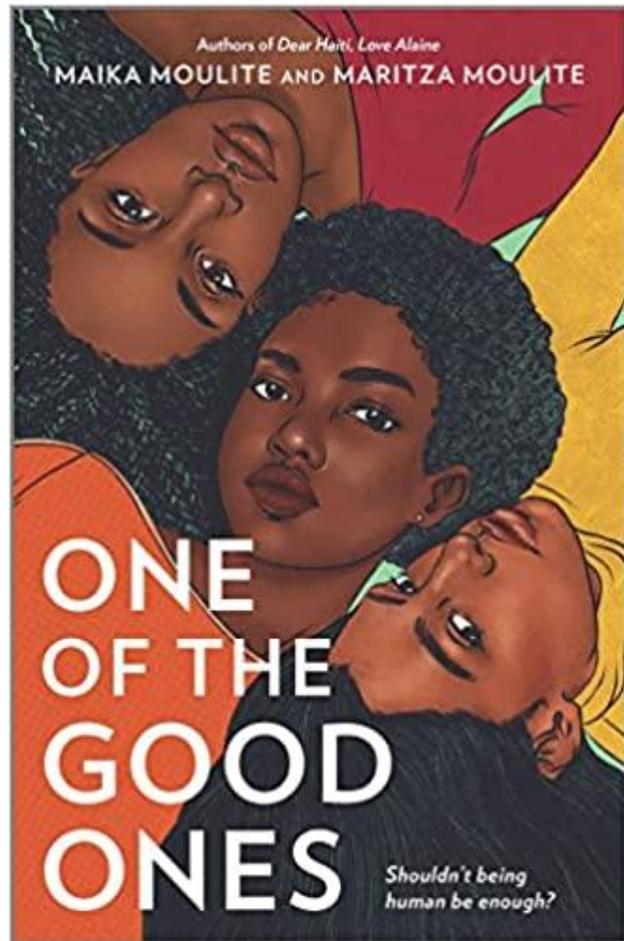
One of the Good Ones by Maika Moulite

ISN'T BEING HUMAN ENOUGH?

When teen social activist and history buff Kezi Smith is killed under mysterious circumstances after attending a social justice rally, her devastated sister Happi and their family are left reeling in the aftermath. As Kezi becomes another immortalized victim in the fight against police brutality, Happi begins to question the idealized way her sister is remembered. Perfect. Angelic.

One of the good ones.

Even as the phrase rings wrong in her mind—why are only certain people deemed worthy to be missed?—Happi and her sister Genny embark on a journey to honor Kezi in their own way, using an heirloom copy of *The Negro Motorist Green Book* as their guide. But there's a twist to Kezi's story that no one could've ever expected—one that will change everything all over again.

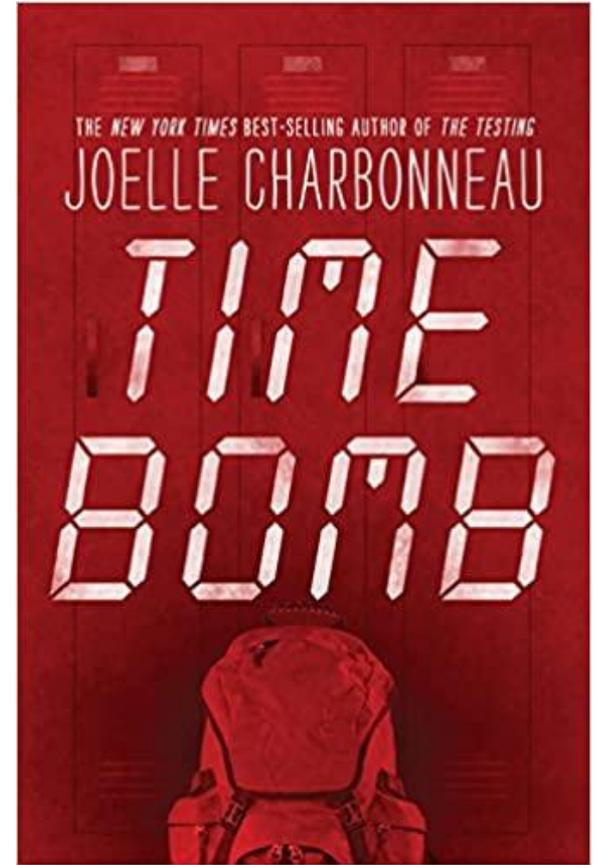


Time Bomb by Joelle Charbonneau

A congressman's daughter who has to be perfect. A star quarterback with a secret. A guy who's tired of being ignored. A clarinet player who's done trying to fit in. An orphaned rebel who wants to teach someone a lesson. A guy who wants people to see him, not his religion.

They couldn't be more different, but before the morning's over, they'll all be trapped in a school that's been rocked by a bombing. When they hear that someone inside is the bomber, they'll also be looking to one another for answers.

Told from multiple perspectives, *Time Bomb* will keep readers guessing about who the bomber could be—and what motivated such drastic action.



Skyhunter (Skyhunter Duology, 1) by Marie Lu

A broken world.

An overwhelming evil.

A team of warriors ready to strike back.

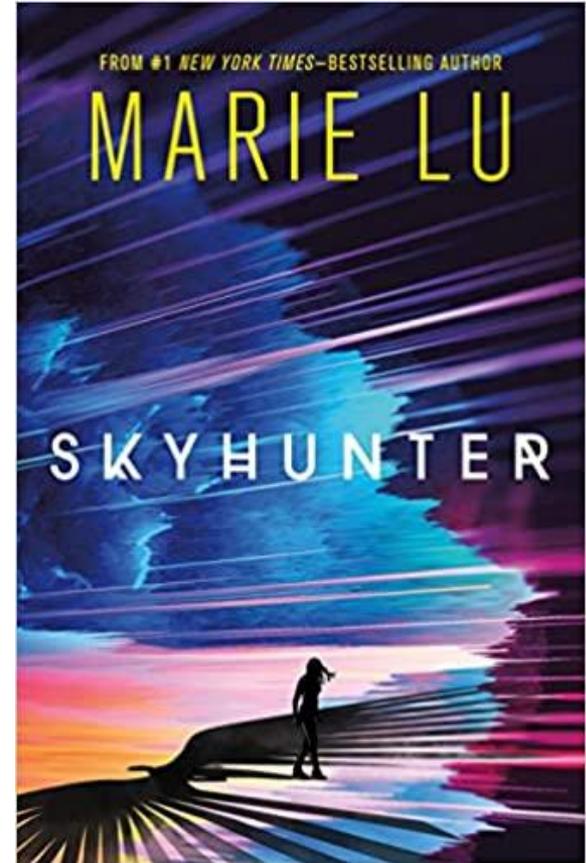
Talin is a Striker, a member of an elite fighting force that stands as the last defense for the only free nation in the world: Mara.

A refugee, Talin knows firsthand the horrors of the Federation, a world-dominating war machine responsible for destroying nation after nation with its terrifying army of mutant beasts known only as Ghosts.

But when a mysterious prisoner is brought from the front to Mara's capital, Talin senses there's more to him than meets the eye. Is he a spy from the Federation? What secrets is he hiding?

Only one thing is clear: Talin is ready to fight to the death alongside her fellow Strikers for the only homeland she has left . . . with or without the boy who might just be the weapon to save—or destroy—they all.

Loyalty is life.

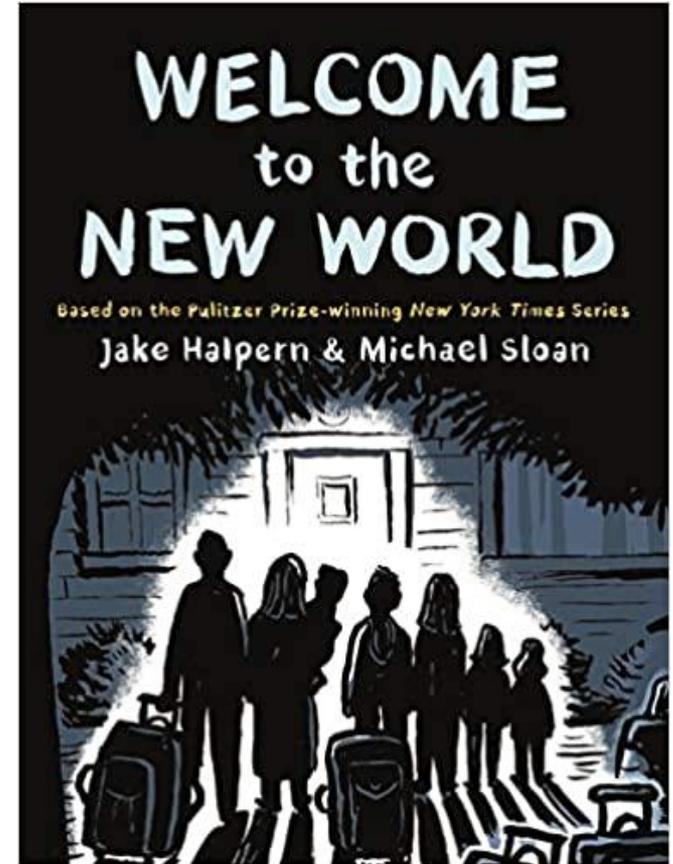


Welcome to the New World by Jake Halpern

After escaping a Syrian prison, Ibrahim Aldabaan and his family fled the country to seek protection in America. Among the few refugees to receive visas, they finally landed in JFK airport on November 8, 2016, Election Day. The family had reached a safe harbor, but woke up to the world of Donald Trump and a Muslim ban that would sever them from the grandmother, brothers, sisters, and cousins stranded in exile in Jordan.

Welcome to the New World tells the Aldabaans' story. Resettled in Connecticut with little English, few friends, and even less money, the family of seven strive to create something like home. As a blur of language classes, job-training programs, and the fearsome first days of high school (with hijab) give way to normalcy, the Aldabaans are lulled into a sense of security. A white van cruising slowly past the house prompts some unease, which erupts into full terror when the family receives a death threat and is forced to flee and start all over yet again. The America in which the Aldabaans must make their way is by turns kind and ignorant, generous and cruel, uplifting and heartbreaking.

Delivered with warmth and intimacy, Jake Halpern and Michael Sloan's Welcome to the New World is a wholly original view of the immigrant experience, revealing not only the trials and successes of one family but showing the spirit of a town and a country, for good and bad.



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