

THE READING AGENCY

86 brilliant books for children and young people by Black authors and illustrators

TACKLING LIFE'S BIG CHALLENGES THROUGH THE PROVEN POWER OF READING

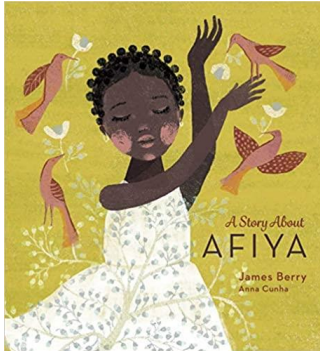
The Reading Agency is a national charity that tackles life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. We work closely with partners to develop and deliver programmes for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Reading Agency is funded by Arts Council England. <https://readingagency.org.uk/>

October is Black History Month so is the perfect time to celebrate some brilliant books for children and young people created by black authors and illustrators. Our list of 86 titles includes fiction, non-fiction, poetry and graphic novels for all children, young people and adults to enjoy reading. Find out more about Black History Month here: <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/>.

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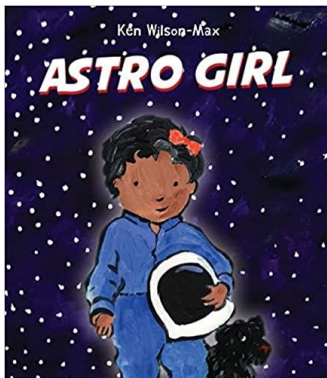
Picture books



A Story About Afiya by James Berry and Anna Cunha

978-1911373339, Lantana Publishing

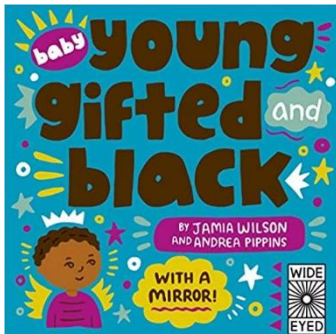
Some people have dresses for every occasion but Afiya needs only one. Her dress records the memories of her childhood, from roses in bloom to pigeons in flight, from tigers at the zoo to October leaves falling. A joyful celebration of a young girl's childhood, written by the late Coretta Scott King Book Award-winning Jamaican poet James Berry.



Astro Girl by Ken Wilson-Max

978-1910959213, Otter-Barry Books

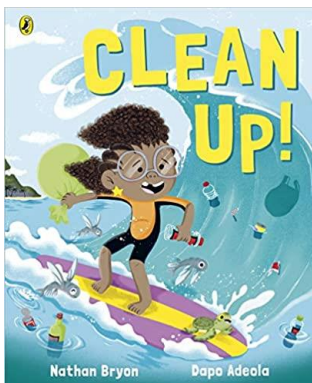
Astrid has always loved the stars and space. "I want to be an astronaut!" she says. While Mama is away, Papa and Astrid have fun acting out the challenges an astronaut faces on a space mission - eating food from a tube, doing science experiments, living and sleeping in near-zero gravity. Astrid can do it all! Then it's time to meet Mama at the airbase. But where has Mama been?



Baby Young, Gifted, and Black: With a Mirror! by Jamia Wilson and Andrea Pippins

978-0711261419, Wide Eyed Editions

Meet icons of colour from past and present in this baby board book celebration of inspirational achievement. A collection of positive, yet simple, affirmations to encourage the next generation. Highlighting the talent of Black leaders and changemakers from around the world, young dreamers will develop confidence, self-assurance, and self-belief.



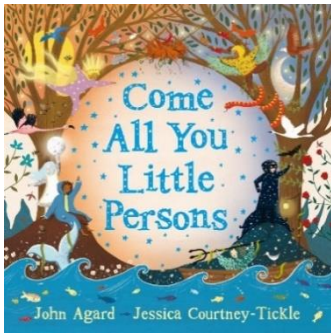
Clean Up! by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola

978-0241345894, Puffin

Join lovable, passionate Rocket as she sets off on a mission to save a Caribbean island from plastic pollution!

When Rocket goes for a holiday to visit her grandparents, she's shocked by the pollution that is spoiling their island home and putting the local sea life at risk. Can she think of a way to save the day? This is a heartwarming, timely and empowering picture book, showing how we ALL can make a difference.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



Come All You Little Persons by John Agard and Jessica Courtney-Tickle 978-0571324163, Faber Children's

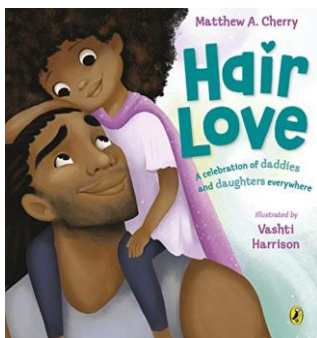
Come little bird person, come little bee person, come little tree person - little persons from all over the world join together to celebrate the dance of life and love in this stunning poem from John Agard. Stunningly illustrated by Jessica Courtney-Tickle, this is a book that both little persons and big persons will treasure and pore over for a lifetime and is a true poem of our time.



Coming to England by Floella Benjamin 978-1529009415, Macmillan Children's Books

A picture book edition of *Coming to England*, the inspiring true story of Baroness Floella Benjamin: from Trinidad, to London as part of the Windrush generation, to the House of Lords.

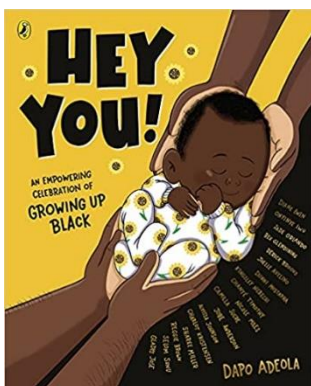
Follow ten-year-old Floella as she and her family set sail from the Caribbean to a new life in London. Alone on a huge ship for two weeks, then tumbled into a cold and unfriendly London, coming to England wasn't at all what Floella had expected . . . What will her new school be like? Will she meet the Queen?



Hair Love by Matthew Cherry and Vashti Harrison 978-0241406427, Puffin

It's up to Daddy to give his daughter an extra-special hair style in this story of self-confidence and the love between fathers and daughters. Zuri knows her hair is beautiful, but it has a mind of its own! It kinks, coils, and curls every which way. Mum always does Zuri's hair just the way she likes it - so when Daddy steps in to style it for an extra special occasion, he has a lot to learn. But he

LOVES his Zuri, and he'll do anything to make her, and her hair, happy.

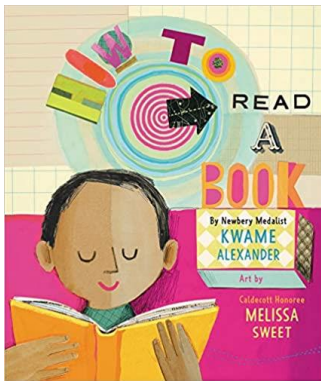


Hey You!: An empowering celebration of growing up Black by Dapo Adeola and various, 978-0241521946, Puffin

This groundbreaking picture book is a lyrical, inspirational exploration of growing up Black, written by award-winning illustrator Dapo Adeola, and brought to life by some of the most exciting Black illustration talents working today. This book addresses - honestly, yet hopefully - the experiences Black children face growing up with systemic racism, as well as providing hope for the future, delivering a powerful message to a new generation of dreamers. It's a message that is both urgent and

timeless - and offers a rich and rewarding reading experience for every child.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



How to Read a Book Hardcover by Kwame Alexander and Melissa Sweet

978-0062307811, HarperCollins Children's

Find a tree—a

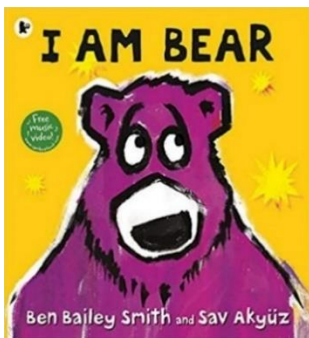
black tupelo or

dawn redwood will do—and

plant yourself.

(It's okay if you prefer a stoop, like Langston Hughes.)

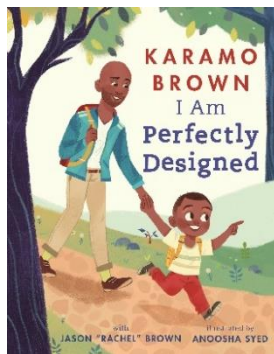
With these words, an adventure begins. Kwame Alexander's evocative poetry and Melissa Sweet's lush artwork come together to take readers on a sensory journey between the pages of a book.



I Am Bear by Ben Bailey Smith and Sav Akyuz

978-1406373059, Walker Books

If there's trouble, one thing is certain: Bear was there. In (and out) of his outrageous purple outfit, Bear can do anything – steal honey from the bees, do magic tricks, steal doughnuts from a police officer, and annoy a certain pesky squirrel. This hilarious picture book debut of actor Ben Bailey Smith (aka rapper Doc Brown) and artist Sav Akyuz will keep young mischief-makers in stitches.



I Am Perfectly Designed by Karamo Brown, Jason "Rachel" Brown and Anoosha Syed, 978-1529036145, Macmillan Children's Books

I Am Perfectly Designed is an empowering story about loving who you are, exactly as you are – and a celebration of the love between parent and child. From Karamo Brown, star of the hit Netflix series *Queer Eye*. Written by Karamo and his son Jason, this touching, funny story follows a boy and his father, as they spend the day together. Walking through the city, they chat about all the ways in which they are perfectly designed for each other.

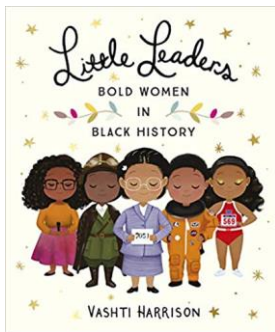


If All the World Were... by Joseph Coelho and Allison Colpoys 978-1786036513, Lincoln Children's Books

A moving, lyrical picture book about a young girl's love for her granddad and how she copes when he's gone, written by poet and playwright Joseph Coelho.

This beautifully illustrated, powerful and ultimately uplifting text is the ideal way to introduce children to the concept of death and dying, particularly children who have lost a grandparent.

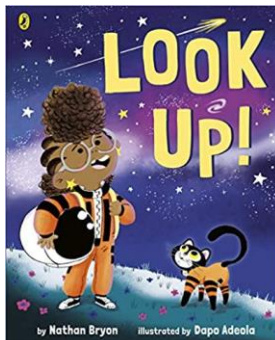
Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison 978-0241346846, Puffin

Did you know the treatment for leprosy was developed by a young scientist called Alice Ball? And Josephine Baker- world famous cabaret singer and dancer- was also a spy for the French résistance?

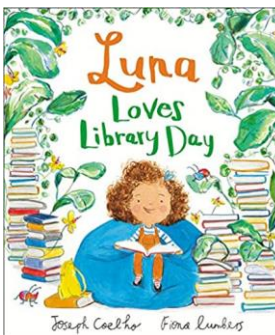
Featuring 40 trailblazing black women in the world's history, this book educates and inspires as it relates true stories of women who broke boundaries and exceeded all expectations.



Look Up! by Nathan Bryon and Dapo Adeola 978-0241345849, Puffin

Meet hilarious, science-mad chatterbox, Rocket - she's going to be the greatest astronaut, star-catcher, space-traveller that has ever lived!

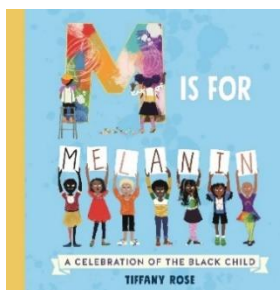
But... can she convince her big brother to stop looking down at his phone and start LOOKING UP at the stars? Bursting with energy and passion about science and space, this heart-warming, inspirational picture book will have readers turning off their screens and switching on to the outside world.



Luna Loves Library Day by Joseph Coelho and Fiona Lumbers 978-1783445950, Andersen Press

Every week Luna looks forward to one special day: the day when she discovers magic among the library shelves; the day she gets to spend with her dad. Exploring the books, Luna and her dad find magic, mystery and even start to mend their own history.

An inspiring story from one of the UK's greatest up-and-coming award-winning poets for children, perfectly captured in all its flights of fancy by newcomer Fiona Lumbers.

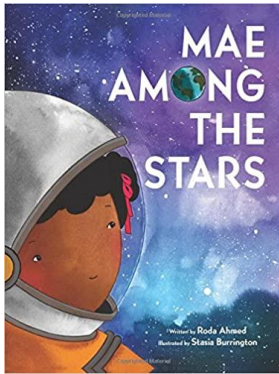


M is for Melanin: A Celebration of the Black Child by Tiffany Rose 978-1529062502, Macmillan Children's Books

Be bold. Be fearless. BE YOU.

M is for Melanin is an empowering alphabet book that teaches kids their ABC and celebrates black children. Each letter of the alphabet contains affirming, black-positive messages, from E is for Empowerment, to L is for Lead to W is for Worthy. This joyful book, written and illustrated by Tiffany Rose, teaches children their ABC and encourages all kids to love the skin they're in.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



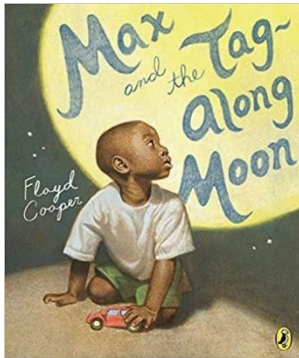
Mae Among the Stars by Roda Ahmed
978-0062651730, HarperCollins Children's

When Little Mae was a child, she dreamed of dancing in space. She imagined herself surrounded by billions of stars, floating, gliding, and discovering.

She wanted to be an astronaut.

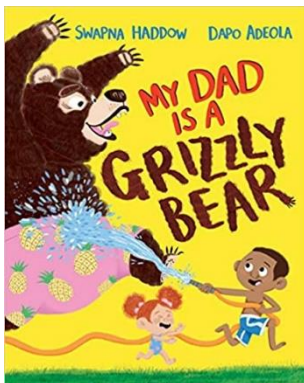
Her mom told her, If you believe it, and work hard for it, anything is possible."

Little Mae's curiosity, intelligence, and determination, matched with her parents' encouraging words, paved the way for her incredible success at NASA as the first African American woman to travel in space.



Max and the Tag-Along Moon by Floyd Cooper
978-0147515469, Puffin

Max loves his grandpa. When they must say good-bye after a visit, Grandpa promises Max that the moon at Grandpa's house is the same moon that will follow him all the way home. On that swervy-curvy car ride back to his house, Max watches as the moon tags along. But when the sky darkens and the moon disappears behind clouds, he worries that it didn't follow him home after all. Where did the moon go--and what about Grandpa's promise?

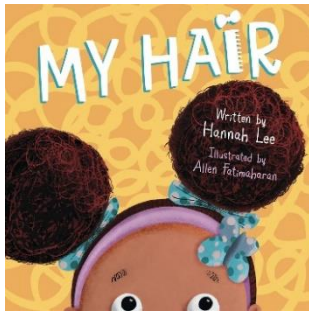


My Dad Is A Grizzly Bear by Swapna Haddow, Dapo Adeola
978-1529013979, Macmillan Children's Books

A playful, warm and funny story following a boy with a wild imagination and his lively family, from brand new creative duo: Swapna Haddow and Dapo Adeola.

Shhh. Beware. My dad is a grizzly bear.

In this family, it's just possible that Dad is a grizzly bear . . . He has fuzzy fur, enormous paws and loves the outdoors. He sleeps a lot even in the cinema and when he's awake, he's always hungry, usually eating up all the honey. What else could Dad be? But sometimes, when it's scary at night, a lovely big bear hug is just what is needed.

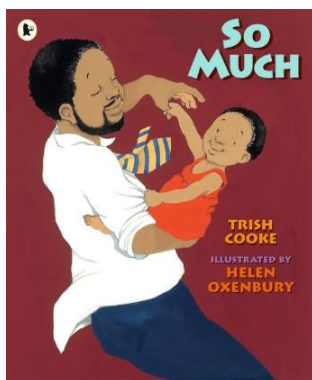


My Hair by Hannah Lee and Allen Fatimaharan

978-0571346875, Faber Children's

*My birthday's coming up so soon,
I'll need new clothes to wear.
But most of all, I need to know,
How shall I style my hair?*

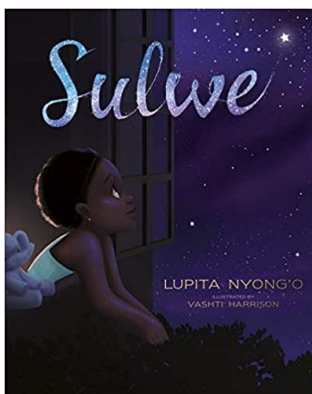
Will it be dreads or a twist out? Braids or a high-top fade? Joyous and vibrant, this captures perfectly the excitement of getting ready for a celebration, as well as showcasing a dazzling array of intricate hairstyles.



**So Much by Trish Cooke and Helen Oxenbury, 978-1406390728
Walker Books**

Mum and baby are home alone when – DING DONG! – Auntie and then Uncle and Nannie and Gran-Gran and the cousins come to visit. And they all want to hug and kiss and squeeze and eat the baby right up ... because everybody loves the baby SO MUCH!

A special 25th anniversary edition of a multiple award-winning story, *So Much* is a celebration of family life. Helen Oxenbury's characteristically warm, funny illustrations, paired with Trish Cooke's rhythmic, cumulative story capture the joy of being a baby in a large extended family – a baby who knows that he is absolutely, utterly adored.



Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o and Vashti Harrison

978-0241394328, Puffin

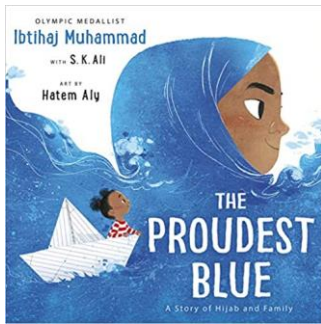
From Academy Award-winning actress Lupita Nyong'o comes a powerful, moving picture book about colourism, self-esteem and learning that true beauty comes from within.

Sulwe's skin is the colour of midnight. She's darker than everyone in her family, and everyone at school.

All she wants is to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister.

Then a magical journey through the night sky opens her eyes and changes everything.

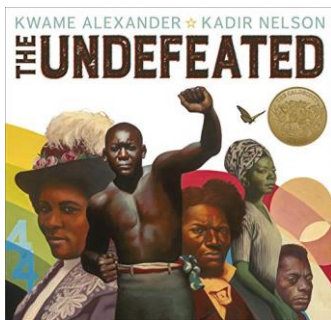
Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad by S. K. Ali and Hatem Aly, 978-1783449729, Andersen Press

Asiya's hijab is like the ocean and the sky, no line between them, saying hello with a loud wave.

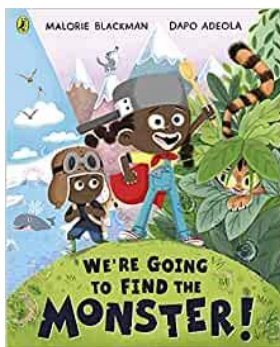
It's Faizah's first day of school, and her older sister Asiya's first day of wearing hijab – made of a beautiful blue fabric. But not everyone sees hijab as beautiful. In the face of hurtful, confusing words, will Faizah find new ways to be strong?



The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander, Kadir Nelson 978-1783449293, Andersen Press

This is for the unforgettable. The unafraid. The undefeated.

From *New York Times* bestselling-author Kwame Alexander comes this powerful and important ode to black history: the strength and bravery of everyday people and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest artists, athletes, and activists. With references to lyrics and lines originally shared by our most celebrated heroes, this poem digs into the not-so-distant past to underline the endurance and spirit of those surviving and thriving in the present.

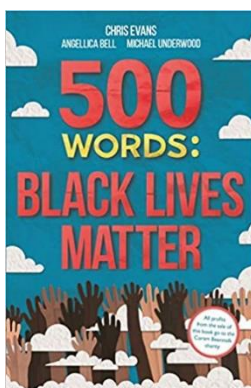


We're Going to Find the Monster by Malorie Blackman and Dapo Adeola

978-0241401309, Puffin

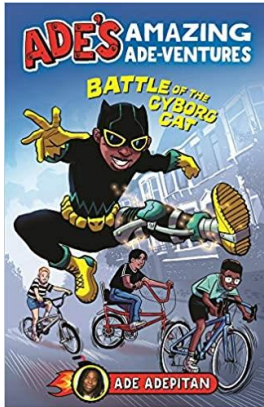
Join two intrepid adventurers as their imaginations transform their house into a wild wonderland - and their big brother becomes a mighty monster. A joy to read-aloud with its cumulative refrain, and full of funny, relatable characters, this is a contemporary celebration of creativity, fantasy and family.

Middle grade books



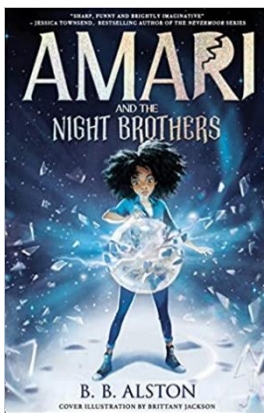
500 Words: Black Lives Matter written by various and edited by Chris Evans, Angellica Bell and Michael Underwood, 978-1787419605, Studio Press

A collection of 100 inspiring, moving and poignant short stories, submitted to the 500 Words: Black Lives Matter competition which ran on Virgin Radio in July 2020. *500 Words: Black Lives Matter* features a foreword from Chris Evans, analysis of the writing from Oxford University Press and writing tips from judges Malorie Blackman, Charlie Higson, Francesca Simon and Frank Cottrell-Boyce.



Ade's Amazing Ade-ventures: Battle of the Cyborg Cat by Ade Adepitan, 978-1787413252, Piccadilly Press

When Ade moves to London from Nigeria, he knows things will be different, but nothing can prepare him for the ups and downs of his Parson's Road adventures. Ade doesn't always feel welcome in his new community; fitting in is hard, especially as he looks different to everyone else. But Ade is brave and takes on the school bullies, surprising himself and the kids on his new street. His heroic acts and super football skills quickly help him make new friends who will always be there for him.



**Amari and the Night Brothers by BB Alston
978-1405298193, Farshore**

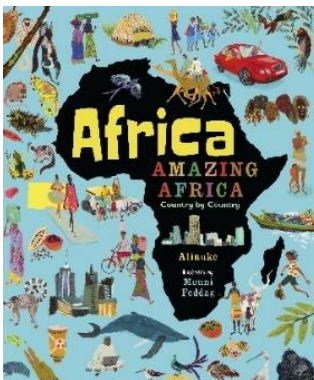
An epic middle grade supernatural adventure series, soon to be a major movie starring Marsai Martin. Perfect for readers aged 8+ and fans of Percy Jackson, Nevermoor and Men in Black.

Amari Peters knows three things.

Her big brother Quinton has gone missing.

No one will talk about it.

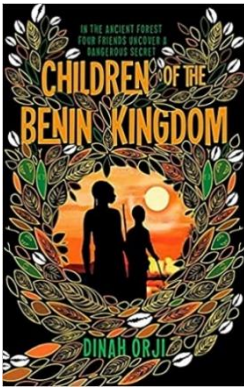
His mysterious job holds the secret...



Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country by Atinuke and Mouni Feddag, 978-1406376586, Walker Books

This book is British-Nigerian storyteller Atinuke's love letter to Africa: a carefully curated sample of the continent's 55 countries, in all their amazing diversity. Her beautifully-written, lively text reflects Africa's unique mix of the modern and the traditional, as she explores its geography, its peoples, its animals and its fascinating history.

The book divides Africa into five sections: South, East, West, Central and North, each with its own introduction. This is followed by a page per country, containing a delightful mix of friendly, informative text and colourful illustrations. With just a couple of facts per page, the book is perfectly geared toward seven year old readers, and imagined as a diving-off point: to inspire children to find out more about each and every country...



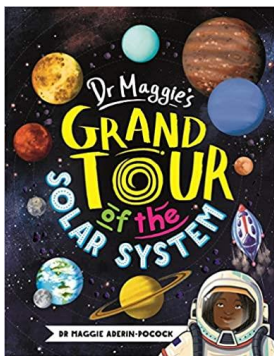
Children of the Benin by Dinah Orji
978-1999336332, Dinosaur Book Ltd

The Kingdom of Benin was located in modern-day Nigeria and our story takes place prior to the transatlantic slave trade and colonisation. It's the direct history of many Black UK school children, whether or not their ancestors were enslaved and taken across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. Although the story is celebratory of this incredible civilisation and of West African culture, it is also carefully researched and historically accurate.



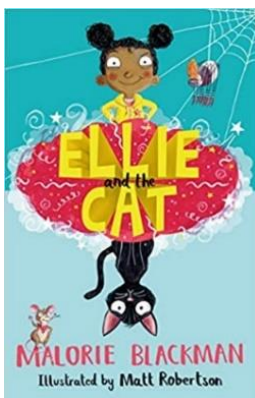
Clean Getaway by Nic Stone and Camilla Ru
978-1913311025, Knights Of

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 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.



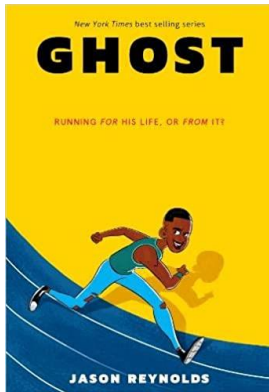
Dr Maggie's Grand Tour of the Solar System by Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock and Chelen Ecija, 978-1780555751, Buster Books

This mind-blowing book invites readers to join BBC presenter and renowned space scientist Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock (MBE) on an epic journey through the Solar System - visiting planets, moons, asteroids and satellites, and travelling to places where no human has been before. Along the way, kids can discover how we could live on Mars, learn about the hunt for a mysterious super-Earth, have a snowball fight on Mercury, climb the tallest mountain in the Solar System and much, much more. From spotting solar flares on the Sun to exploring objects at the edge of the icy Oort Cloud, this fun, action-packed title leaves no question unanswered and no meteorite unturned.



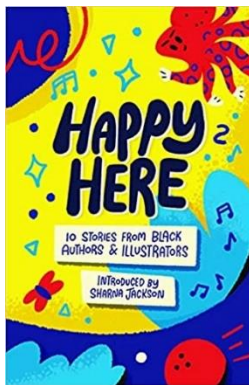
Ellie and the Cat by Malorie Blackman and Matt Robertson
978-1781128244, Barrington Stoke

Ellie is the rudest, most spoilt child her grandma has ever met and it's time that she learnt a lesson! So with a little bit of magic and some help from Jolly the cat, Grandma's going to make sure that Ellie changes her ways. Can Ellie work hard to prove that she can be good? Or is she destined to spend the rest of her days trapped in the body of a mean old cat? Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+.



Ghost by Jason Reynolds and Selom Sunu
978-1999642525, Knights Of

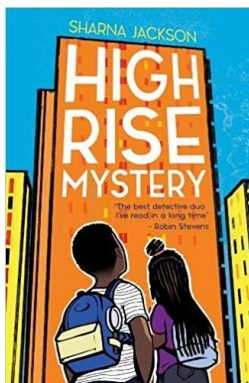
Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons -until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medallist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?



Happy Here: 10 stories from Black British authors & illustrators: 10 stories from Black British authors & illustrators by various, 978-1913311162, Knights Of

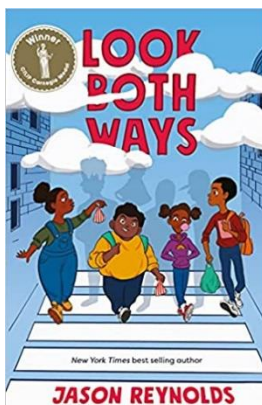
With an introduction from bestselling author Sharna Jackson, *Happy Here* features stories and poems by 10 Black British authors for readers aged 7+. Exploring themes of joy, home and family through a wide range of genres and styles, each author has been paired with a different illustrator to spotlight Black British artistic talent. With stories by Dean Atta, Joseph Coelho, Kereen Getten, Patrice Lawrence, Theresa Lola, E.L. Norry, Jasmine Richards, Alexandra Sheppard, Yomi

Sode, and Clare Weze.



High-Rise Mystery by Sharna Jackson
978-1999642518, Knights Of

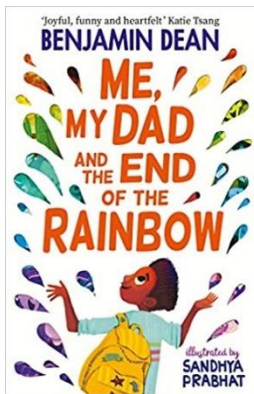
The detective duo everyone is dying to meet! Summer in London is hot, the hottest on record, and there's been a murder in THE TRI: the high-rise home to resident know-it-alls, Nik and Norva. Who better to solve the case? Armed with curiosity, home-turf knowledge and unlimited time - until the end of the summer holidays anyway. The first whodunnit in a new mystery series by Sharna Jackson.



Look Both Ways by Jason Reynolds and Selom Sunu
978-1999642594, Knights Of

When the bell rings and school is finished for the day, the walkers are finally set free. For ten blocks they have no-one telling them what to do; they can talk about bogies, skateboard, plan dramatic escapes, make jokes, face bullies, and hear about the school bus that fell from the sky... In ten stories (one per block), find out what really happens on the walk home from school, when there are no parents or teachers to supervise (or stop the fun!). From hilarious escapades to brave challenges, join the walkers for one journey and many, many

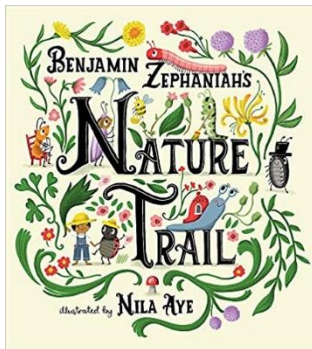
detours...



Me, My Dad and the End of the Rainbow by Benjamin Dean and Sandhya Prabhat, 978-1471199738, Simon & Schuster Children's

Things aren't going great for Archie Albright. His dad's acting weird, his mum too, and all he wants is for everything to go back to normal, to three months before when his parents were happy and still lived together. When Archie sees a colourful, crumpled flyer fall out of Dad's pocket, he thinks he may have found the answer. Only problem? The answer might just lie at the end of the rainbow, an adventure away. Together with his best friends, Bell and Seb, Archie sets off on a heartwarming and unforgettable journey to try and fix his family, even

if he has to break a few rules to do it...

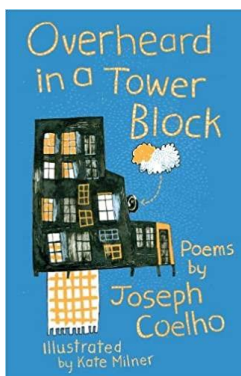


Nature Trail by Benjamin Zephaniah and Nila Aye, 978-1408361252, Orchard Books

All around us, from parks to gardens and flowerpots to pavements, there's a world of wonder just waiting to be discovered. Why not look a little closer and see what you find?

This joyful celebration of nature reminds us all to take a closer look at the world around us, and enjoy the wonder of nature wherever we find it. Packed with animals and minibeasts galore,

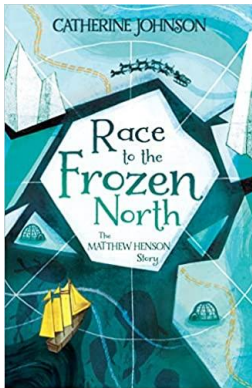
this imaginative rhyming text is perfect for reading aloud.



Overheard in a Tower Block: Poems by Joseph Coelho and Kate Milner 978-1910959589, Otter-Barry Books

Gazing at the stars from five storeys up, smelling the bins from five storeys below. Overheard arguments, overheard laughter. A disappearing father and a Mermaid-Queen mother; statues that sing for flesh and blood; bullies who kick you under the table; perfect red trainers - and the things that lurk in the library...Award-winning poet Joseph Coelho's astonishing new collection is a powerful and moving poetic narrative about growing up in the city.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



Race to the Frozen North: The Matthew Henson Story by Catherine Johnson, 978-1781128404, Barrington Stoke

Matthew Henson was simply an ordinary man. That was, until Commander Robert E. Peary entered his life, and offered him a chance at true adventure. Henson would become navigator, craftsman, translator, and right-hand man on a treacherous journey to the North Pole. Defying the odds and the many prejudices that faced him to become a true pioneer. This is his incredible and often untold story. Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+.



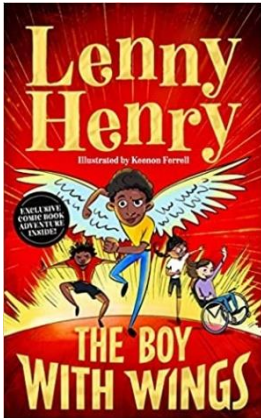
Shuri by Nic Stone 978-0702301834, Scholastic

For centuries, the Chieftain of Wakanda (the Black Panther) has gained his powers through the juices of the Heart-Shaped Herb. Much like Vibranium, the Heart-Shaped Herb is essential to the survival and prosperity of Wakanda. But something is wrong. The plants are dying. No matter what the people of Wakanda do, they can't save them. And their supply is running short.



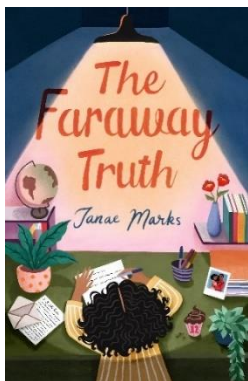
Some Places More Than Others by Renée Watson 978-1526613684, Bloomsbury Children's

All Amara wants for her birthday is to visit her father's family in New York City - Harlem. She can't wait to finally meet her Grandpa Earl and cousins in person, and to stay in the brownstone where her father grew up. Maybe this will help her understand her family - and herself - in a new way. But New York City is not exactly what Amara thought it would be. It's noisy, crowded, confusing, and her cousins can be mean. Plus her father is too busy working to spend time with her and too angry to fix his relationship with Grandpa Earl. Amara can't help wondering, even if she does discover more about where she came from, will it help her know where she belongs?



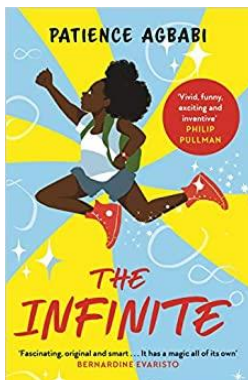
The Boy With Wings by Lenny Henry and Keenon Ferrell
978-1529067835, Macmillan Children's Books

An ordinary kid is about to become an EXTRAORDINARY hero! When Tunde sprouts wings and learns he's all that stands between Earth and total destruction, suddenly school is the least of his problems. Luckily, his rag-tag group of pals have got his back, and with his new powers, Tunde is ready to fly in the face of danger. So what if he can't even stand up to the school bully? He's the boy with wings – this is his destiny. No pressure then...



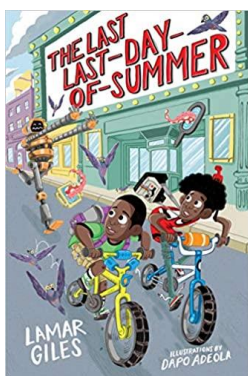
The Faraway Truth by Janae Marks
978-1912626380, Chicken House Books

Zoe Washington never met her father, who was sent to prison right before she was born. When she receives a letter from him on her twelfth birthday, it's a huge surprise. Zoe's mom always told her that Marcus was a liar, a monster, but he sounds... nice. Zoe starts to investigate the crime - and the deeper she digs, the more she doubts the conviction. Is her father innocent? Or is he a liar? Zoe is determined to find out.



The Infinite by Patience Agbabi
978-1786899651, Canongate books

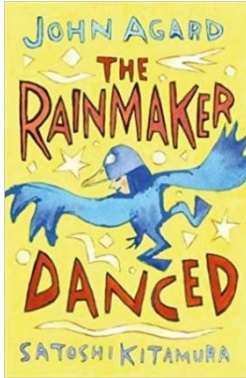
Leaplings, children born on the 29th of February, are very rare. Rarer still are Leaplings with The Gift - the ability to leap through time. Elle Bìbi-Imbelé Ifiè has The Gift, but she's never used it. Until now. On her twelfth birthday, Elle and her best friend Big Ben travel to the Time Squad Centre in 2048. Elle has received a mysterious warning from the future. Other Leaplings are disappearing in time - and not everyone at the centre can be trusted. Soon Elle's adventure becomes more than a race through time. It's a race against time. She must fight to save the world as she knows it - before it ceases to exist...



The Last Last-Day-Of-Summer by Lamar Giles and Dapo Adeola
978-1328460837, Versify

Otto and Sheed are the local sleuths in their zany Virginia town, masters of unraveling mischief using their unmatched powers of deduction. And as the summer winds down and the first day of school looms, the boys are craving just a little bit more time for fun, even as they bicker over what kind of fun they want to have. That is, until a mysterious man appears with a camera that literally freezes time. Now, with the help of some very strange people and even stranger creatures, Otto and Sheed will have to put aside their differences to save their town--and each other--before time stops for good.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



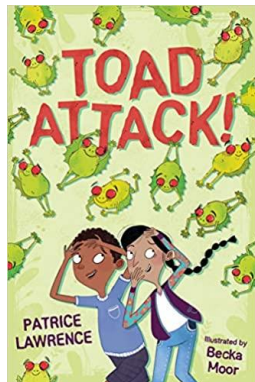
The Rainmaker Danced by John Agard and Satoshi Kitamura
978-1444932607, Hodder Children's

From nature and science to identity, prepare to be transported on a journey through past and present. This collection from John Agard, winner of the Queens Medal and the Eleanor Farjeon Award, explores the wonders of the world - inviting your child to ponder life's questions with lots of fun along the way!



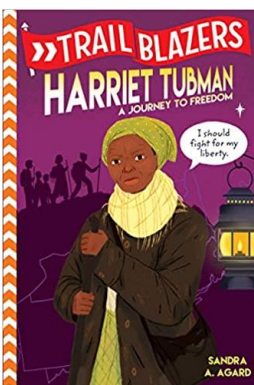
The Truths We Hold (Young Reader's Edition) by Kamala Harris
Bodley Head, 978-1847927019

In this young reader's edition of Kamala Harris's memoir, we learn about the impact that her family and community had on her life, and see what led her to discover her own sense of self and purpose. The Truths We Hold traces her journey as she explored the values she holds most dear—those of community, equality, and justice. An inspiring and empowering memoir, this book challenges us to become leaders in our own lives and shows us that with determination and perseverance all dreams are possible.



Toad Attack! by Patrice Lawrence and Becca Moor
978-1781128442, Barrington Stoke

After a toad lands on his head as he leaves his house one morning, Leo is determined to find out where it has come from and why. Together with his friend Rosa, he needs to come up with some answers before the angry residents of Upper Dab take matters into their own hands and the toads become toast! A brilliantly quirky comedy caper with a diverse and inclusive cast of characters. Particularly suitable for struggling, reluctant or dyslexic readers aged 8+



Trailblazers: Harriet Tubman: A Journey to Freedom by Sandra A. Agard, 978-1788952224, Stripes Publishing

How did Harriet Tubman help hundreds of enslaved people reach freedom? Born into slavery on a Maryland plantation, Harriet's life was full of hardship. In 1849, she made the brave decision to run away, journeying north on the Underground Railroad. Despite the dangers, she returned to the South again and again, leading many others to safety. Discover the story of this amazing abolitionist and find out how she overcame every obstacle in the fight for freedom.

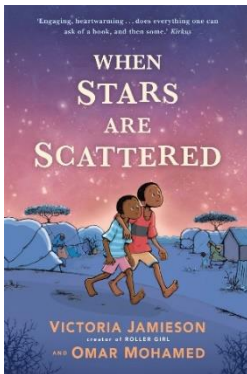
Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



When Life Gives You Mangoes by Kereen Getten

978-1782692645, Pushkin Children's Books

Nothing much happens in Sycamore, the small village where Clara lives - at least, that's how it seems. She loves eating ripe mangoes fallen from trees, running outside in the rainy season and escaping to her secret hideout with her best friend Gaynah. There's only one problem: she can't remember anything about the previous summer. When a quirky girl called Rudy arrives from England, everything starts to change. Gaynah stops acting like a best friend, while Rudy and Clara roam across the island and uncover an old family secret. As the summer reaches its peak and the island storms begin, Clara's memory starts to return and she must finally face the truth of what happened last year.



When Stars are Scattered by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson

978-0571363858, Faber Children's

A heart-wrenching true story about life in a Kenyan refugee camp that will restore your faith in real-life happy endings.

Omar and his brother Hassan, two Somali boys, have spent a long time in the Dadaab refugee camp. Separated from their mother, they are looked after by a friendly stranger. Life in the camp isn't always easy. The hunger is constant... but there's football to look forward to, and now there's a chance Omar will get to go to school...

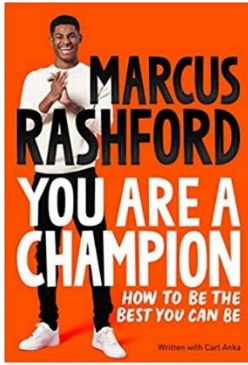


Windrush Child by Benjamin Zephaniah

978-0702302725, Scholastic

Leonard is shocked when he arrives with his mother in the port of Southampton. His father is a stranger to him, it's cold and even the Jamaican food doesn't taste the same as it did back home in Maroon Town. But his parents have brought him here to try to make a better life, so Leonard does his best not to complain, to make new friends, to do well at school – even when people hurt him with their words and with their fists.

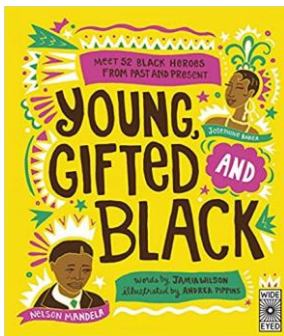
How can a boy so far from home learn to enjoy his new life when so many things count against him?



You Are a Champion: How to Be the Best You Can Be by Marcus Rashford and Carl Anka, 978-1529068177, Macmillan Children's Books

Marcus Rashford MBE is famous worldwide for his skills both on and off the pitch – but before he was a Manchester United and England footballer, and long before he started his inspiring campaign to end child food poverty, he was just an average kid from Wythenshawe, South Manchester. Now the nation's favourite footballer wants to show YOU how to achieve your dreams, in this positive and inspiring

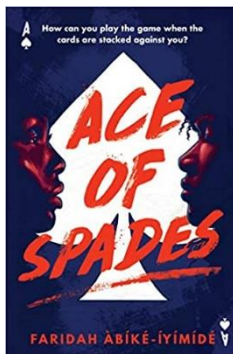
guide for life.



Young, Gifted and Black by Jamia Wilson and Andrea Pippins 978-1786030887, Wide Eye Editions

Meet 52 icons of colour from the past and present in this celebration of inspirational achievement—a collection of stories about changemakers to encourage, inspire and empower the next generation of changemakers. Jamia Wilson has carefully curated this range of black icons and the book is stylishly brought together by Andrea Pippins' colourful and celebratory illustrations.

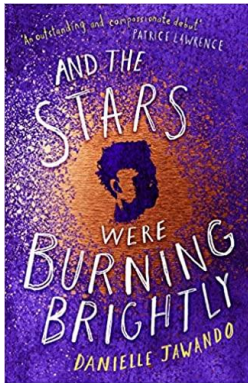
Young Adult



Ace of Spades by Faridah Abike-Iyimide 978-1474967532, Usborne

Hello, Niveus High. It's me. Who am I? That's not important. All you need to know is...I'm here to divide and conquer. - Aces

Welcome to Niveus Private Academy, where money paves the hallways, and the students are never less than perfect. Until now. Because anonymous texter, Aces, is revealing the darkest secrets of two students. Talented musician Devon buries himself in rehearsals, but he can't escape the spotlight when his private photos go public. Head girl Chiamaka isn't afraid to get what she wants, but soon everyone will know the price she has paid for power. Someone is out to get them both. Someone who holds all the aces. And they're planning much more than a high-school game...



And the Stars Were Burning Brightly by Danielle Jawando

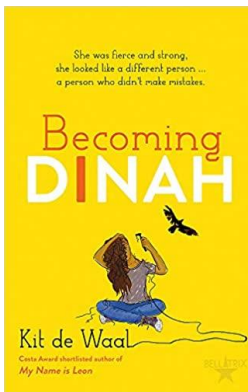
978-1471178771, Simon and Schuster Children's

When fifteen-year-old Nathan discovers that his older brother Al, has taken his own life, his whole world is torn apart.

Convinced that his brother was in trouble, Nathan decides to retrace Al's footsteps. As he does, he meets Megan, Al's former classmate, who is as determined as Nathan to keep Al's memory alive. Together they start seeking answers, but will either of them be able to handle the truth about Al's death when they eventually discover what

happened?

Warning - this novel contains themes that some readers may find upsetting, including suicide and intense bullying.

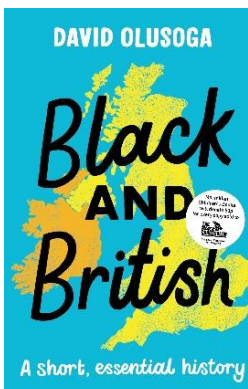


Becoming Dinah by Kit de Waal

978-1510105706, Orion Children's

Seventeen-year-old Dinah needs to leave her home, the weird commune where she grew up. She needs a whole new identity, starting with how she looks, starting with shaving off her hair, her 'crowning glory'. She has to do it quickly, because she has to go now.

Dinah was going to go alone and hitch a ride down south. Except, she ends up being persuaded to illegally drive a VW campervan for hundreds of miles, accompanied by a grumpy man with one leg. This wasn't the plan. But while she's driving, Dinah will be forced to confront everything that led her here, everything that will finally show her which direction to turn...



Black and British: A short essential history by David Olusoga

9781529063394, Macmillan Children's Books

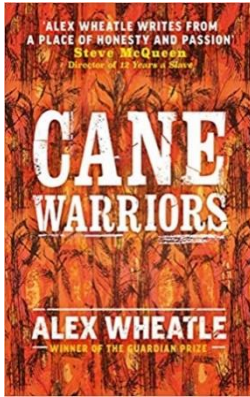
A short, essential introduction to Black British history

When did Africans first come to Britain?

Who are the well-dressed black children in Georgian paintings?

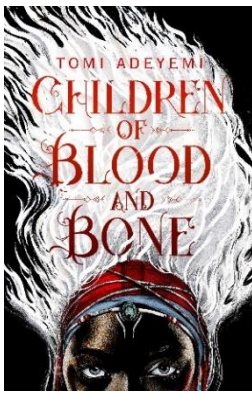
Why did the American Civil War disrupt the Industrial Revolution?

These and many other questions are answered in this essential introduction to 1800 years of the Black British history: from the Roman Africans who guarded Hadrian's Wall right up to the present day.



Cane Warriors by Alex Wheatle
9781783449873, Andersen Press
Nobody free till everybody free.

Moa is fourteen. The only life he has ever known is toiling on the Frontier sugar cane plantation for endless hot days, fearing the vicious whips of the overseers. Then one night he learns of an uprising, led by the charismatic Tacky. Moa is to be a cane warrior, and fight for the freedom of all the enslaved people in the nearby plantations. But before they can escape, Moa and his friend Keverton must face their first great task: to kill their overseer, Misser Donaldson. Time is ticking, and the day of the uprising approaches...



Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi
9781509871353, Macmillan Children's Books

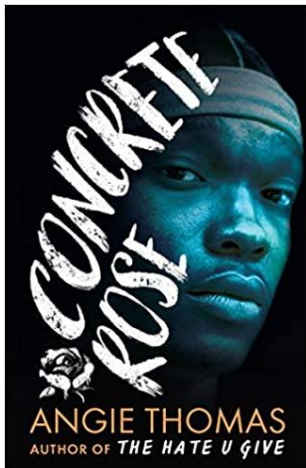
Zélie remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. When different clans ruled – Burners igniting flames, Tiders beckoning waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoning forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, anyone with powers was targeted and killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope. Only a few people remain with the power to use magic, and they must remain hidden.



Clap When You Land by Elizabeth Acevedo
978-1471409127, Hot Key Books

Camino Rios lives for the summers when her father visits her in the Dominican Republic. But this time, on the day when his plane is supposed to land, Camino arrives at the airport to see crowds of crying people...

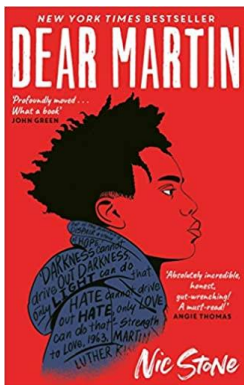
In New York City, Yahaira Rios is called to the principal's office, where her mother is waiting to tell her that her father, her hero, has died in a plane crash. Separated by distance - and Papi's secrets - the two girls are forced to face a new reality in which their father is dead and their lives are forever altered. And then, when it seems like they've lost everything of their father, they learn of each other.



Concrete Rose by Angie Thomas
978-1406384444, Walker Books

From international phenomenon Angie Thomas comes a hard-hitting return to Garden Heights with the story of Maverick Carter, Starr's father, set seventeen years before the events of the award-winning *The Hate U Give*. With his King Lord dad in prison and his mom working two jobs, seventeen-year-old Maverick Carter helps the only way he knows how: slinging drugs. Life's not perfect, but he's got everything under control. Until he finds out he's a father... Suddenly it's not so easy to deal drugs and finish school with a baby dependent on him for everything. So when he's offered the chance to go straight, he takes it. But when King Lord blood runs

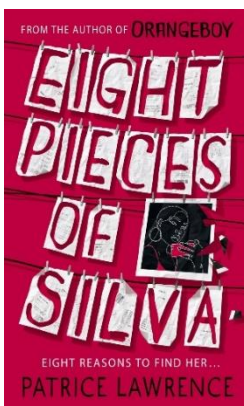
through your veins, you don't get to just walk away.



Dear Martin by Nic Stone, 978-1471175565
Simon and Schuster Children's

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League – but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighbourhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up – way up, sparking the

fury of a white off-duty police officer beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.



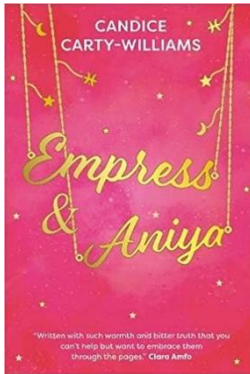
Eight Pieces of Silva by Patrice Lawrence
9781444954746, Hodder Children's Books

Becks is into girls but didn't come out because she was never in. She lives with her mum, stepdad and eighteen-year-old Silva, her stepdad's daughter. Becks and Silva are opposites, but bond over their mutual obsession with K-pop.

When Becks' mum and stepdad go on honeymoon to Japan, Becks and Silva are left alone. Except, Silva disappears. Becks ventures into the forbidden territory of Silva's room and finds the first of eight clues that help her discover her sister's secret life.

Meanwhile, Silva is on a journey. A journey to make someone love her. He says he doesn't, but he's just joking. All she has to do is persuade him otherwise...

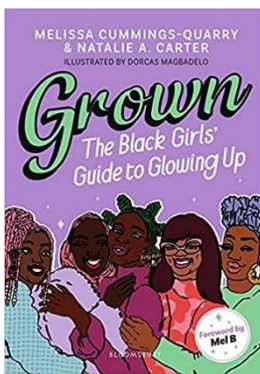
Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



Empress & Aniya by Candice Cartwright-Williams **978-1913311100, Knights Of**

The first YA novel from the bestselling author of *Queenie*. When Empress starts at Aniya's school, they're not exactly best friends. But, when the two teenage girls accidentally cast a spell on their 16th birthday and end up switching bodies, they quickly learn that friendship is the most important magic of all. South London's answer to 'Freaky Friday', Empress and Aniya is a moving portrayal of the importance of real friendship and the ups and downs of being a

teenager.

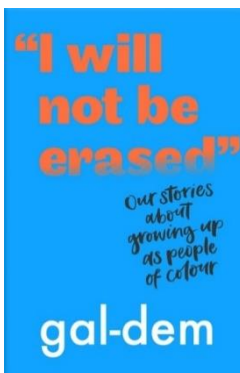


Grown: The Black Girls' Guide to Glowing Up by Melissa Cummings-Quarry, Natalie A Carter and Dorcas Magbadelo, 978-1526623713, Bloomsbury Children's Books

Being a teenager and trying to understand who you are and what you stand for is hard. Period. But if you're a Black girl and don't always see yourself represented in the books you read, the films you watch, the adverts you see or the history you're taught, it can be even tougher. Grown: The Black Girls' Guide to Glowing Up was written with one

thing in mind sis. You.

From understanding identity to the politics of hair to maintaining squad goals to dealing with microaggressions to consent to figuring out what career you might want, Grown has got your back.

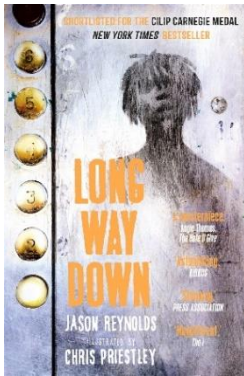


"I Will Not Be Erased": Our stories about growing up as people of colour by gal-dem, 978-1406386370, Walker Books

gal-dem, the award-winning online and print magazine, is created by women and non-binary people of colour. In this life-affirming, moving and joyous collection of fourteen essays, gal-dem's talented writers use raw material from their teenage years - diaries, poems and chat histories - to give advice to their younger selves and those growing up today.

gal-dem have been praised by the Guardian for being "the agents of change we need" and these essays tackle important subjects including race, gender, mental health and activism, making this essential reading.

Brilliant books for children and young people by black authors and illustrators



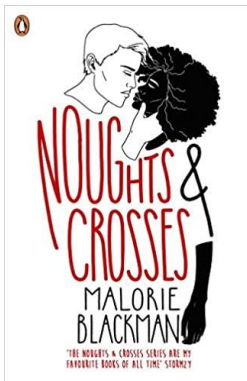
Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds and Chris Priestley, 9780571335121, Faber Children's

After Will's brother is shot in a gang crime, he knows the next steps. Don't cry. Don't snitch. Get revenge. So he gets in the lift with Shawn's gun, determined to follow The Rules. Only when the lift door opens, Buck walks in, Will's friend who died years ago. And Dani, who was shot years before that. As more people from his past arrive, Will has to ask himself if he really knows what he's doing.



Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds 978-1484788509, Marvel Press

Miles Morales is just your average teenager. Dinner every Sunday with his parents, chilling out playing old-school video games with his best friend, Ganke, crushing on brainy, beautiful poet Alicia. He's even got a scholarship spot at the prestigious Brooklyn Visions Academy. Oh yeah, and he's Spider Man. But lately, Miles's spidey-sense has been on the fritz. When a misunderstanding leads to his suspension from school, Miles begins to question his abilities. After all, his dad and uncle were Brooklyn jack-boys with criminal records. Maybe kids like Miles aren't meant to be superheroes. Maybe Miles should take his dad's advice and focus on saving himself.



Noughts & Crosses by Malorie Blackman 978-0141378640, Penguin

'Stop it! You're all behaving like animals! Worse than animals - like blankers!'

Sephy is a Cross: she lives a life of privilege and power. But she's lonely, and burns with injustice at the world she sees around her.

Callum is a nought: he's considered to be less than nothing - a blanker, there to serve Crosses - but he dreams of a better life.

They've been friends since they were children, and they both know that's as far as it can ever go. Noughts and Crosses are fated to be bitter enemies - love is out of the question.

Then - in spite of a world that is fiercely against them - these star-crossed lovers choose each other.

But this is love story that will lead both of them into terrible danger . . . and which will have shocking repercussions for generations to come.



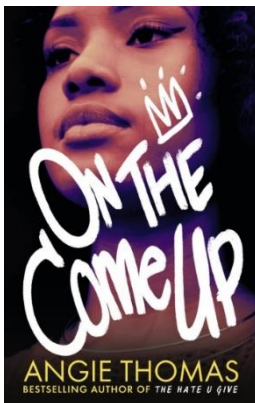
Oh My Gods by Alexandra Sheppard

978-1407188737, Scholastic

She's just moved in with her dorky dad and self-absorbed older siblings - who happen to be the ancient Greek gods, living incognito in London!

Between keeping her family's true identities secret, trying to impress her new friends, and meeting an *actually* cute boy, Helen's stress levels are higher than Mount Olympus.

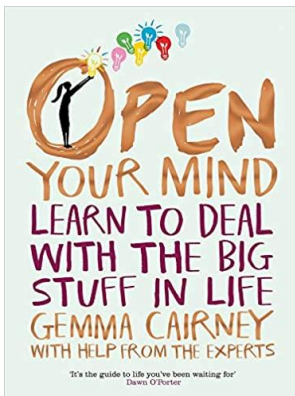
She needs to rein in her chaotic family before they blow their cover AND her chances at a half-normal social life.



On the Come Up Paperback by Angie Thomas, 978-1406372168

Walker Books

Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. As the daughter of an underground hip hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri's got massive shoes to fill. But when her first song goes viral for all the wrong reasons, Bri finds herself at the centre of controversy and portrayed by the media as more menace than MC. And with an eviction notice staring her family down, Bri no longer just wants to make it – she has to. Even if it means becoming the very thing the public has made her out to be.



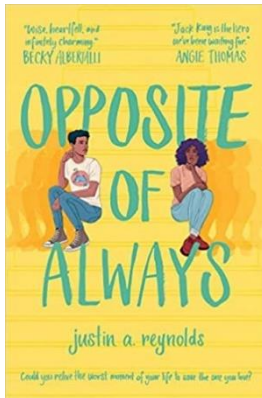
Open Your Mind: Your World and Your Future by Gemma Cairney

978-1509877003, Macmillan Children's Books

Full of honest and practical advice from Gemma Cairney and a whole host of trained professionals and real people, *Open Your Mind* is the best friend of a book everyone needs. From stress, trauma and anxiety, to your place in the world and everything in between.

Gemma Cairney is an important advocate for young people. Her personal insight and time as Radio 1's resident agony aunt on The Surgery makes her perfectly placed to offer advice to young people

questioning what life's all about. Discover even more with *Open Your Heart: Learn to Love Your Life and Love Yourself*.



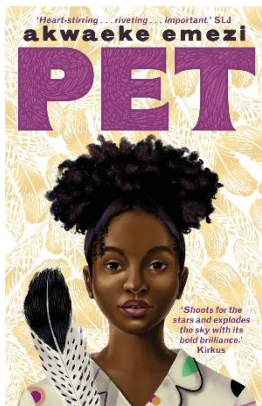
Opposite of Always by Justin Reynolds

978-1509870042, Macmillan Children’s Books

When Jack and Kate meet at a party, he knows he’s falling – hard. Soon she’s meeting his best friends and Kate wins them over as easily as she did Jack. But then Kate dies. And their story should end there.

Yet Kate’s death sends Jack back to the beginning, the moment they first meet, and Kate’s there again. Healthy, happy, and charming as ever. Jack isn’t sure if he’s losing his mind.

Still, if he has a chance to prevent Kate’s death, he’ll take it. Even if that means believing in time travel. However, Jack will learn that his actions are not without consequences. And when one choice turns deadly for someone else close to him, he has to figure out what he’s willing to do to save the people he loves.



Pet by Akwaeke Emezi

9780571355112, Faber Children’s

There are no more monsters anymore, or so the children in the city of Lucille are taught. With doting parents and a best friend named Redemption, Jam has grown up with this lesson all her life. But when she meets Pet, a creature made of horns and colours and claws, who emerges from one of her mother’s paintings and a drop of Jam’s blood, she must reconsider what she’s been told. Pet has come to hunt a monster, and the shadow of something grim lurks in Redemption’s house. Jam must fight not only to protect her best

friend, but also to uncover the truth.



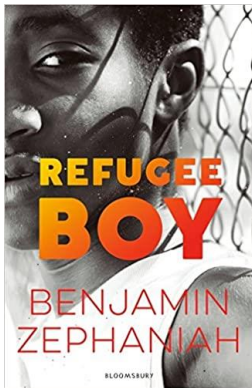
Punching the Air by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam

978-0008422141, HarperCollins Children’s

With threats coming from both inside and outside the game, Kiera must fight to save the safe space she’s created. But can she protect SLAY without losing herself?

One fateful night, an altercation in a gentrifying neighbourhood escalates into tragedy. ‘Boys just being boys’ turns out to be true only when those boys are white.

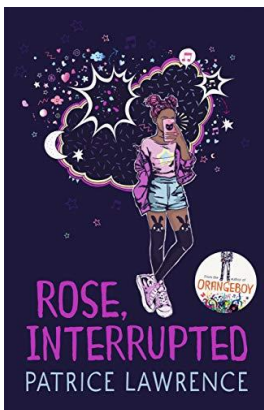
Suddenly, at just sixteen years old, Amal Shahid’s bright future is upended: he is convicted of a crime he didn’t commit and sent to prison. Despair and rage almost sink him until he turns to the refuge of his words, his art. This never should have been his story. But can he change it?



Refugee Boy by Benjamin Zephaniah
978-1408894996, Bloomsbury Children's

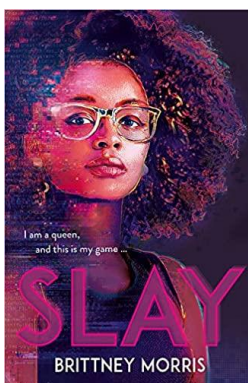
Acclaimed performance poet and novelist Benjamin Zephaniah's honest, wry and poignant story of a young refugee left in London is of even more power and pertinence today than when it was first published.

Life is not safe for Alem. His father is Ethiopian, his mother Eritrean. Their countries are at war, and Alem is welcome in neither place. So Alem is excited to spend a holiday in London with his father - until he wakes up to find him gone. What seems like a betrayal is in fact an act of love, but now Alem is alone in a strange country, and he must forge his own path ...



Rose, Interrupted by Patrice Lawrence
Hodder Children's Books, 978-1444940657

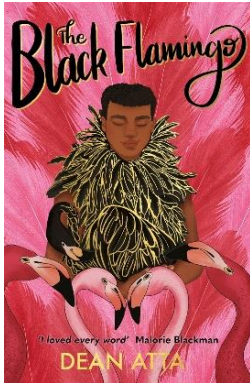
Eighteen months ago, 17-year-old Rose and 13-year-old Rudder escaped a strict religious sect with their mum. They are still trying to make sense of the world outside - no more rules about clothes and books, films and music, no more technology bans. But also no more friendship with the people they've known all their lives, no community and no certainty. It doesn't help that their mum has to work all hours to pay rent on their cramped, smelly, one-bed flat above a kebab shop in Hackney. While Rudder gorges on once-taboo Harry Potters and dances to Simon and Garfunkel and show tunes, Rose swaps the ankle skirts and uncut hair of the Woodford Pilgrims for Japanese-cute fairy dress and her new boyfriend, Kye. Kye, who she wants with all her being. But there's loads of scary stuff about their new life that Rose and Rudder have no idea how to handle - it's normal for girls to let their boyfriends take naked pictures of them, right?



SLAY by Brittney Morris, 9781444951721
Hodder Children's Books

'We are different ages, genders and traditions ... but tonight we all SLAY'

By day, seventeen-year-old Kiera Johnson is a college student, and one of the only black kids at Jefferson Academy. By night, she joins hundreds of thousands of black gamers who duel worldwide in the secret online role-playing card game, SLAY. No one knows Kiera is the game developer - not even her boyfriend, Malcolm. But when a teen in Kansas City is murdered over a dispute in the SLAY world, the media labels it an exclusionist, racist hub for thugs.



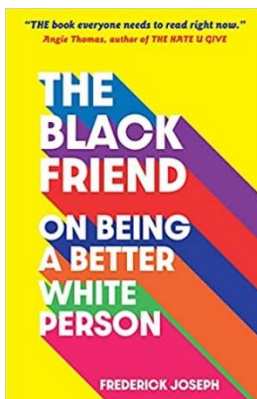
The Black Flamingo by Dean Atta and Anshika Khullar
9781444948608, Hodder Children's Books

This is not about being ready, it's not even about being fierce, or fearless, IT'S ABOUT BEING FREE.

Michael waits in the stage wings, wearing a pink wig, pink fluffy coat and black heels.

One more step will see him illuminated by spotlight.

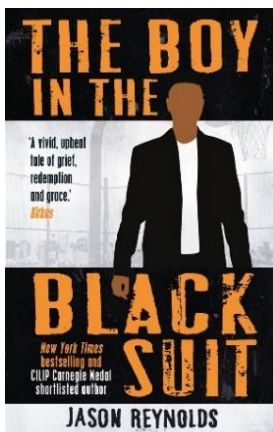
He has been on a journey of bravery to get here, and he is almost ready to show himself to the world in bold colours... Can he emerge as The Black Flamingo?



The Black Friend: On Being a Better White Person by Frederick Joseph

978-1529500615, Walker Books

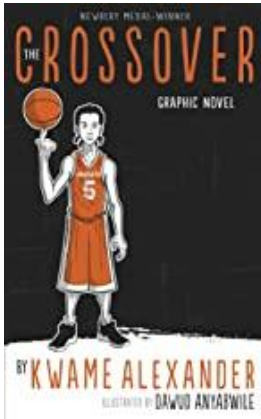
Speaking directly to the reader, Frederick Joseph offers powerful reflections on his own experiences with racism. As a former "token Black kid", he now presents himself as the friend many readers need, touching on topics including cultural appropriation, "reverse racism" and white privilege. Featuring interviews with figures such as writer Angie Thomas, content creator Toni Tone, and April Reign, founder of the #OscarsSoWhite movement, this book serves as conversation starter and tool kit, creating a timely and essential read for committed anti-racists and newcomers to the cause of racial justice alike.



The Boy in the Black Suit by Jason Reynolds, 9780571356126
Faber Children's

Matt wears a black suit every day. No, not because his mom died – although she did, and it sucks. But he wears the suit for his gig at the local funeral home, which pays way better than the Cluck Bucket, and he needs the income since his dad can't handle the bills (or anything, really) on his own. So while Dad's snagging bottles of whiskey, Matt's snagging fifteen bucks an hour. Not bad. But everything else? Not good. Then Matt meets Lovey. Crazy name, and she's been through more crazy stuff than he can imagine. Yet Lovey never cries. She's tough. Really tough. Tough in the way Matt wishes he could be.

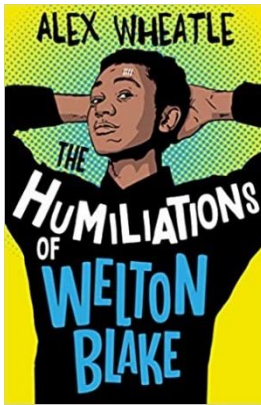
Which is maybe why he's drawn to her, and definitely why he can't seem to shake her. Because there's nothing more hopeful than finding a person who understands your loneliness – and who can maybe even help take it away.



***The Crossover: Graphic Novel* by Kwame Alexander & Dawud Anyabwile, 9781783449590, Andersen Press**

'With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. 'Cuz tonight I'm delivering,' raps twelve-year-old Josh Bell. Thanks to their dad, he and his twin brother, Jordan, are kings on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood – he's got mad beats, too, which help him find his rhythm when it's all on the line.

Kwame Alexander's *New York Times* bestseller and Newbery Medal-winning *The Crossover* is vividly brought to life as a graphic novel with stunning illustrations by star talent Dawud Anyabwile.



***The Humiliations of Welton Blake* by Alex Wheatle 978-1781129494, Barrington Stoke**

Welton Blake has done it! He's asked out Carmella McKenzie - the best-looking girl in school - and she's only gone and said yes!

But just as he thinks his luck is starting to change, Welton's phone breaks, kick-starting a series of unfortunate and humiliating events. With bullies to avoid, girls ready to knock him out and all the drama with his mum and dad, life for Welton is about to go very, very wrong...

Finding your next read

[Black Lives Matter Booklists ages 0-16 by National Literacy Trust](https://www.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/represents/breaking-ground-brochure.pdf)

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/represents/breaking-ground-brochure.pdf>

[Chatterbooks resources page \(for children up to 13+\)](https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/blog/collections/diverse-voices-childrens-books-that-celebrate-difference-6090)

<https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/blog/collections/diverse-voices-childrens-books-that-celebrate-difference-6090>

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