

2017 NOTABLE BOOKS FOR A GLOBAL SOCIETY:

Empathy, Caring, and Understanding from Multiple Perspectives



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THE NOTABLE BOOKS for a Global Society Committee selects a collection of multicultural books that address issues from around the world and are available for school-aged students in K-12th grade. After careful consideration of over 300 submitted texts, the committee chose 25 winners published in 2016, and we feature those selections in this article. As we pondered our final decisions during the annual National Council of Teachers of English meeting in Atlanta this past November, our deliberations were informed by speakers we heard at the conference. In Friday's general panel session (NCTE, 2016, Voices of Advocacy) moderated by Joan Kaywell, participating authors Ibtisam Barakat, e.E. Charlton-Trujillo, Sharon M. Draper, Meg Medina, G. Neri, and Jason Reynolds expressed their ideas about advocacy, inclusion, and building empathy

through literature. Their passionate and unique views on how important it is to promote change through literature, how authors make meaning, and how readers make meaning with their stories sparked ideas that resonated with us as we selected the books you find highlighted in this collection.

In our review of books for and about children and people around the world, we were struck by information and stories most of us had not previously heard or known. We believe history is best learned from a variety of perspectives (Lewison, Flint & Van Sluys, 2002), and we know children's literature must strive to reach various voices to narrate previously untold stories the world should hear. Emotional literacy matters, but only when considering sociocultural and political contexts (Boler, 1999). Hearing untold stories can help us rethink our fears and mis-

understandings; hearing those untold stories can help to build understanding and empathy for all people. As Walter Dean Myers (2014) said so well, “Books transmit values. They explore our common humanity.” We need books by and about all people to teach us about who we are and who we might become.

An important part of the mission of NBGS is to promote understanding across lines of culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and values. As bombs explode and refugees move to new lands around the world, our committee seeks to promote empathy and understanding for cultural differences now more than ever. It is our hope that in reading about a variety of cultures, we will all begin to see cultural similarities as well as cultural differences. We truly believe both similarities and differences can help us expand who we are as people living in a world that is becoming smaller and more easily accessible for all and ultimately make us better citizens of the world.

We believe this list will help you choose quality literature for your classroom and begin to have meaningful discussions with your students. We supplement that literature by also offering Teaching Suggestions, websites, videos, and Related Books to help you negotiate the wondering and questions of your students and dig into global issues that matter.

2017 Notable Books for a Global Society Selections



Barakat, Ibtisam. (2016). *Balcony on the moon: Coming of age in Palestine*. New York, NY: Margaret Ferguson Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux/Macmillan. 240 pp. Gr. 8-12. Memoir.

This memoir traces the life of Barakat under Israeli occupation and persecution from 1972-1981. It chronicles the inspirations that created her love for education and writing, her father’s illness and her mother’s decision to further her

own education. Barakat strongly articulates the tensions of occupation as an ever-present backdrop.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Conduct an inquiry into the lives of Americans who migrated in the 1930s in a discussion of the website <http://get.smarter.com/qa/history/did-american-migrant-workers-1930> and <https://prezi.com/lifz0vkwk-6bx/migrant-workers-of-california-in-the-1930s/> with the lives of people in Palestine and Israel to discern how people are able to make lives for themselves in extraordinary times.
- A jackdaw is a personal archive of primary source documents. Introduce the Palestinian conflict by gathering resources to create jackdaws and lead an inquiry into various aspects related to migration and employment.
- Connect past wars to the present day and the current “War on Terror.” Compare and contrast the wars and their impacts to see who is suffering and who is not and whose voice is heard and who is being silenced.

Related Books:

- Abdelrazaq, L. (2015). *Baddawi*. Charlottesville, VA: Just World Books.
- Abdel Fattah, R. (2008). *Where the streets had a name*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press.
- Barakat, I. (2007). *Tasting the sky*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Bradley, K. (2015). *The war that saved my life*. New York, NY: Penguin Young Readers Group.
- Laird, E. & Nimr, S. (2003). *A little piece of ground*. New York, NY: Haymarket Books.
- Ryan, M. R. (2015). *Echo*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

Submitted by Seemi Azziz



Bruchac, Joseph. (2016). *Talking leaves*. New York, NY: Dial Books/Penguin Group. 256 pp. Gr. 4 and up. Historical Fiction.

Joseph Bruchac tells the story of Sequoyah, the creator of the Cherokee syllabary, through the eyes of Sequoyah's son, Jesse. Sequoyah realized the power and importance of keeping one's tribal language alive. He observed that when a language cannot be written and shared, then an alternative language is forced onto people. Bruchac weaves details of Cherokee customs, stories, and life while showing how the Cherokee language came to be written, a valuable perspective on Cherokee history and the life of Sequoyah.

Teaching Suggestions:

Another look at this remarkable man is found in James Rumford's *Sequoyah, the Cherokee Man Who Gave His People Writing*. In this bilingual picture book one can compare the English words with the beautifully scripted Cherokee words.

Compare different forms of writing: Both books, Bruchac's *Talking Leaves* and Rumford's picture book, *Sequoyah*, celebrate literacy and the creation of a written language. Calligraphy, or the art of drawing letters, is an important part of the Islamic culture and also two other cultures, Japanese and Chinese.

Compare this form of writing to the tiny pictures that are part of Japanese and Chinese writing. In Ed Young's *Beyond the Great Mountains, a Visual Poem About China*, Ed Young describes the towering mountains and lush valleys of China while showing the reader how the written words first began as tiny pictures.

- Have students use calligraphy to create a visual form of a favorite poem or write one's name in a different language—Cherokee, Chinese, Japanese, or Arabic—or their own created syllabary!

Related Books:

- Carle, E. & Kazuo I. (2001). *Where are you going? To see my friend!* New York, NY: Orchard Books.
- Jacobson, D., Ito, S., & Tsuboi, M. (2016). *Are you an echo? The lost poetry of Misuzu Kaneko*. Illus. T. Hajjui. Seattle, WA: Chin Music Press.
- Rumford, J. (2004). *Sequoyah, the Cherokee man who gave his people writing*. (A. S. Huckaby, Trans.). Boston, MA:

Houghton Mifflin Co.

Rumford, J. (2008). *Silent music, a story of Baghdad*. New York, NY: Roaring Brook Press.

Young, E. (2005). *Beyond the great mountains: A visual poem about China*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books.

Submitted by Nancy Bo Flood



Bryan, Ashley. (2016). *Freedom over me: Eleven slaves, their lives and dreams brought to life*. New York, NY: A Caitlyn Dlouhy Book/Atheneum Books/Simon & Schuster. 56 pp. Gr 2 and up. Historical Fiction.

Bryan breathes life into the accounts of eleven slaves from a plantation estate auction in 1828. The historical record lists only their first names and selling prices. He gives each slave a poetic biography that respectfully honors their lives with African names, genders, ages, occupations, talents, hopes, and dreams of freedom. This book is richly illustrated, depicting each slave with two portraits: one embedded with facsimiles of historical documents in collage-style, and the other showing their dreams.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Using a Venn Diagram, have students chart the slaves' wishes for freedoms on one side and the students' freedoms on the other. In the center of the graphic organizer have students list the freedoms they have in common. Based on these, have students write dreams for their lives. Once that draft is complete have them write their dreams in a poetic style such as a free verse. Next have students draw self-portraits while experiencing their dreams.
- It was against the laws of the times for slaves to learn to read and write. Why do you believe slaves were not allowed to acquire literacy skills? How would you secretly

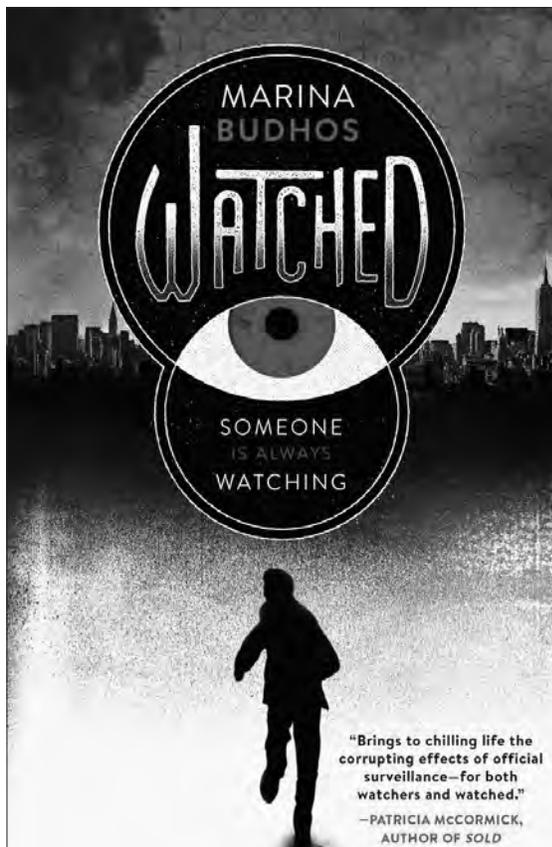
teach someone your age to read and write? For an example of a slave who becomes literate, read *Ben and the Emancipation Proclamation* (Sherman, 2009).

- Discuss, respond, and write connections to the following quote from a previously-owned slave: “No day dawns for the slave, nor is it looked for. It is all night--night forever.” Go to the following website for the source of the quote and more details about slavery. <http://www.crf-usa.org/black-history-month/slavery-in-the-american-south>

Related Books:

- Burg, A. (2016). *Unbound: A novel in verse*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Sherman, P. (2009). *Ben and the Emancipation Proclamation*. Illus. F. Cooper. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Weatherford, C. (2016). *Freedom in Congo Square*. Illus. R. G. Christie. New York, NY: Little Bee Books.
- Woelfle, G. (2016). *Answering the cry for freedom: Stories of African Americans and the American Revolution*. Illus. R. G. Christie. Honesdale, PA: Calkins Creek.

Submitted by Deborah Wooten



Budhos, Marina (2016). *Watched: Someone is always watching*. New York, NY: Wendy Lamb Books/Random House. 272 pp. Gr. 9-12. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

This fast moving young adult novel is based on the life of a Bangladeshi Muslim teen named Naeem living in the United States. Naeem is caught shoplifting and then coerced to work with the police to become the eyes and ears for the authorities against his own people.

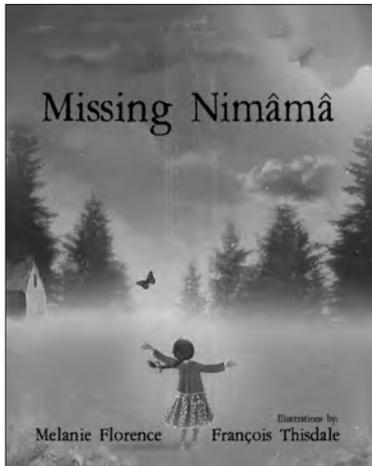
Teaching Suggestions:

- To address the sensitive issue of surveillance on which this novel focusses, educators might introduce the topic with the general overarching themes of right to privacy and safe spaces. Then conduct an inquiry project that explores issues of surveillance by going to sources at <http://www.marinabudhos.com/books/watched/watched-resources>
- Keeping in view the present political scenario and the current War on Terror, the following questions might be addressed during class discussions.
 - What are our rights as human beings living in a free country?
 - What are our rights as citizens?
 - Why is surveillance a controversial issue?
 - Who is conducting surveillance and on whom and why?
 - Who are Muslims?
- Conduct an inquiry into voices of people at *Informant: NYPD Paid Me to 'Bait' Muslims*, Matt Apuzzo and Adam Goldman—Oct, 23 2012 and *In our Own Words: Narratives of South Asian New Yorkers Affected by Racial and Religious Profiling*, March 2012. What new insights do students share in hearing of other voices with similar experiences?

Related Books:

- Budhos, M. (2007). *Ask me no questions*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books/Simon & Schuster.
- Halahmy, M. (2015). *Hidden*. New York, NY: Holiday House.

Submitted by Seemi Azziz



Florence, Melanie. (2016). *Missing Nimâmâ*. Illus. François Thisdale. Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada: Clockwise Press. 32 pp. Gr. K and up. Picture book, Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

Kateri, a young Cree girl, is motherless and being raised by her grandmother, *Nobkom*. Kateri's story is based on the stories of the missing indigenous women of Canada. Told in alternating voices, the absent mother follows her daughter as she grows, enters school, and becomes a mother herself. Florence's lyrical, free-verse text and Thisdale's watercolor images portray the emotional journey of children coping with the loss of a parent.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Have students discuss ways discrimination and violence can take away one's parents. What happens when a country's legal system (courts and police) does not provide equal protection? What are examples of situations in the United States when people have been treated unfairly because of being a minority, a person of color, or having particular religious beliefs?
- Read these titles and allow children to discover some of the many reasons why parents and children become separated: *Missing Nimâmâ*, *Somos como las nubes—We are like the clouds*, *Two White Rabbits*, or *Bone Sparrow*.

Related Books:

Argueta, J. (2016) *Somos como las nubes: We are like the clouds*. Illus. Alfonso Ruano. (E. Amado, Trans.). Toronto, Canada: Groundwood Books.

Buitrago, J. (2015). *Two white rabbits*. Toronto, ON, Canada:

da: Groundwood Books.

Hitchcock, B. (2016). *The smell of other people's houses*. New York, NY: Wendy Lamb Books/Random House.

Submitted by Nancy Bo Flood



Fraillon, Zana. (2016). *Bone sparrow*. New York, NY: Disney Hyperion. 240 pp. Gr. 5 and up. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

Nine-year-old Subhi, the narrator of this story, is a member of the Muslim Rohingya people of Burma. He was born in an Australian refugee camp and has never seen his homeland. His description of the appalling food and living quarters, the enclosed spaces, and the forever-watchful guards create a stark reality of life for him and his family. This novel highlights the predicament of the Rohingya as an invisible people who are being slowly, but surely, ethnically cleansed in Myanmar/Burma. The author uses magical realism as an avenue to make this story thoughtful and available to a wide range of readers.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Explore the use of magic realism in the story.
- Since few sources address the issues that members of the Muslim Rohingya people of Myanmar/Burma face, encourage students to consider some meaningful questions for discussions.
 - Who are the Muslim Rohingya people of Myanmar/Burma?
 - What would compel families to flee their home for other lands?
 - Buddhism is a peaceful religion. What are its teachings and what is causing people to flee

Myanmar/Burma?

- Explore official stances on immigrants and refugees and the various laws that define them. Also explore similarities and differences between the laws in Australia and the United States.
- To explore the refugee predicament further, the following websites may help invite students to take social action:
 - UNICEF (<http://www.unicef.org>) is a strong resource for understanding global issues related to refugee immigration
 - Reform's Book and Backpack Project (<http://refugeechildren.wix.com/refugee-children>) provides insights about social action

Related Books:

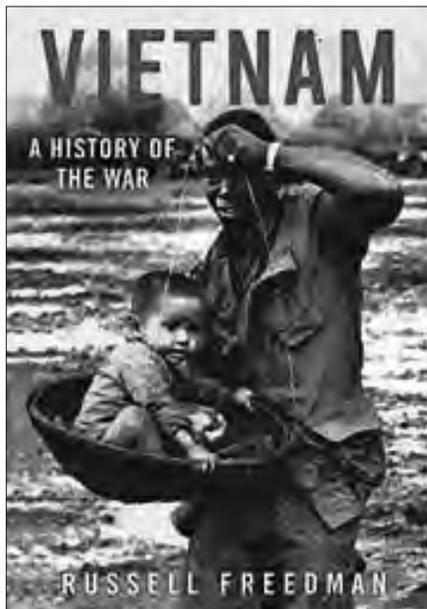
Hough, R. (2015). *Diego's crossing*. New York, NY: Annick Press.

Ryan, M. R. (2015). *Echo*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Sepetys, R. (2016). *Salt to the sea*. New York, NY: Philomel/Penguin Group.

Tonatiuh, D. (2013). *Pancho rabbit and the coyote: A migrant's tale*. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams.

Submitted by Seemi Azziz



Freedman, Russell. (2016). *Vietnam: A history of the war*. New York, NY: Holiday House. 150 pp. Gr. 8-12. Nonfiction.

Set in the context of the life and education of Ho Chi Minh, Freedman chronicles the alliance between the United States and Vietnam during World War II and recounts the evolution from a unified country to a divided and then modernizing one. Freedman provides detail of the changing leadership in South Vietnam, the destruction of families and villages, and the precipitation of waves of refugees fleeing the South. Archival illustrations and photographs, a timeline, and source notes contribute information to the complex events of thirty years of war in the 20th century in the ancient country.

Teaching Suggestions:

- To better understand this book, provide a context for reading and learning about Vietnam with websites such as https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_s-bd0E44uA and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38MabwCUj8Y> and talk about the values of the authors of the videos that are suggested in the clips.
- Stop and talk with students during reading, and develop a timeline of events as you move through the book. Discuss with students who is represented in the text and whose voices are silent.
- Learn more about Russell Freedman at http://www.librarypoint.org/russell_freedman and <https://www.neh.gov/about/awards/national-humanities-medals/russell-freedman>. Discuss themes that appear in his books and how his body of work reflects his values.

Related Books:

Caputo, P. (2005). *10,000 days of thunder: A history of the Vietnam War*. New York, NY:

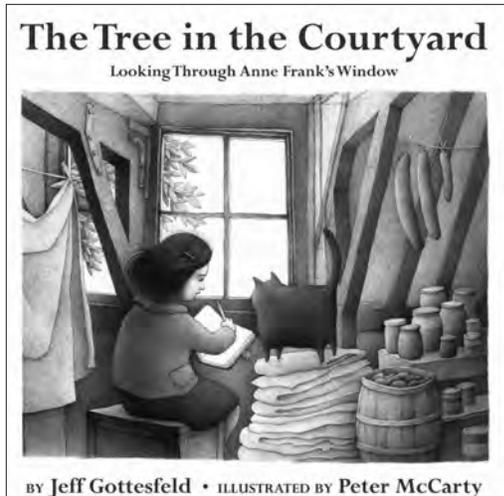
Atheneum Books for Young Readers/Simon & Schuster.

Lai, T. (2011). *Inside out & back again*. New York, NY: HarperCollins/Harper.

Skrypuch, M. F., with Ho, T. (2016). *Adrift at sea: A Vietnamese boy's story of survival*. Illus. B. Dienes. Toronto, ON: Pajama Press.

Warren, A. (2004). *Escape from Saigon: How a Vietnam War orphan became an American boy*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Submitted by Sandip Wilson



Gottesfeld, Jeff. (2016) *The tree in the courtyard*. Illus. by Peter McCarty. New York, NY: Knopf Books for Young Readers. 40 pp. Gr. 5 and up. Picture book.

The story of Anne Frank is known far and wide, but it is rarely told with such illustrious prose and artwork as in this picture book. The chestnut tree outside Anne Frank's hidden apartment window endures the harshness of winter and passing time. Like the reader, the tree can do nothing but watch as various atrocities befall Anne and her family. The chestnut tree lives on, however, long after Anne Frank and her family are gone. The seeds of the tree are now spread throughout the world, much like Anne's story. Gottesfeld tells this infamously tragic story with tenderness and ends it with hope.

Teaching Suggestions:

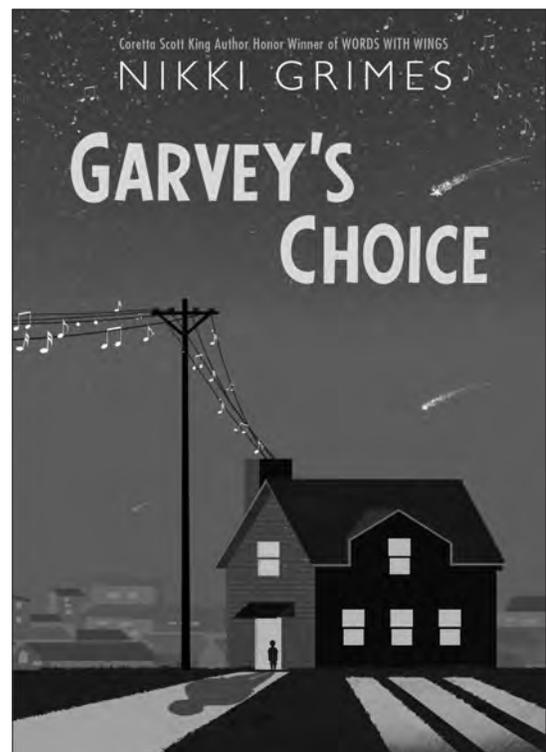
- Use the recommended supplementary books in a meaningful unit to facilitate empathy and provide multiple formats from which to embark upon learning about conditions in World War II and the Holocaust.
- A phrase like, "her bare boughs etched a lattice against the pale blue sky" is a stunning example of how Gottesfeld uses language to paint a picture. Have students keep a journal with examples of how the author uses language to convey meaning and emotion. Then, encourage students use similar examples of poetic language in their own writing.
- Have students discuss the use of metaphor in this book. The chestnut tree lived outside the Anne Frank House for 172 years. Seeds from the tree are now planted in

many places. How does this reflect Anne Frank's memory and how we have come to know her? How do descriptions of the tree compare to ways Anne Frank and her family are described?

Related Books:

- Bunting, E., & Gammell, S. (1989). *Terrible things: An allegory of the Holocaust*. Illus. S. Gammell. Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society.
- Hoestlandt, J., Polizzotti, M., Kang, J., & Edelstein, G. M. (1995). *Star of fear, star of hope*. New York, NY: Walker Books.
- Roy, J., & Owenson, M. (2016) *Jars of hope: How one woman helped save 2,500 children during the Holocaust*. Illus. M. Owenson. North Mankato, MN: Capstone.

Submitted by Kelly Finan



Grimes, Nikki. (2016). *Garvey's choice*. Honesdale, PA: Wordsong/Boyd's Mills Press. 108 pp. Gr. 4-8. Poetry.

Award-winning poet Nikki Grimes tells the story of Garvey, a preteen boy who loves reading, science, music, and telling jokes. Unfortunately, his father cannot understand why Garvey isn't an athlete like he was, and it causes much angst since Garvey really wants his

father's approval. With the encouragement of his best friend, Garvey joins the chorus, but soon realizes he will need to make a choice. With time, Garvey sees that he made the right choice, and is able to connect with his father through his gift.

Teaching Suggestions:

- In addition to worrying about gaining his father's approval, Garvey is bullied at school. It is through the help of his friend that he begins to take up for himself. Find out more information about bullying. Begin the search by going to <http://lifestyle.howstuffworks.com/family/parenting/tweens-teens/5-strategies-helping-tweens-cope-with-bullying.htm>. Compare the recommended strategies for dealing with bullying to what Garvey actually did. What other suggestions should be kept in mind?
- Garvey felt the most comfortable with himself when singing. Reread the poem in *Garvey's Choice* that explained his trepidation, yet excitement, when he finally decides to audition for the choir. Make connections with other stories, mediums, or texts that highlight people who realized they have musical gifts like Garvey.
- Nikki Grimes writes this entire text in poetic tanka verse, a modern Japanese poetry similar to haiku, however, with two additional lines. For more information about creating the Tanka poem go to <https://www.forwardpoetry.co.uk/tanka-poem.php>. Encourage students to write their own tanka poems highlighting personal experiences, much like the main character Garvey does throughout this poignant text.

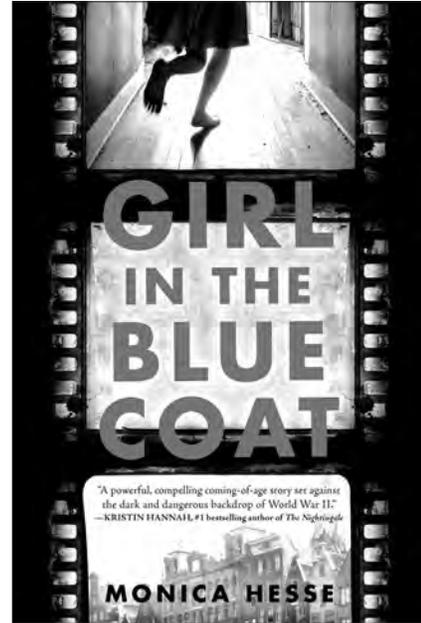
Related Books:

Andrews, T. (2015). *Trombone Shorty*. Illus. B. Collier. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams Publishers.

Barton, C. (2016). *Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's super-soaking stream of inventions*. Illus. D. Tate. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge.

Reynolds, J. (2016). *Ghost*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books/Simon & Schuster.

Submitted by Tami Morton



Hesse, Monica. (2016). *Girl in the blue coat*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company. 320 pp. Gr. 5 and up. Historical Fiction.

It is 1943 and the Nazis have invaded Amsterdam. Fifteen-year-old Hanneke supports her family by using deceased people's ration cards to purchase hard to find items in the Black Market and then sell them to paying customers. One of them lures her into looking for Mirjam, a missing young Jewish girl wearing a blue coat. While looking for Mirjam, Hanneke gets involved in a complex youth-led resistance group that secretly smuggles Jewish children out of Amsterdam to safety. While Hanneke works with the resistance, her eyes are opened to the horrific treatment of the Jews.

Teaching Suggestions:

- The United States Holocaust Memorial has a collection of interactive lesson plans that appeal to a wide-range of learners. The link to this website is: <https://www.ushmm.org/educators/lesson-plans>.
- One lesson is a "Photo Narrative Activity" that can be crafted to use with this book. Additional information about this activity can be found at <https://www.ushmm.org/educators/lesson-plans/photo-narrative-activity/narrative-and-assessment>.
- Brainstorm reasons why you think Hanneke's parents did not seem to have more restrictions on the amount of time she spent away from home. Divide students into groups

of three to assume the roles of Hanneke and her parents and create dialogues based on the issues in the book. After each group shares their dialogues, decide which is the most convincing and reflective of the events in the story.

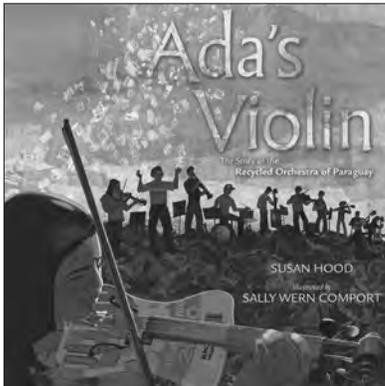
Related Books:

Freedman, R. (2016). *We will not be silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement that defied Adolf Hitler*. New York, NY: Clarion.

Gottesfeld, J. (2016). *The tree in the courtyard: Looking through Anne Frank's window*. Illus. P. McCarty. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Hoose, P. (2015). *The boys who challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club*. New York, NY: Farrar Straus Giroux.

Submitted by Deborah Wooten



Hood, Susan. (2016). *Ada's violin: The story of the recycled orchestra of Paraguay*. Illus. by Susan Wern Comport. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. 40 pp. Gr. K and up. Nonfiction.

An orchestra with instruments all made from trash? Favio Chavez, an environmental engineer and musician, offered to teach music lessons and change the lives of the children growing up in Cateura where fifteen hundred tons of garbage were dumped each day. Favio sought the help of Señor Gomez to scour the landfill and transform paint cans, baking trays, oil drums, packing crates, water pipes, and discarded items into cellos, flutes, guitars, and violins. The children learned to play music as well as to respect themselves and others. Brightly colored illustrations, an informative author's note, and resources complement this inspiring true story of the recycled orchestra who continues to share their music and gift of hope with people around the world.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Prior to reading the book, preview photos and videos of the orchestra to prompt children's questions and set a purpose for reading. <http://www.recycledorchestracateura.com/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCjbd21fYV8>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDQ6c_bLr2o
- Identify the strong themes in the book such as hope, creativity, resilience, and vision.
- Have children experiment with sound and create their own musical instruments out of recycled materials.

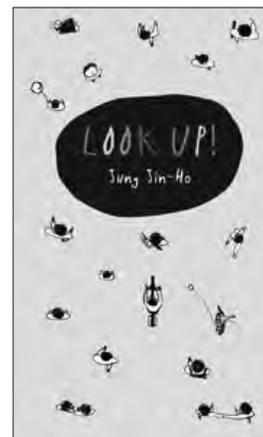
Related Books:

Brown, M. (2013). *Tito Puente, mambo king/Tito Puente, rey del mambo*. Illus. R. Lopez. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Russell-Brown, K. (2014). *Little Melba and her big trombone*. Illus. F. Morrison. New York, NY: Lee & Low Books.

Stinson, K. (2013). *The man with the violin*. Illus. D. Petricié. Toronto, ON: Annick Press.

Submitted by Fran Wilson



Jin-Ho, Jung. (2016). *Look Up!* (M. H. Kim, Trans.). New York, NY: Holiday House. 32 pp. Gr. 1-4. Picture book.

With spare text and unique illustrations, Jin-Ho creates a feeling of empathy in readers. *Look Up!* will launch discussion among children of varying ages about kindness and being aware of others' needs and wants. From the first page, readers can debate what is seen in the illustrations. Jin-Ho uses a black and white color scheme and a combination of lines and objects to evoke melancholy emotions, until the last page when he uses color to show how happy the main character is when someone finally "looks up" and makes the child happy.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Turn the pages of the book without anyone commenting, and ask students to soak in the illustrations as much as possible. Then, revisit the text again discussing each page and what students observe. Make charts/lists on a board so students can track the ways their thoughts change.
- Students can make a word cloud (i.e. www.wordle.com) with words that describe how they feel at the end of the story. Depending on age level and ability level, students might choose words like “compassion” or “domino effect” or they may choose words like “friend” or “kind”. Teachers can expand this word-based activity into a writing assignment where students empathize with the main character or the boy who finally looks up!
- Start a “Look-Up” movement in your school/home. On morning announcements, students can share times when someone “looked up” at them, or times when they added color to someone’s day just like Jin-Ho at the end of the story.

Related Books:

- de la Peña, M. (2015). *Last stop on Market Street*. Illus. M. Robinson. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam’s Sons.
- Ludwig, T., & Barton, P. (2013). *The invisible boy*. Illus. P. Barton. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Wenzel, B. (2016). *They all saw a cat*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books.

Submitted by Kelly Finan



Lee, Sungju (2016). *Every falling star*. New York NY: Amulet Books/Abrams. 336 pp. Gr. 8 and up. Memoir.

North Korea is currently one of the most stereotyped and misunderstood countries in the world. Ordinary citizens of

the country have limited exposure to worlds outside of North Korea, and yet a major spotlight highlights the dictatorship and nuclear weapons of the military forces. *Every Falling Star* is a memoir of a young North Korean defector, Sungju Lee. He tells the stories of ordinary people in North Korea forced to go through dramatic status changes in sociocultural classism. Sungju’s tragedy starts when his family has a sudden “vacation” to a remote area leaving their privileged home in Pyongyang behind. The vacation was not an actual vacation at all, but a demotion because of political accusations against his father. Soon Sungju was separated from his parents and his “lost-everything” period began. This memoir tells of the harsh reality in North Korea where children and teenagers face extreme poverty, starvation, and homelessness. At the same time, young people’s resilience is illustrated with the necessary street gang/family cultures. In his memoir, different locations in the North Korea landscape indicate Sungju’s mental and physical state like a symbolic compass.

Teaching Suggestions:

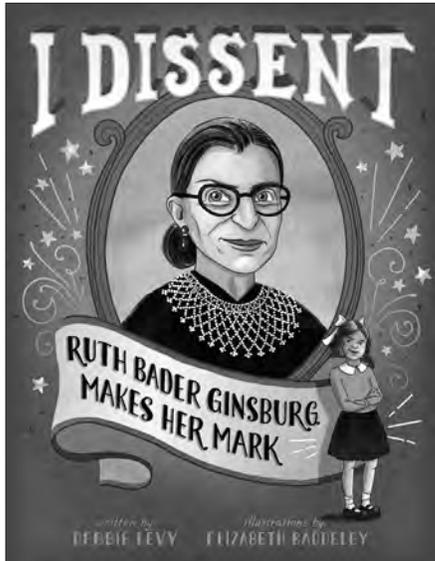
- Learn more about North Korea by listening to additional North Korean defector’s stories in documentary films at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mcgnuy1yZYw> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdxPCeWw75k>.
- Numerous North Koreans leave their home country and move to South Korea. Currently, 26,000 North Korean defectors live in South Korea, yet adjusting to South Korean society is not easy due to cultural differences in school systems, politics, the fundamental freedom of speech, language barriers, and social prejudice against North Koreans. Invite students to research South Korea and North Korea and think about the internal diversity within the region.
- Read another contemporary realistic fiction book, *Across the Tuman: A North Korean Kkotjebi Boy’s Quest* by Young-sook Moon that was originally written in Korean and translated into English. Compare it to *Every Falling Star* and discuss how the authors’ perspectives illustrate life in North Korea. Conduct research on what it takes to research ordinary people’s days in North Korea.

Related Books:

- Moon, Y. (2013). *Across the Tumen: A North Korean Kkotjebi boy’s quest*. Irvine CA: Seoul Selection USA, Inc.
- Serres, A. (2012). *I have the right to be a child*. Illus. A. Fronty.

(H. Mixer, Trans.). Toronto, ON: Groundwood Press.
 Skarmeta, A. (2002). *The composition*. Illus. A. Ruano. Toronto, ON: Groundwood Press.

Submitted by Yoo Kyung Sung



Levy, Debby. (2016). *I dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg makes her mark*. Illus. by Elizabeth Baddeley. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster. Picture book. Gr. 4-8. Biography.

Ruth Bader dissented on the limitations placed on women in school and work, by going to college, university, law school, and by becoming a lawyer. As a child, her mother introduced her to diverse opportunities in learning, education, and aspirations. Even after her mother died, Ruth Bader kept those possibilities in mind and became a law clerk, a lawyer, a law professor, and federal judge, while also marrying and having a family. In spite of the limitations on women, Ruth Bader Ginsburg fought for what was fair and just for all, and became the first Jewish woman to serve as justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Before reading, discuss with students the work of the U.S. Supreme Court, sharing photographs of the building in Washington, D. C. and of the justices listening to the audio recordings of hearings. Back matter in the book is filled with resources.
- How was student life different for men and women in the 1950s when Ruth Bader began college at Cornell

University? Conduct research to find out and look for information about historical events of the time, i.e. Joseph McCarthy and his Congressional hearings.

- With students, research the story of any of the cases mentioned in the biography. For instance, in *Frontiero v. Richardson*, a woman in the Air Force argued that she should have the same benefits for her male spouse as men in the Air Force had for their female spouses. Talk about the values that the case shows.

Related Books:

- Colman, P. (2011). *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A friendship that changed the world*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.
- Engle, M. (2013). *The lightning dreamer: Cuba's great abolitionist*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Stone, T. L. (2013). *Who says women can't be doctors?* Illus. M. Priceman. New York, NY: Henry Holt.
- Tonatiuh, D. (2014). *Separate is never equal: Sylvia Mendez & her family's fight for desegregation*. New York, NY: Abrams.

Submitted by Sandip Wilson



Lorenzi, N. D. (2016). *A long pitch home*. New York: Charlesbridge. 256 pp. Gr. 4-7. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

Bilal is a 10-year-old whose family has just fled from Pakistan to the home of their extended family in Virginia. Life in America is very different – Bilal was an excellent cricket athlete in Pakistan, but now he must learn how to play baseball which his new friends have been playing for years. He

was the best student in his class in his last school in Pakistan, but now in the U.S. he finds himself in ESL classes and in need of extra help. Bilal's cousin, Jalaal, is a mentor for him as he adjusts to a new culture and home, but Bilal's father is still in Pakistan fighting to clear his name and has not been able to join the family in the U.S. This book provides intermediate aged readers with an interesting story that provokes reflection on the lives of U.S. immigrant families.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Think about immigrants in your community, school, and classroom. Invite them to tell their stories about seeking refuge or coming to a new country. Ask them to speak about life in their native country, but also about life in their new country.
- Create opportunities for families to tell stories of life in the past and in the present. Encourage all to discuss what it means to "seek refuge" in both positive and negative ways.
- Learn about immigrants in the U.S. and your state. Find statistical information at the Center for Immigration studies at <http://cis.org/Immigrants-in-the-United-State?s?gclid=CKOPzfbXutECFQ8GhgodL5AIs>

Related Books:

- Ringgold, F. (2016). *We came to America*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Williams, K. L. (2016). *Four feet, two sandals*. Illus. D. Chayka. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- Yousafzai, M. & McCormick, P. (2014). *I am Malala: How one girl stood up for education and changed the world*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company.

Submitted by Renita Schmidt



Medina, J. (2016). *Juana & Lucas*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press. 88 pp. Gr. 2-4. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

How many contemporary realistic fiction books have you read about one's childhood in Colombia, more specifically the city of Bogotá? *Juana & Lucas* is a fiction book that reflects the author's Colombian childhood. Bogotá has a broad range of neighborhoods and Juana proudly presents CICLVIA, a never-ending route of bike lanes across the city. The landscape of Bogotá that Juana describes is a big metropolis that has many old, tall trees. Juana also loves to read by flashlight in the quiet of her bedroom. Her childhood in Bogotá has lots of resemblances to American children's childhoods. Juana takes a school bus, solves math problems on the blackboard, and doesn't like her itchy school uniform which she likens to learning English at school!

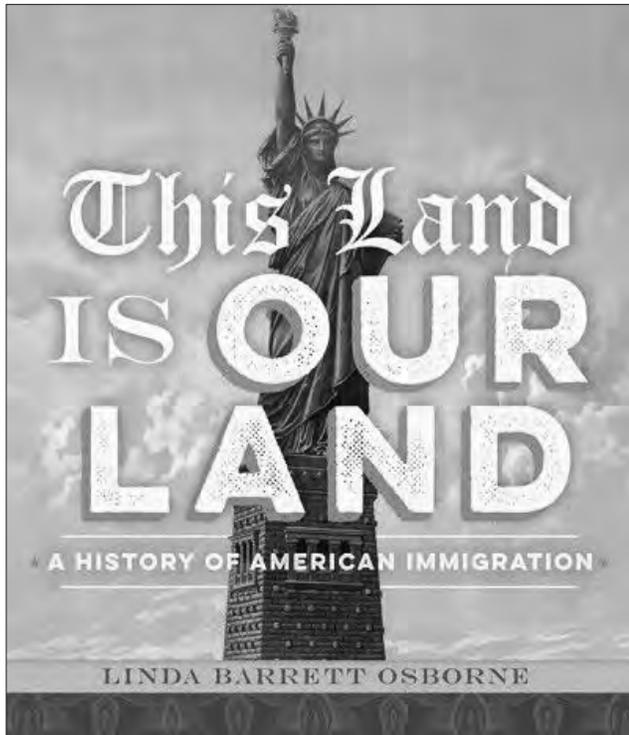
Teaching Suggestions:

- Look for Colombia on a world map. Find the most familiar Latin America country, Mexico, on the map and calculate distances between Colombia, Mexico, and the U.S. Students can also find Bogotá and Mexico City. Encourage students to think about how they address those countries. Do people mention specific city names when they indicate locations in Colombia or Mexico or just country names? Discuss why country names are more commonly used instead of specific locations.
- Read Jeanette Winter's book titled, *Biblioburro: A True Story From Colombia* and compare it to *Juana & Lucas*. Discuss the different landscapes these two books illustrate about Colombia and compare urban and rural experiences students may have in their neighborhoods or on vacation.
- Discuss personal connections students make with Juana's stories in Bogotá. Have students share the ways Juana's book invites them to think about Colombia differently and learn about Colombian childhood.

Related Books:

- Hughes, S. (2011). *Off to class: Incredible and unusual schools around the world*. Toronto, ON: Owlkids.
- Rousaki, M. (2003). *Unique Monique*. Illus. P. Papanikolaou. LaJolla, CA: Kane Miller Books.
- Winter, Jeanette. (2010). *Biblioburro: A true story from Colombia*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Submitted by Yoo Kyung Sung



Osborne, Linda Barrett. (2016). *This land is our land: A history of America*. New York: NY. Abrams Books for Young People. 128 pp. Gr. 5 and up. Nonfiction.

With the exception of Native Americans, people living in the U.S. are immigrants. Throughout history Americans have been somewhat divided about their positions regarding immigration. While some immigrants have been welcomed, others have experienced discrimination, and some have been altogether excluded from entering America. Osborne's account of the history of immigration has striking parallels to today's beliefs about this hot topic. This important history book includes anecdotal accounts, photographs, government policies, records, and current responses to immigration, communicated in easy-to-understand narrative style. Each chapter highlights the ebb and flow of different races and cultures entering America and the hardships they encountered. Osborne writes methodically to allow readers to develop their own beliefs about immigration and to support their positions with historical background knowledge.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Benjamin Franklin stated, "Why should Pennsylvania founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens,

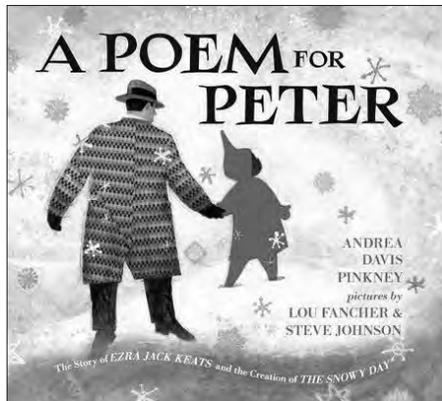
who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion" (Osborne, 2016, p. 6). Discuss this quote while clarifying the content and vocabulary words. Refer to page 6 for additional context for the quote. Have students write their reactions and questions to this quote and discuss in think-pair-share groupings. Next, have them share their thoughts as a class and ask them if they believe their statements may be prevalent today and if so, how and why?

- In the 1940's Mexico and the United States created The Bracero Program which entitled Mexican men to come to the USA and work as laborers for low wages. Have students learn more about this program by choosing passages to read aloud. Then have the students complete a graphic organizer that leads them to list the causes and effects of this program that ended in 1964. For more information about The Bracero Program refer to the website: <http://mexicanborder.web.unc.edu/the-bracero-program-3/>
- Why have people immigrated to America? Analyze each chapter to determine why each wave of immigrants came to the United States in small groups. How were they treated when they arrived here? How can new students be welcomed into schools and social life, especially those representing different cultures and races? Chart students' responses and post them in the classroom. Provide additional space on the chart for future ideas and plans for welcoming people into the community.

Related Books:

- Argueta, J. (2016). *Somos como las nubes: We are like the clouds*. Illus. A. Ruano. (E. Amado, Trans.). Toronto, Canada: Groundwood.
- Lee, S. & McClelland, S. (2016). *Every falling star: The true story of how I survived and escaped North Korea*. New York, NY: Abrams.
- Skrypunh, M. F. with T. Ho (2016). *Adrift at sea: A Vietnamese boy's story of survival*. Illus. B. Dienes. Toronto, ON, Canada: Pajama Press.

Submitted by Deborah Wooten



Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (2016). *A poem for Peter: The Story of Ezra Jack Keats and the creation of the Snowy Day*. Illus. Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. New York, NY: Viking Books/Penguin Group. 60 pp. Gr. 2 and up. Biography.

Peter's playful adventures on a snowy day have delighted children for decades. Now readers can learn how Peter came to be. Free verse is used to tell about the life of Ezra Jack Keats growing up in Brooklyn as the son of Polish-Jewish immigrants, aspiring to be an artist, and finally achieving his dream when he becomes an author and illustrator. After twenty years of keeping photos of a young black child clipped from *Life Magazine*, Ezra used them to create Peter in the first book for children featuring an African American child as a character. Johnson and Fancher's illustrations, done in Keats' own mixed media style, combine with the lyrical text to create a celebratory text.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Reread the book *The Snowy Day* and then share this book with students. Follow up the reading with a discussion on how this book prompted diversity in books published for children.
- Compare and contrast the information provided by the book with this video on Ezra Jack Keats' life <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ytUze3SMIE>
- Study the collage and mixed media style of Keats' illustrations and have students experiment by making an illustration to complement a piece of their own writing.
- Use the book as a mentor text to study the "bio-poem" style and how Andrea Davis Pinkney weaves researched facts into her writing.

Related Books:

- de la Peña, Matt. (2015). *Last stop on Market Street*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons Books.
- Keats, E. J. & Silvey, A. (2002). *Keats's neighborhood: An Ezra Jack Keats treasury*. New York, NY: Viking Books for Young Readers.
- Keats, E. J. (1962). *The snowy day*. New York, NY: Viking Press.

Submitted by Fran Wilson



Rhodes, J. P. (2016). *Towers falling*. New York, NY: Little, Brown. 228 pp. Gr. 4-8. Contemporary Realistic Fiction.

The night before Deja goes to her new school in Brooklyn, she cannot sleep. She keeps wondering why her family is unexpectedly poor and living in the projects. Once at school, she realizes that she makes two new best friends and realizes she likes her new school much more than her previous school. Then Deja hears the story of two towers falling on September 11, 2001 and learns how that story helps us understand what it means to be an American while also providing new insights into her own family's current living situation.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Help students gain more knowledge about 9/11, particularly since many students today were not even born at the time. Have them gain more knowledge researching this significant event, beginning with the site <http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks>. Encourage them to consider the American symbols, our countries' history, as well as what being an American truly means.
- Depression is another issue that should be understood

when reading *Towers Falling*. Deja was very confused by her father's sickness, and was often disappointed that he did not have a job to help support their family. Read more about this disorder at the National Institute of Mental Health <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression/index.shtml>

- 9/11 has influenced other countries outside of the United States. Consider how this tragedy affected other countries, such as Annie Donwerth-Chikamatsu's *Somewhere Among* which offers the perspective of a seven-year-old Japanese girl.

Related texts:

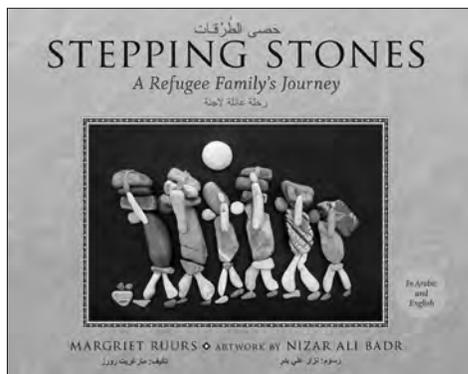
Baskin, N. R. (2016). *Nine, ten: A September 11 story*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books/Simon & Schuster.

Deedy, C.A. with W. K. Naiyomah. (2009). *14 cows for America*. Illus. T. Gonzales. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers.

Donwerth-Chikamatsu, A. (2016). *Somewhere among*. New York, NY: Atheneum Books /Simon & Schuster.

Lowitz, L. (2016). *Up from the sea*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers.

Submitted by Tami Morton



Ruurs, Margriet. (2016). *Stepping stones: A refugee family's journey*. Illus. Nizar Ali Badr. (Falah Raheem, Trans.). Victoria, BC: Orca Books. 28pp. Gr. K and up. Picture book.

Rama and her family must make a difficult decision to flee as the bombs of the civil war fall near their home and threaten their peaceful village. The family sets off on foot for Europe, carrying what they can upon their backs. Rama's happy childhood is replaced with the fears of migrating. Arriving in a new home brings relief but also the worry of whether they can ever return. This story is brought to life by

the beautiful artwork of Syrian artist, Nizar Ali Badr, who carefully arranges stones collected from the sea to depict the family's journey. The story written in both English and Arabic is perfect for sharing the plight of refugees with children.

Teaching suggestions:

- After reading the book, discuss the meaning of the word refugee.
- Discuss the contribution of the accompanying artwork. How do the carefully placed stones and background color of the artwork help the reader to understand the journey and feelings of the refugees?
- Share the foreword of the book or view the book's website and book trailer to learn how this book came to be written: <http://steppingstonesthebook.com/story/>
- Try creating artwork with stones after viewing the gallery of the artist's work at <http://steppingstonesthebook.com/gallery/>

Related Books:

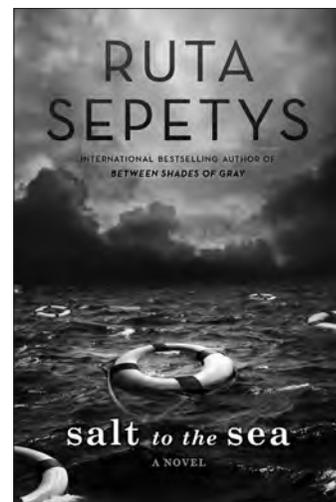
Orbeck-Nilssen, C. (2016). *Why am I here?* Illus. by A. Duzakin. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmann Books for Young Readers.

Skrypuch, M. F. with Tuan Ho. (2016). *Adrift at sea: A Vietnamese boy's story of survival*. Illus. B. Deines. Toronto, ON: Pajama Press.

Watts, J. (2016). *A piece of home*. Illus. H. Yum. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

Young, R. (2016). *Teacup*. Illus. M. Ottley. New York, NY: Dial Books/Penguin Random House.

Submitted by Fran Wilson



Sepetys, Ruta (2016). *Salt to the sea*. New York, NY: Philomel Books/Penguin Group. 391 pp. Gr. 6 and up. **Historical Fiction.**

Russian torpedoes attacked the German cruise ship, *Wilhelm Gustloff*, on January 30, 1945, and nine thousand people including children were killed on the sinking ship. Operation Hannibal, the largest sea evacuation in modern history, transported soldiers and civilians to safety from the advancing Russian troops. *Salt to the Sea* is a story about four fictional characters from East Prussia, Poland, and the Baltic countries trapped in difficult circumstances related to the war. In the beginning, the characters do not trust each other because of their own prejudices against different nationalities. Eventually, they develop warm, empathetic friendships and even family-like support for one other. Although this is historical fiction, imagining what happened to the Russian Amber Room, once called the Eighth Wonder of the World in 1944, amplifies historical mystery in the story.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Invite students to brainstorm what they know or have heard about World War II. As students share common knowledge (i.e. European Jewish Holocaust, Anne Frank, Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima bombing, etc.), have students discuss how World War II ended specifically on German and Russian sides. Visit a world map and check the locations that are mentioned in *Salt to the Sea* in 1945. Compare the present map with the map of 1945 from *Salt to the Sea* and discuss what caused the changes on the map from 1945 and now, especially considering Soviet Union dissolution.
- Visit *Wilhelm Gustloff* documentary film links found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roWKlk3ahas> and <http://www.wilhelmgustloff.com/sinking.htm>. Discuss how and why common knowledge of World War II may be somewhat limited in your classroom even though there has been so much emphasis on WW II history.
- Discuss what happened to the Baltic Sea and Asian regions beyond well-known World War II facts. Further, discuss why WW II is such a common war event so commonly publicized.

Related Books:

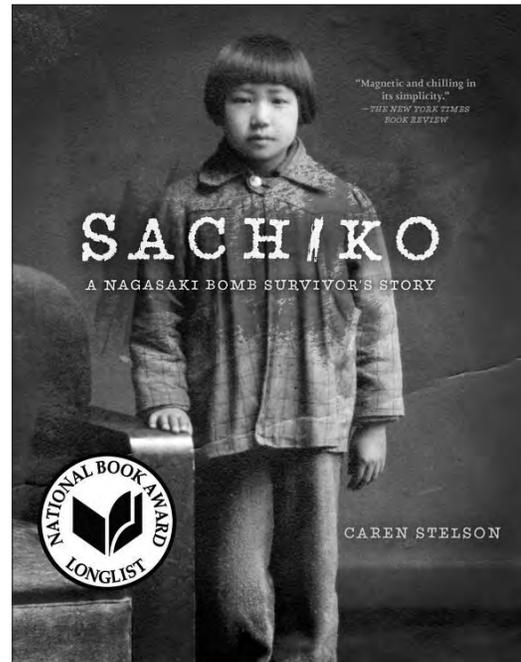
Elliott, Laura. (2015). *Across a war-tossed sea*. New York, NY:

Hyperion Books.

Pausewang, Gudrun (2006). *Traitor*. (R. Ward, Trans). Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books/Lerner Group.

Ungerer, Tomi (2010). *Otto: The autobiography of a teddy bear*. New York, NY: Phaidon Press.

Submitted by Yoo Kyung Sung



Caren Stelson. (2016). *Sachiko: A Nagasaki bomb survivor's story*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books/Lerner Group. 144 pp. Gr. 8-12. **Nonfiction.**

Sachiko, a child of Nagasaki and born in 1939, recounts the day the atomic bomb was dropped on her native city. Before 1945 her family had been living in conditions of growing deprivation, with slim food rations and the fear of her father being conscripted into the Japanese military, yet on the day of the air raid, her father had not yet gone to serve. Organized in chapters that are first day by day, then month by month, and finally year by year ending with her social activism and advocacy for peace, Sachiko's perspective on rebuilding a home life, going to a strange school in the town left standing on the other side of the hills, and facing the tragedy of her family members dying of radiation sickness will engage readers with its unique and closely observed details giving depth to events of World War II and the rebuilding of Japan in its aftermath. Archival photographs and extensive back matter with author's note, source notes, acknowledgements, and glossary provide additional information.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Before reading, engage students in a discussion about the city and country with photos, maps, and videos of Japan prior to World War II. Photographs of early 20th century Nagasaki are included in the book and can be a starting point. Discuss with students what they understand about the lives of people from viewing photographs and videos, and what photographers want viewers to think about the city and its people.
- During the reading, search textbooks and guides to find out how the lives and culture of different people during World War II are addressed. Assist students in recording data about what information and whose perspectives are included in the different sources.
- After reading, discuss with students what they have learned about the lives of the people affected by the bombing. Discuss with them how they might inform other people of their understanding.

Related Books:

Marrin, A. (2016). *Uprooted: The Japanese American experience during World War II*. New York, NY: Knopf.

National Geographic. (2009). *Every human has rights: A photographic declaration for kids*. Washington, DC: National Geographic.

Oppenheim, J. (2006). *Dear Miss Breed: True stories of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II and a librarian who made a difference*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Submitted by Sandip Wilson



Myron Uhlberg. (2016). *The sound of all things*. Illus. Ted Papoulas. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree Publishers. 36 pp. Gr. K to 3. Historical Fiction.

Your parents are deaf but you can hear. In this picture book a hearing son describes to his father through sign language all the noise and music that surround them as they enjoy the sights of the amusement park, Coney Island. But how do you explain the roar of a roller coaster or the crash of ocean waves? Both parents sign to their son how sound feels to them: “I feel the wind,” my father signed, “the way I feel your voice when you talk into the palm of my hand.” When the son needs more words, he discovers a wealth of language at their library.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Try “speaking” in American Sign Language (ASL). You can find explanations and see video examples of the basic 100 signs at <http://www.lifeprint.com/>. If you live near a college or university where sign-language is taught, invite a student or professor who knows sign language to come to your classroom and demonstrate signing the book *The Sound of All Things* as the class reads aloud.
- Go outside. Sit with a notebook. Write down the sounds you hear. Can you tell how close or far away is each sound? Is the source moving closer or farther away? What kind of environmental sounds do you hear? Birds, wind, tree branches, water flowing, rain falling? Children playing a game—what kind of game? People walking by, riding past on a bicycle, skateboard, car?
- Think about losing a different sense—what if you were blind instead of deaf? Compare what would be hard about losing sight versus losing hearing. Read *El Deafo*, Cece Bell’s description of her experience growing up deaf. Then read George Mendoza’s description of losing his eyesight but continuing to become an Olympic runner and then an artist. What if you lost the ability to walk? Read Padma Venkadrma’s *A Time to Dance* which tells the story of a young girl, passionate about dancing, who loses her leg in a car accident. Compare how each type of loss (hearing, sight, mobility) affects one’s daily life, friendships, hobbies, sports, and education.

Related texts:

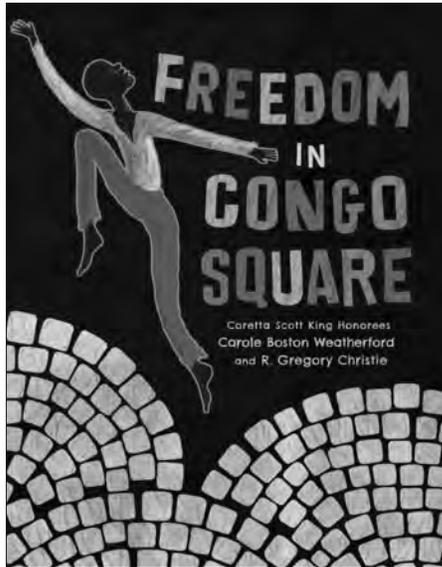
Bell, C. (2014). *El Deafo*. New York, NY: Abrams.

Powers, J. L. (2014). *Colors of the wind: The story of blind artist and champion runner, George Mendoza*. Illus. G. Mendoza & H. Morgan-Sanders. Cynthiana, KY: Purple House Press.

Stork, F. X. (2009). *Marcelo in the real world*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Venkatraman, Padma. (2014) *A time to dance*. New York, NY: Nancy Paulsen Books/Penguin Books.

Submitted by Nancy Bo Flood



Weatherford, C. B. (2016). *Freedom in Congo Square*. Illus. by R. G. Christie. New York, NY: Little Bee Books. 32 pp. Gr. 2 and up. Picture book.

Weatherford creates a wonderful poetic account of a little known meeting place for slaves in New Orleans. Slave owners allowed slaves a day of rest on Sunday. They would go to Congo Square and congregate, dance, sing, and participate in an open market. Congo Square offers a small taste of freedom.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Research Congo Square in New Orleans, LA—it's actual location, how this location was used in the past, and the ways that it is used today. Visit the link <http://new.nola.gov/parks-and-parkways/parks-squares/congo-square-louis-armstrong-park/> to gain further information. What sociocultural factors may be at play in maintaining this park in New Orleans?
- Students may have learned about slavery, but very likely may not be familiar with a place for slaves like Congo Square in New Orleans, LA. Have students ponder the treatment of slaves knowing about Congo Square. Does this change their opinion about slavery or slave owners.

Why or why not?

- Look closely at R. Gregory Christie's illustrations, noting how the art closely ties with the text. Explore more books illustrated by Christie, using them as mentor texts for students' own artwork. More about Christie and his art can be found at <http://gas-art.com/about-r-gregory-christie/>

Related Books:

Burg, A.E. (2016). *Unbound*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

Curtis, C.P. (2009). *Elijah of Buxton*. New York, NY: Scholastic Paperbacks.

Pinkney, A. (2009). *Sojourner Truth's step-stomp stride*. Illus. J.B. Pinkney. New York, NY: Jump at the Sun/ Disney Hyperion.

Submitted by Tami Morton



Wood, Susan. (2016). *Esquivel! Space-age sound artist*. Illus. by Duncan Tonatiuh. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge. 32 pp. Gr. K and up. Biography.

Zu-Zu! Pow! Juan Garcia Esquivel tinkered with sound as soon as he could dismantle his family's player piano. This fascination led to the creation of musical selections that combined a variety of exotic instruments playing in unusual tempos with wordless vocals. Esquivel's unique instrumental style—a blend of jazz, Latin, and lounge music—seemed to transport listeners to outer space and earned him the title, "King of Space Age Pop." The biography of this musical pioneer is brought to life by Duncan Tonatiuh's illustrations done in his distinct modern Mixtec codex style.

Teaching suggestions:

- After reading the book, listen to a selection of Esquivel's music and identify the unique aspects of his style heard within the selection from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYfXfV6fp5I> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NglD0H-cps>
- Watch the following video clips produced by Ernie Kovac in which kitchen and office objects come to life with Esquivel's musical selections.
 - Musical Office: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EXKMJ4LMKA>
 - Kitchen Symphony: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16yl-uQqcFA>
 - Discuss: How does Esquivel's music contribute to the impact of the accompanying illustrations.
- Learn more about Duncan Tonatiuh's style by viewing this informative video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1avdB7jHcg>

Related Books:

- Andrews, T. (2015). *Trombone Shorty*. Illus. B. Collier. New York, NY: Abrams Books for Young Readers.
- Deans, K. (2015). *Sisters of swing: The story of the International Sweethearts of Rhythm*. Illus. J. Cepeda. New York, NY: Holiday House Books for Young People.
- Hill, L. C. (2013). *When the beat was born: DJ Kool Herc and the creation of Hip Hop*. Illus. T. Taylor III. New York, NY: Roaring Brook Press.

Submitted by Fran Wilson

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- Myers, W. D. (March 16, 2014). Where are the people of color in children's books? *New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/where-are-the-people-of-color-in-childrens-books.html?_r=0