



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.

April 2021: Poetry



Haiku Baby

By [Snyder, Betsy E.](#)

Illustrator [Snyder, Betsy E.](#)

2008-05 - Random House Books for Young Readers

9780375843952 [Check Our Catalog](#)

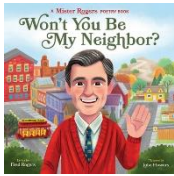
"IN TICKLY-TOE GRASS

a buttercup offers up

yellow nose kisses.

"The simple delights in baby's natural world--a bird, a fish, a leaf, a snowflake, a

raindrop--are celebrated in the traditional Japanese poetic form, the haiku. In just 17 syllables, a moment, a season, the elements are joyfully captured. This peaceful little board book has tabs to encourage little [...More](#)



Won't You Be My Neighbor?: A Mister Rogers Poetry Book

By [Rogers, Fred](#)

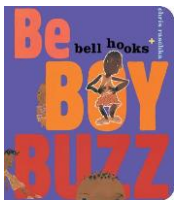
Illustrator [Flowers, Luke](#)

2020-08 - Quirk Books

9781683691990 [Check Our Catalog](#)

The iconic song "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* is transformed into a board book for a new generation of kids.

For the first time ever, Mister Rogers's beloved opening theme song is a board book to share with the youngest readers. With bright, upbeat illustrations by Luke Flowers and sweet lyrics fans will know by heart, readers follow Mister Rogers [...More](#)



Be Boy Buzz

By [Hooks, Bell](#)

Illustrator [Raschka, Chris](#)

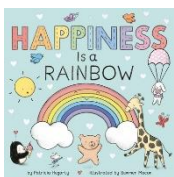
2016-12 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

9781484788400 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From legendary author and critic bell hooks and multi-Caldecott Medalist Chris Raschka comes an acclaimed ode to Black boy joy, perfect for fans of *I Am Every Good Thing* and *I Am Enough*.

I be boy. All bliss boy. All fine beat. All beau boy. Beautiful.

Here a tight, exuberant story from two award-winning creators that captures the essence and energy [...More](#)



Happiness Is a Rainbow

By [Hegarty, Patricia](#)

Illustrator [Macon, Summer](#)

2021-02 - Rodale Kids

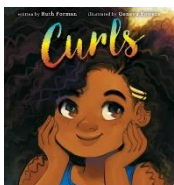
9780593303801 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Discover happiness in the colors that shape our world in this easy board book of first colors that fosters social emotional development

Blue is the color of the sky and the sea, just like a bird, we feel happy and free.

Yellow is the color of a bright shining sun. It makes us feel happy, it makes our lives fun.

Red is the color of a beautiful [...More](#)



Curls

By [Forman, Ruth](#)

Illustrator [Bowers, Geneva](#)

2020-12 - Little Simon

9781534446311 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A joyfully poetic board book that delivers an ode to African American girls and the beauty of their curls.

Me

Morning

Mirror Smile

Shine big

hair love

This simple, playful, and beautiful board book stars four friends who celebrate the joy of their hairstyles from bouncing curls to swinging braids. [...More](#)



Tummy Time Friends

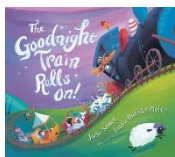
By [Brisson, Pat](#)

2020-04 - Tilbury House Publishers

9780884488071 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Infants will lift their heads to see the beautiful faces surrounding them, and toddlers will love the photos of diverse babies long after they've outgrown tummy time. The simple, gentle verses are perfect for engaging babies and encouraging their verbal skills.

Tummy Time Friends has been selected by Raising Readers--a nonprofit organization of pediatricians and early-reading [...More](#)



The Goodnight Train Rolls On! (Board Book)

By [Sobel, June](#)

Author [Huliska-Beith, Laura](#)

2019-09 - Houghton Mifflin

9781328499141 [Check Our Catalog](#)

All aboard This colorful companion to *The Goodnight Train* is leaving the station, with all the rhyme and rhythm that made the first book a bedtime read-aloud favorite.

When a herd of poky sheep slow the Goodnight Train to a crawl, the engineer's quick thinking (and counting) has them rolling along in no-time--until one tricky sheep sends the train and its sleepy [...More](#)



Things I Love to Do with You

By [Schwartz, Amy](#)

2020-11 - Abrams Appleseed

9781419748097 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Celebrate time spent together in this board book adaptation of *100 Things I Love to Do with You*

Smell roses

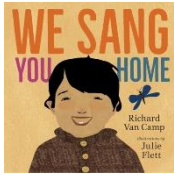
Rub noses

Make faces

Run races

From the beloved author of *Things That Make Me Happy* comes a delightful collection of things to share with the ones you love

[...More](#)



We Sang You Home

By [Van Camp, Richard](#)

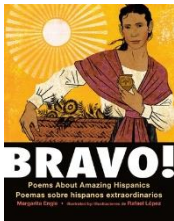
Illustrator [Flett, Julie](#)

2016-10 - Orca Book Publishers

9781459811782 [Check Our Catalog](#)

In this sweet and lyrical board book from the creators of the bestselling *Little You*, gentle rhythmic text captures the wonder new parents feel as they welcome baby into the world. A celebration of the bond between parent and child, this is the perfect song to share with your little ones.

Internationally renowned storyteller and bestselling author Richard Van Camp teams up with [...More](#)



Bravo! (Bilingual Board Book - Spanish Edition): Poems about Amazing Hispanics / Poemas Sobre Hispanos Extraordinarios

By [Engle, Margarita](#)

Illustrator [López, Rafael](#)

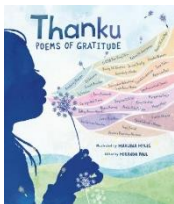
2020-03 - Henry Holt & Company

9781250230812 [Check Our Catalog](#) SPA

Adapted from the Texas Bluebonnet Award-winning *Bravo Poems About Amazing Hispanics*.

This board book of poems and portraits from writer Margarita Engle and illustrator Rafael Lopez celebrates the lives and accomplishments of amazing Hispanics.

This book is a welcome addition to schools and libraries, as it expands the canon of historically significant individuals in the [...More](#)



Thanku: Poems of Gratitude

By [Paul, Miranda](#)

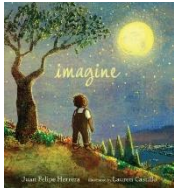
Illustrator [Myles, Marlana](#)

2019-09 - Millbrook Press (Tm)

9781541523630 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This poetry anthology, edited by Miranda Paul, explores a wide range of ways to be grateful (from gratitude for a puppy to gratitude for family to gratitude for the sky) with poems by a diverse group of contributors, including Joseph Bruchac, Margarita Engle, Cynthia Leitich Smith, Naomi Shihab Nye, Charles Waters, and Jane Yolen.

[...More](#)



Imagine

By [Herrera, Juan Felipe](#)

Illustrator [Castillo, Lauren](#)

2018-09 - Candlewick Press (MA)

9780763690526 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A buoyant, breathtaking poem from Juan Felipe Herrera -- brilliantly illustrated by Caldecott Honoree Lauren Castillo -- speaks to every dreaming heart.

Have you ever imagined what you might be when you grow up? When he was very young, Juan Felipe Herrera picked chamomile flowers in windy fields and let tadpoles swim across his hands in a creek. He slept outside and learned to say [...More](#)



Write! Write! Write!

By [Vanderwater, Amy Ludwig](#)

Illustrator [O'Rourke, Ryan](#)

2020-03 - Wordsong

9781684373628 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A NCTE Notable Poetry Book

Twenty-two poems capture the amazing power of writing and will inspire even the most reluctant writer to begin putting words to paper.

Write Write Write is a poetry collection that explores every stage and every aspect of the writing process, from learning the alphabet to the thrilling moment of writing a thought for the first time, from writer's [...More](#)



Poetree

By [Lavoy Reynolds, Shauna](#)

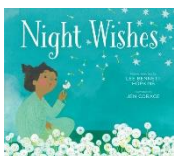
Illustrator [Maydani, Shahrzad](#)

2019-03 - Dial Books

9780399539121 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A girl writes a poem to a tree, but then is surprised when the tree writes back in this wondrous and warm picture book about friendship, nature, and the power of poetry.

The snow has melted, the buttercups are blooming, and Sylvia celebrates winter's end by writing a poem. She ties her poem to a birch tree, hoping that it doesn't count as littering if it makes the world more beautiful. [...More](#)



Night Wishes

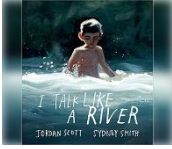
By [Hopkins, Lee Bennett](#)

Illustrator [Corace, Jen](#)

2020-09 - Eerdmans Books for Young Readers

9780802854964 [Check Our Catalog](#)

How would a clock, nightlight, or teddy bear say good night? In this enchanting poetry collection, Lee Bennett Hopkins and thirteen other poets imagine the wishes whispering through a young girl's bedroom as she falls asleep. The bookshelf's stories curl through her head; the pillow transforms into a hot air balloon; the rocking horse waits expectantly for tomorrow's adventures. Stunning [...More](#)



I Talk Like a River

By [Scott, Jordan](#)

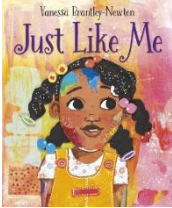
Author [Smith, Sydney](#)

Read by [Scott, Jordan](#)

2020-12 - Dreamscape Media

9781662049866 [Check Our Catalog](#)

When a boy who stutters feels isolated, alone, and incapable of communicating in the way he'd like, it takes a kindly father and a walk by the river to help him find his voice. Through this powerful and uplifting story, poet Jordan Scott uses his own experiences to reveal what it's like to be a child who feels lost, lonely, or unable to fit in. Compassionate parents everywhere will recognize how [...More](#)



Just Like Me

By [Newton, Vanessa](#)

2020-01 - Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

9780525582090 [Check Our Catalog](#)

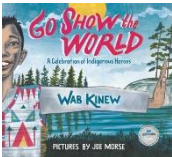
An ode to the girl with scrapes on her knees and flowers in her hair, and every girl in between, this exquisite treasury will appeal to readers of *Dear Girl* and *I Am Enough* and have kids poring over it to find a poem that's just for them.

I am a canvas

Being painted on

By the words of my family

Friends...[More](#)



Go Show the World

By [Kinew, Wab](#)

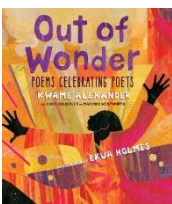
Illustrator [Morse, Joe](#)

2018-09 - Tundra Books (NY)

9780735262928 [Check Our Catalog](#)

We are a people who matter. Inspired by President Barack Obama's *Of Thee I Sing*, *Go Show the World* is a tribute to historic and modern-day Indigenous heroes, featuring important figures such as Tecumseh, Sacagawea and former NASA astronaut John Herrington.

Celebrating the stories of Indigenous people throughout time, Wab Kinew has created a powerful rap song, the lyrics [...More](#)



Out of Wonder: Poems Celebrating Poets

By [Alexander, Kwame](#)

Author [Colderley, Chris](#)

Illustrator [Holmes, Ekua](#)

2017-03 - Candlewick Press (MA)

9780763680947 [Check Our Catalog](#)

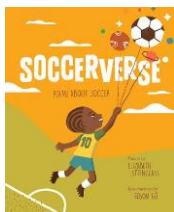
Awards:

Coretta Scott King Award (2018)

The 2018 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award Winner

A Newbery Medalist and a Caldecott Honoree's *New York Times* best-selling ode to poets who have sparked a sense of wonder.

Out of gratitude for the poet's art form, Newbery Award-winning author and poet Kwame Alexander, along with Chris Colderley and Marjory Wentworth, present original poems [...More](#)



Soccerverse: Poems about Soccer

By [Steinglass, Elizabeth](#)

Illustrator [Ike, Edson](#)

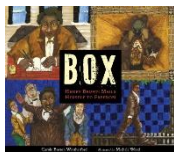
2019-06 - Wordsong

9781629792491 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An NCTE Notable Poetry Book

The perfect gift for young soccer fans, this picture book features twenty-two imaginative poems that capture all aspects of the world's most popular sport.

From the coach who inspires players to fly like the wind, to the shin guard that begs to be donned, to soccer dreams that fill the night, *Soccerverse* celebrates soccer. Featuring a diverse cast [...More](#)



Box: Henry Brown Mails Himself to Freedom

By [Weatherford, Carole Boston](#)

Illustrator [Wood, Michele](#)

2020-04 - Candlewick Press (MA)

9780763691561 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A 2021 Newbery Honor Book

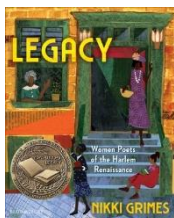
In a moving, lyrical tale about the cost and fragility of freedom, a *New York Times* best-selling author and an acclaimed artist follow the life of a man who courageously shipped himself out of slavery.

What have I to fear?

My master broke every promise to me.

I lost my beloved wife and our dear children.

[...More](#)



Legacy

By [Grimes, Nikki](#)

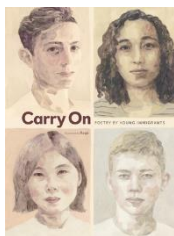
2021-01 - Bloomsbury Publishing PLC

9781681199443 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From Children's Literature Legacy Award-winning author Nikki Grimes comes a feminist-forward new collection of poetry celebrating the little-known women

poets of the Harlem Renaissance--paired with full-color, original art from today's most talented female African-American illustrators.

For centuries, accomplished women--of all races--have fallen out of the historical records. The [...More](#)



Carry on: Poetry by Young Immigrants

By [Various](#)

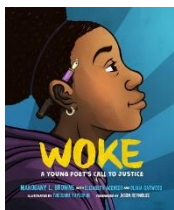
Illustrator [Girard, Rog ](#)

2021-04 - Owlkids

9781771474160 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A moving #OwnVoices poetry collection written by young newcomers to Canada

Carry On began in a high school in Outremont, Quebec, where author and poet Simon Boulerville conducted creative-writing workshops for young newcomers to Canada. As the students began writing, their poems gave voice to their reflections on leaving family, friends, and countries of origin to make new [...More](#)



Woke

By [Browne, Mahogany L.](#)

Author [Acevedo, Elizabeth](#)

Author [Gatwood, Olivia](#)

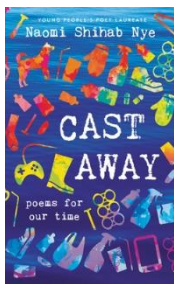
2020-03 - Roaring Brook Press

9781250311207 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This collection of poems by women of color covers topics relating to social justice, activism, discrimination and empathy, focusing on the need to speak out and inspiring middle-graders. -Vogue

Woke: A Young Poet's Guide to Justice is a collection of poems to inspire kids to stay woke and become a new generation of activists.

Historically poets have been on the [...More](#)



Cast Away: Poems for Our Time

By [Nye, Naomi Shihab](#)

2020-02 - Greenwillow Books

9780062907691 [Check Our Catalog](#)

"Nye at her engaging, insightful best." --Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

Acclaimed poet and Young People's Poet Laureate Naomi Shihab Nye shines a spotlight on the things we cast away, from plastic water bottles to those less fortunate, in this collection of more than eighty original and never-before-published poems. A deeply moving, sometimes funny, and [...More](#)



Red, White, and Whole

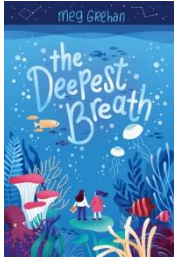
By [Larocca, Rajani](#)

2021-02 - Quill Tree Books

9780063047426 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A heartbreakingly hopeful #ownvoices novel in verse about an Indian American girl whose life is turned upside down when her mother is diagnosed with leukemia.

Reha feels torn between two worlds: school, where she's the only Indian American student, and home, with her family's traditions and holidays. But Reha's parents don't understand why she's conflicted--they only [...More](#)



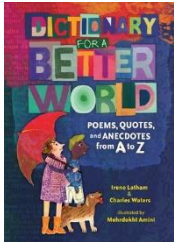
The Deepest Breath

By [Grehan, Meg](#)

2021-02 - Houghton Mifflin

9780358354758 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



Dictionary for a Better World: Poems, Quotes, and Anecdotes from A to Z

By [Latham, Irene](#)

Author [Waters, Charles](#)

Illustrator [Amini, Mehrookht](#)

2020-02 - Carolrhoda Books (R)

9781541557758 [Check Our Catalog](#)

How can we make the world a better place? This inspiring resource for middle-grade readers is organized as a dictionary; each entry presents a word related to creating a better world, such as *ally*, *empathy*, or *respect*. For each word, there is a poem, a quote from an inspiring person, a personal anecdote from the authors, and a try it prompt for an activity.

This [...More](#)



Hello, Earth! Poems to Our Planet

By [Sidman, Joyce](#)

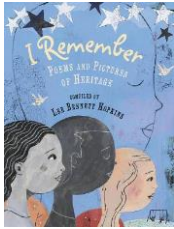
Illustrator [Lora, Miren Asiain](#)

2021-02 - Eerdmans Books for Young Readers

9780802855282 [Check Our Catalog](#)

We walk on Earth's surface every day, but how often do we wonder about the incredible planet around us? From the molten cracks below to the shimmering moon above, *Hello, Earth* explores the wonders of the natural world. This playful journey across our puzzle-piece continents does not hesitate to ask questions--even of the Earth itself

Joyce Sidman's imaginative poems encourage [...More](#)



I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage

By [Hopkins, Lee Bennett](#)

Illustrator [Various Artists](#)

Contribution by [Wong, Janet](#)

2019-10 - Lee & Low Books

9781620143117 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An outstanding celebration of diversity and family: fourteen poets and sixteen illustrators of diverse backgrounds share memorable childhood experiences and reflect upon their different heritages, traditions, and beliefs.

I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage brings together the work of fourteen award-winning poets and sixteen illustrators of diverse backgrounds who share [...More](#)