

Recommended African American Children's Books

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Primary = Grades K-3
Intermediate = Grades 4-6

Please note that I define African American children's books as books intended for youth that are written by *and* about African Americans.

Fiction

- Barnes, Derrick. (2017). Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut. Illus. by Gordon C. James. Chicago, IL: Bolden (Primary/Intermediate)
- Bond, Victoria & Simon, T. R. (2010). Zora and Me. Somerville, MA: Candlewick. (Intermediate)
- Bryan, Ashley. (2016). Freedom Over Me. New York: Atheneum. (Intermediate)
- Caines, Jeannette. (1982). Just Us Women. Illus. by Pat Cummings. New York: Harper & Row. (Primary)
- Clifton, Lucille. (1983). Everett Anderson's Goodbye. Illus. by Ann Grifalconi. New York: Henry Holt. (Primary)
- Crews, Donald. (1991). Bigmama's. New York: Greenwillow. (Primary)
- Crews, Donald. (1992). Shortcut. New York: Greenwillow. (Primary)
- Cummings, Pat. (1994). Clean Your Room, Harvey Moon!. New York: Aladdin. (Primary)
- Curtis, Christopher Paul. (1995). The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963. New York: Delacorte. (Intermediate)
- Greenfield, Eloise. (1993). She Come Bringing Me That Little Baby Girl. Illus. by John Steptoe. New York: HarperCollins. (Primary)
- Grimes, Nikki. (2009). Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. New York: Putnam. (Primary)
- Grimes, Nikki. (2009). Rich: A Dyamonde Daniel Book. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. New York: Putnam. (Primary)
- Grimes, Nikki. (2010). Almost Zero: A Dyamonde Daniel Book. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. New York: Putnam. (Primary)
- Harrington, Janice. (2007). The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County. Illus. by Shelley Jackson. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux. (Primary)
- Johnson, Angela. (1990). Do Like Kyla. Illus. by James Ransome. New York: Orchard. (Primary)
- Johnson, Angela. (1993). When I Am Old With You. New York: Orchard. (Primary)
- Lee, Spike, & Lee, Tonya Lewis. (2002). Please, Baby, Please. Illus. by Spike Lee. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary)
- McKissack, Patricia. (1986). Flossie and the Fox. Illus. by Rachel Isadora. New York: Dial. (Primary)
- McKissack, Patricia. (1988). Mirandy and Brother Wind. Illus. by Jerry Pinkney. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. (Primary)

- Mitchell, Margaree King. (1993). Uncle Jed's Barbershop. Illus. by James Ransome. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Mora, Oge. (2018). Thank You, Omu!. New York: Little, Brown. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Mora, Oge. (2019). Saturday. New York: Little, Brown. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Nolen, Jerdine. (2003). Thunder Rose. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. San Diego, CA: Harcourt. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Nolen, Jerdine. (2005). Hewitt Anderson's Great Big Life. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Pinkney, Brian. (1994). Max Found Two Sticks. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary)
- Pinkney, Brian. (1997). The Adventures of Sparrowboy. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Ringgold, Faith. (1991). Tar Beach. New York: Crown/Random House. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Step toe, John. (1969). Stevie. New York: HarperCollins. (Primary)
- Tarpley, Natasha. (1997). I Love My Hair! Illus. by E.B. Lewis. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Company. (Primary)
- Tarpley, Natasha. (2002). Bippity Bop Barbershop. Illus. by E.B. Lewis. Boston, MA: Little Brown & Company. (Primary)
- Taylor, Mildred. (1976). Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry. New York: Dial. (Intermediate)
- Taylor, Mildred. (1998). The Gold Cadillac. New York: Puffin. (Intermediate)
- Taylor, Mildred. (1990). Road to Memphis. New York: Puffin. (Intermediate)
- Taylor, Mildred. (1991). Let the Circle be Unbroken. New York: Puffin. (Intermediate)
- Walter, Mildred Pitts. (1986). Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World. New York: HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. (2010). One Crazy Summer. New York: Amistad/HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. (2013). P.S. Be Eleven. New York: Amistad/HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. (2015). Gone Crazy in Alabama. New York: Amistad/HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Williams-Garcia, Rita. (2017). Clayton Byrd Goes Underground. New York: Amistad/HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Woodson, Jacqueline. (2002). Visiting Day. Illus. by James Ransome. New York: Scholastic. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Woodson, Jacqueline. (2004). Coming on Home Soon. Illus. by E.B. Lewis. New York: Putnam. (Primary)
- Wyeth, Sharon Dennis. (1998). Something Beautiful. Illus. by Chris Soentpiet. New York: Doubleday. (Primary)

Non-Fiction

- Bolden, Tonya. (2005). Maritcha: A Nineteenth-Century American Girl. New York: Abrams. (Intermediate)
- Bolden, Tonya. (2017). How to Build a Museum: Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. New York: Viking. (Intermediate)
- Cline-Ransome, Lesa. (2000). Satchel Paige. Illus. by James Ransome. New York: Simon & Schuster. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Green, Michelle Y. (2002). A Strong Right Arm: The Story of Mamie "Peanut" Johnson. New York: Puffin. (Intermediate)
- Johnson, Dolores. (2006). Onward: A Photobiography of African-American Polar Explorer Matthew Henson. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic. (Intermediate)
- Lewis, John, & Aydin, Andrew. (2013). March: Book One. Illus. by Nate Powell. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf Productions. (Intermediate)

- Nelson, Kadir. (2008). We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball. New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion. (Intermediate)
- Nelson, Kadir. (2011). Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans. New York: Balzar + Bray/HarperCollins. (Intermediate)
- Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux. (2009). Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda.
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (1993). Alvin Ailey. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. New York: Hyperion.
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (1997). Bill Pickett: Rodeo-Ridin' Cowboy. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. San Diego, CA: Harcourt. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (1998). Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. New York: Hyperion. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (2000). Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters. Illus. by Stephen Alcorn. San Diego, CA: Harcourt. (Intermediate)
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (2007). Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuosa. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. New York: Hyperion. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Pinkney, Andrea Davis. (2012). Hand in Hand: Ten Black Men Who Changed America. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. New York: Disney/Hyperion. (Intermediate)
- Smith, Charles. R. (2015). 28 Days: Moments in Black History That Changed the World. Illus. by Shane W. Evans. New York: Roaring Brook Press. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Weatherford, Carole Boston. (2006). Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Weatherford, Carole Boston. (2008). Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane. Illus. by Sean Qualls. New York: Henry Holt. (Primary)
- Weatherford, Carole Boston. (2015). Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer: The Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement. Illus. by Ekua Holmes. Somerville, MA: Candlewick. (Intermediate)
- Woodson, Jacqueline. (2014). Brown Girl Dreaming. New York: Nancy Paulsen. (Intermediate)

Poetry

- Alexander, Kwame. (2019). The Undefeated. Illus. by Kadir Nelson. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. (Intermediate)
- Greenfield, Eloise. (1977). Honey, I Love. Illus. by Leo & Diane Dillon. New York: HarperCollins. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Grimes, Nikki. (1994). Meet Danitra Brown. Illus. by Floyd Cooper. New York: HarperCollins. (Primary)
- Grimes, Nikki. (2002). My Man Blue. Illus. by Jerome Lagarrigue. New York: Puffin. (Intermediate)
- Grimes, Nikki. (2002). Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman. Illus. by E.B. Lewis. New York: Orchard. (Intermediate)
- Hughes, Langston. (1994). The Dream Keeper and Other Poems. Illus. by Brian Pinkney. New York: Scholastic. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Hughes, Langston. (2009). My People. Photo-Illus. by Charles R. Smith, Jr. New York: Atheneum. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Medina, Tony. (2001). Deshawn Days. Illus. by R. Gregory Christie. New York: Lee & Low. (Primary)
- Smith, Hope Anita. (2003). The Way a Door Closes. Illus. by Shane Evans. New York: Henry Holt. (Intermediate)
- Step toe, Javaka. (Ed.). (1997). In Daddy's Arms I am Tall: African Americans Celebrating Fathers. New York: Lee and Low. (Primary/Intermediate)
- Thomas, Joyce Carol. (2008). The Blacker the Berry. Illus. by Floyd Cooper. New York: HarperCollins. (Intermediate)

Weatherford, Carole Boston. (2016). You Can Fly: The Tuskegee Airmen. Illus. by Jeffery Weatherford. New York: Atheneum. (Intermediate)

Sing-A-Long Picture Books

Bryan, Ashley. (2007). Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals. New York: Atheneum.
(Primary/Intermediate)

Nelson, Kadir. (2005). He's Got the Whole World in His Hands. New York: Dial. (Primary)