



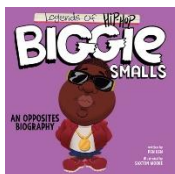
Inclusive Literature Lists

The Billings Public Library supports and values and celebrates diversity and inclusion. We strive to curate a collection of resources that represents all demographics in our community's tapestry. We believe an inclusive and welcoming community is a stronger community.

This list of inclusive and diverse literature that the youth of our community can see themselves in as well as use as a conduit to build compassion for others is brought to you on behalf of collaboration between the Human Relations Commission of the City of Billings, the Billings Public Library, and a children's literature assistant professor from Montana State University Billings.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. We welcome your feedback, suggestions, and any recommendations for this list. We will take these into consideration as we continue to develop these lists.

October 2024 Inclusive Literature



Legends of Hip-Hop: Biggie Smalls: An Opposites Biography

By [Ken, Pen](#)

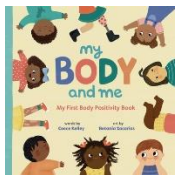
Illustrator [Moore, Saxton](#)

2024-06 - HarperFestival

9780063234307 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Mic check! Learn your opposites with Biggie Smalls in the Legends of Hip-Hop board book series.

In this accessible series perfectly crafted for babies (and adult fans), music producer Pen Ken and 3x Emmy Award-nominated animation director Saxton Moore introduce mini emcees to some of hip-hop's biggest and brightest luminaries with fun facts about each rapper, organized by [...More](#)



My Body and Me: My First Body Positivity Book

By [Kelley, Ceece](#)

Illustrator [Zacarias, Betania](#)

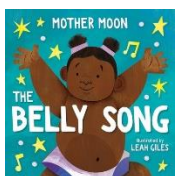
2024-03 - Soaring Kite Books

9781958372210 [Check Our Catalog](#)

I love my body. It's special to me. It's exactly the way it's meant to be.

An empowering celebration of bodies, promoting body positivity such as gratitude for our puffy cheeks that help us eat; strength in our round bellies that help store our food; pride in our natural hair; appreciation for the color of our skin; and more.

This board book tackles [...More](#)



The Belly Song

By [Moon, Mother](#)

Illustrator [Giles, Leah](#)

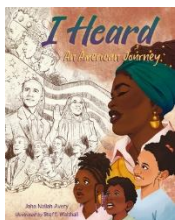
2024-07 - Little Bee Books

9781499816280 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Sing along in this joyful celebration of your baby's perfect belly!

"As the pages celebrate many different kinds of human bellies, they simultaneously model a wealth of loving connections between children and adults." - *Publisher's Weekly*

"[*The Belly Song*] joyfully celebrates different body types, focusing on bellies with entertaining, simple lyrics that [...More](#)



I Heard

By [Avery, J. Nailah](#)

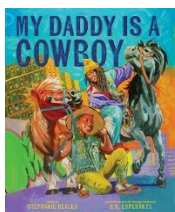
Illustrator [Walthall, Steffi](#)

2024-04 - Charlesbridge Publishing

9781623543822 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A powerful and poetic picture book about Black history in the United States, from the shores of Africa and slavery, to the civil rights and Black Lives Matter movements.

With stunning lyricism reminiscent of traditional African spirituals and today's rhythm and flow of hip-hop, a teacher shares the history of being Black in the US, while continuing to march into present day--undeterred [...More](#)



My Daddy Is a Cowboy

By [Seales, Stephanie](#)

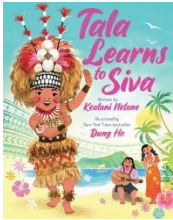
Illustrator [Esperanza, C. G.](#)

2024-06 - Abrams Books for Young Readers

9781419760815 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A young girl and her father share an early morning horseback ride around their city in *My Daddy Is a Cowboy*, a picture book celebration of "just-us time," perfect for fans of *My Papi Has a Motorcycle*.

In the early hours before dawn, a young girl and her father greet their horses and ride together through the waking city streets. As they trot along, Daddy tells cowboy [...More](#)



Tala Learns to Siva

By [Netane, Kealani](#)

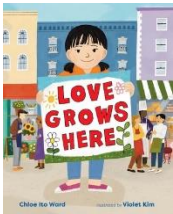
Illustrator [Ho, Dung](#)

2024-05 - Orchard Books

9781338859317 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A lovingly empowering story about finding courage and strength in your family, history, and community through a traditional and cherished Samoan dance, tauluga. Written by debut author, Kealani Netane, and illustrated by *New York Times* bestselling illustrator, Dung Ho.

Tala wishes that she could dance the traditional Samoan dance, the tauluga, just like her Aunty Sina. [...More](#)



Love Grows Here

By [Ward, Chloe Ito](#)

Illustrator [Kim, Violet](#)

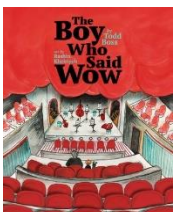
2024-04 - Albert Whitman & Company

9780807531242 [Check Our Catalog](#)

After a racist encounter, an Asian American girl decides to fight hate by spreading love.

Aiko learns that Japanese Americans were once put in prison camps in her own country--the US--and that there are still some people who don't like her, for no reason. But Aiko also learns that people respond to acts of kindness.

[...More](#)



The Boy Who Said Wow

By [Boss, Todd](#)

Illustrator [Kheiriyeh, Rashin](#)

2024-04 - Beach Lane Books

9781534499713 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Inspired by the beautiful true story of a nonverbal boy moved to speech at his first Mozart concert, this picture book is a testament to the power of art and the boundless joy it can bring.

When Grandfather comes to take his grandson to a concert, Ronan is quiet as they leave the house, quiet in the car, and quiet at the concert hall. But when the performance is over and the beautiful [...More](#)



Calvin, Look Out!: A Bookworm Birdie Gets Glasses

By [Berne, Jennifer](#)

Illustrator [Bendis, Keith](#)

2014-08 - Sterling Children's Books

9781454909101 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This follow-up to "Calvin Can't Fly!" relates how everyone's favorite bookworm Calvin uses his book knowledge and his new glasses after he gets lost in the forest. Full color. [...More](#)



Emma's Awesome Summer Camp Adventure: A Charley and Emma Story

By [Webb, Amy](#)

Author [Webb, Grace](#)

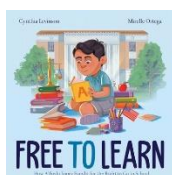
Illustrator [Liddiard, Merrilee](#)

2024-04 - Beaming Books

9781506483399 [Check Our Catalog](#)

All for inclusion, and inclusion for all!

Emma is going to her first summer camp, and she is so excited! Camp Waterfall is an accessible camp, which means that Emma, Charley, and a host of new friends with different abilities can all participate, with nobody feeling left out or getting left behind. But will Emma really be ready to meet all the challenges and new experiences [...More](#)



Free to Learn: How Alfredo Lopez Fought for the Right to Go to School

By [Levinson, Cynthia](#)

Illustrator [Ortega, Mirelle](#)

2024-04 - Atheneum Books

9781665904278 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From the author of the award-winning *The Youngest Marcher* comes a picture book about the true story of Alfredo Lopez, an undocumented boy involved in a landmark Supreme Court case that still ensures children's right to education today.

Alfredo Lopez has so many questions before starting second grade! Will his friends be in his class? Will his teacher speak Spanish? But then his [...More](#)



Let's Go

By [Flett, Julie](#)

2024-05 - Greystone Kids

9781771646109 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An extraordinary book that celebrates skateboarding, family, and community, from beloved artist and author Julie Flett, a winner of the New York Times / New York Public Library Best Illustrated Children's Book Award.

Every day, a little boy watches kids pass by on skateboards, and dreams of joining them. One day, his mother brings a surprise: her old skateboard, just for [...More](#)



A Family Tree

By [Drouillard, Staci Lola](#)

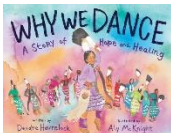
Illustrator [Gardiner, Kate](#)

2024-05 - Clarion Books

9780063242463 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A modern-day twist to *The Giving Tree*, this book chronicles the changes brought upon a beloved family tree that must be uprooted and planted on new land. This debut picture book by Staci Lola Drouillard (Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe descendant) celebrates resiliency, family bonds, and our deep connection to and responsibility for nature.

Grandma's garden was [...More](#)



Why We Dance: A Story of Hope and Healing

By [Havrelock, Deidre](#)

Illustrator [McKnight, Aly](#)

2024-02 - Abrams Books for Young Readers

9781419756672 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From Indigenous creative team Deidre Havrelock and Aly McKnight comes a powerful and exuberant story about the heritage, joy, and healing power of the Jingle Dress Dance--a perfect read-aloud picture book.

It's a special day--the day of the Jingle Dress Dance! Before the big powwow, there's a lot to do: getting dressed, braiding hair, packing lunches, and practicing bounce-steps.

[...More](#)



Free to Be Fabulous

By [McMullin, David](#)

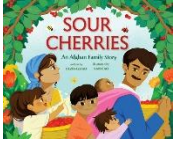
Illustrator [Cathro, Robbie](#)

2024-04 - Clarion Books

9780063239685 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An exuberant and affirming picture book about self-expression, allyship, and celebrating differences.

Daniel is obsessed with his favorite pop star Fabulina and can't wait to show off his signature shimmy-kick to her biggest hit "Strong, Brave, Free" at the school talent show. After winning the talent show, Daniel feels euphoric. But Daniel soon realizes that not everyone [...More](#)



Sour Cherries: An Afghan Family Story

By [Azaad, Dezh](#)

Illustrator [Cao, Nan](#)

2024-05 - Abrams Books for Young Readers

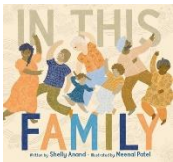
9781419763625 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Author Dezh Azaad and illustrator Nan Cao's picture book *Sour Cherries* is a moving, personal story about an Afghan refugee child and the fruit that connects him to family and home.

My favorite day is in the summer,

picking cherries with my mother.

Sour Cherries follows a summer day as an Afghan child learns to make sour cherry jam, [...More](#)



In This Family

By [Anand, Shelly](#)

Illustrator [Patel, Meenal](#)

2024-05 - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

9781665919036 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A multicultural family welcomes a new member in this warm and lyrical picture book that celebrates family love.

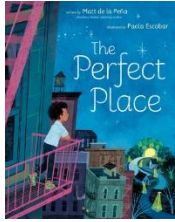
In this family

We are a blend, a combination

of cornbread and roti,

of the Green Bay Packers and Bhangra...

This family has ancestors hailing from the Land of Five Rivers, the Emerald Isle, the Swiss Alps, and [...More](#)



The Perfect Place

By [de la Peña, Matt](#)

Illustrator [Escobar, Paola](#)

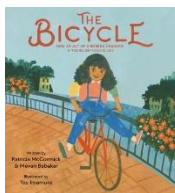
2024-05 - G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers

9780593325636 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From the Newbery Medal-winning author of *Last Stop on Market Street* comes this moving picture book about the perils of perfectionism.

Lucas goes to the perfect school in the perfect neighborhood. And when he gets perfect grades, he feels like he fits right in.

But life at home is not so perfect. His dad's old work truck keeps breaking down. His mom works long hours at her job [...More](#)



The Bicycle

By [McCormick, Patricia](#)

Illustrator [Imamura, Yas](#)

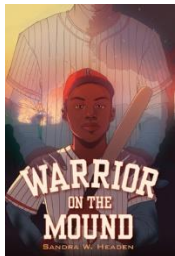
Author [Babakar, Mevan](#)

2024-05 - Balzer & Bray/Harperteen

9780063056992 [Check Our Catalog](#)

The true story of how a simple act of kindness changed a young refugee's life--from award-winning author Patricia McCormick with Mevan Babakar.

For generations, Mevan and her family lived in their beloved Kurdistan. But when they are forced to flee by the Iraqi government, Mevan must leave everything behind. Her family travels from country to country in search of safety; [...More](#)



Warrior on the Mound

By [Headen, Sandra W.](#)

2024-03 - Holiday House

9780823453788 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Narrated by twelve-year-old Cato, this intense and evocative story of racial unrest in prewar North Carolina ends with a dramatic match between white and Black little league teams.

1935. Twelve-year-old Cato wants nothing more than to play baseball, perfect his pitch, and meet Mr. Satchel Paige--the best pitcher in Negro League baseball. But when he and his teammates "trespass" on their [...More](#)



Lunar Boy

By [Wibowo, Jes And Cin](#)

Illustrator [Wibowo, Jes And Cin](#)

2024-05 - Harperalley

9780063057593 [Check Our Catalog](#)

For fans of *The Witch Boy* and *Squished*, *Lunar Boy* is a must-have heartwarming coming-of-age graphic novel about a young boy from the moon who discovers a home in the most unlikely places, from debut twin creators Jes and Cin Wibowo.

Indu, a boy from the moon, feels like he doesn't belong. He hasn't since he and his adoptive mom disembarked from [...More](#)



Queenie Jean Is in Trouble Again

By [Read, Christine](#)

2024-04 - Heritage House

9781772034790 [Check Our Catalog](#)

When ten-year-old Queenie and her family move from small-town Ontario to a glitzy suburb of Vancouver, she is desperate to fit in and make a best friend for the first time in her life. With her creativity and bubbly personality, Queenie arrives at Western Canada Preparatory School ready to win over her classmates and conquer the world. But even before the first bell rings, she finds [...More](#)



Picture a Girl

By [Manzer, Jenny](#)

2024-05 - Orca Book Publishers

9781459836662 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Addie's mom is good at two things (three, if you count making French toast): surfing and telling stories.

Addie and her brother, Billy, live with their mom in a shabby rental cabin in the tourist town of Cedarveil, BC, right off the beach. Their lives are a little different than some--they often visit the food bank, and they don't have a phone or TV. For entertainment, [...More](#)



Shark Teeth

By [Winston, Sherri](#)

2024-01 - Bloomsbury Publishing PLC

9781547608508 [Check Our Catalog](#)

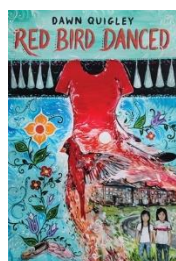
From National Book Award longlisted author Sherri Winston comes an important middle grade novel about a girl's tumultuous journey to keep her family together, even when she's falling apart.

Sharkita "Kita" Hayes is always waiting.

Waiting for her mama to mess up.

Waiting for social services to be called again.

Waiting for her and her siblings to be [...More](#)



Red Bird Danced

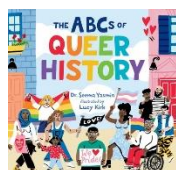
By [Quigley, Dawn](#)

2024-06 - Heartdrum

9780063223622 [Check Our Catalog](#)

With lyrical verse and powerful emotion, Dawn Quigley (Ojibwe) tells the story of urban Native kids who find strength in connection with those who came before and in the hope that lets them take flight.

Ariel and Tomah have lived in the city's intertribal housing complex all their lives. But for both of them, this Dagwaagin (Autumn) season is different than any [...More](#)



The ABCs of Queer History

By [Yasmin, Seema](#)

Illustrator [Kirk, Lucy](#)

2024-04 - Workman Publishing

9781523518548 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A Through-the-Alphabet Celebration of Queer History in the US, from the Publisher of the *New York Times* Bestseller *The ABCs of Black History*

In a beautiful picture book brimming with **P** for **Pride**, writer and poet Seema Yasmin and illustrator Lucy Kirk celebrate all the joys and challenges of queer history in the United States through lively, rhyming verse and [...More](#)



Force of Nature: A Novel of Rachel Carson

By [Burg, Ann E.](#)

Illustrator [Blackall, Sophie](#)

2024-03 - Scholastic Press

9781338883381 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A beautiful, hopeful story of how a young impassioned naturalist grows up to change the world. For everyone who cares about our fragile planet and perfect for fans of *Wishtree* and *Wildoak*.

"An absolute joy to read." --Book Riot

Rachel was a girl who loved

science and the sea,

books and writing

and all the creatures of the [...More](#)



Tessa Miyata Is No Hero

By [Abe, Julie](#)

2023-08 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

9780316448529 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This thrilling and charming middle grade fantasy steeped in Japanese lore and mythology follows Tessa after she breaks a precious family heirloom, sending her on a wild adventure to save herself, her family--and all of Tokyo.

Tessa Miyata has never fit in. When she and her two sisters are told they will be staying at their grandparents in Japan, Tessa is thrilled. A summer in Japan [...More](#)



Paige Not Found

By [Wilde, Jen](#)

2024-04 - Scholastic Press

9781338880564 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A thrilling adventure story that examines consent and privacy in a way that books have not had to before this generation where everything is online.

Nothing about us, without us.

When Paige learns that her parents enrolled her in an autism study without telling her, her world turns upside down. Suddenly she isn't sure if she can trust the two people she loves most. A [...More](#)



Puzzleheart

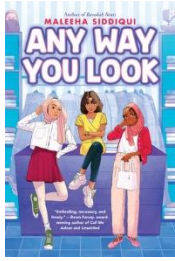
By [Reese, Jenn](#)

2024-05 - Henry Holt & Company

9781250783462 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Get ready to solve the mystery at the heart of this captivating new middle grade adventure about family--and a house with a mind of its own--from the award-winning author of *Game of Fox & Squirrels* and *Every Bird a Prince*, Jenn Reese.

Twelve-year-old Perigee has never met a problem they couldn't solve. So when their Dad's spirits need raising, Perigee [...More](#)



Any Way You Look

By [Siddiqui, Maleeha](#)

2024-05 - Scholastic Press

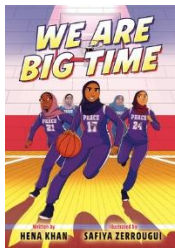
9781339010267 [Check Our Catalog](#)

What do you do with the wrong kind of attention?

***Dress Coded* meets *Amina's Voice* in this new middle grade novel by Maleeha Siddiqui.**

Ainy is excited for summer! She plans on working at her mom's clothing store, having adventures with her best friend, and maybe even starting to wear the hijab--just like her big sister.

Everything [...More](#)



We Are Big Time: (A Graphic Novel)

By [Khan, Hena](#)

Illustrator [Zerrougui, Safiya](#)

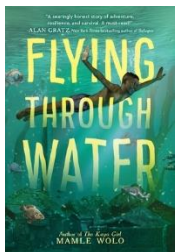
2024-08 - Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

9780593430484 [Check Our Catalog](#)

SWISH! Cheer courtside for a Muslim teen as she joins an all-girls, hijab-wearing basketball team and learns that she's much more than a score. This energetic graphic novel is inspired by a true story!

"A slam dunk!" --Minh Lê

Aliya is new to Wisconsin, and everything feels different than Florida. The Islamic school is bigger, the city is colder, and her new basketball team [...More](#)



Flying Through Water

By [Wolo, Mamle](#)

2024-05 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

9780316703963 [Check Our Catalog](#)

"A searingly honest story of adventure, resilience, and survival. A must-read!"--Alan Gratz, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Refugee*

★ **"A powerful look at...the will to survive."—*Kirkus*, starred review**

★ **"Readers will devour Sena's story."--*School Library Journal*, starred review**

For fans of *A Long* [...More](#)