



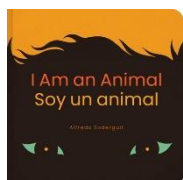
## Inclusive Literature Lists

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.

## August 2023 Inclusive Literature



### **I Am an Animal**

By [Soderquit, Alfredo](#)

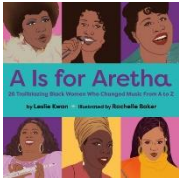
2023-03 - Tra Publishing

9781735311586 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**"Delves into the commonalities we share with our co-inhabitants on this great planet." --Kirkus Reviews**

**"Soderquit's work makes adept use of illustration and design elements to convey meaning, truly honoring the picture book form." --Publishers Weekly**

A bilingual board book for little ones to explore the wonderful world of animals and [...More](#)



## A is for Aretha

By [Kwan, Leslie](#)

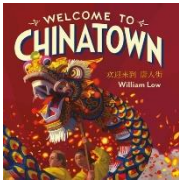
Illustrator [Baker, Rachelle](#)

2023-01 - Kokila

9780593406533 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**An exciting ABC board book featuring Black women musicians whose artistry and activism globally changed the way we hear and interact with music, one song at a time.**

Spotlighting 26 Black women in music, *A is for Aretha* is a celebration of the contributions they made not only within their industry but also of the social causes that often underpinned their music. Within these pages [...More](#)



## Welcome to Chinatown

By [Low, William](#)

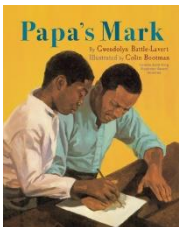
Illustrator [Low, William](#)

2023-01 - Godwin Books

9781250841995 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Welcome to Chinatown. There is so much to see. People practicing tai-chi, shoe cobblers, rows of herbs, outdoor fish markets, and more. And best of all, when the Lunar New Year begins, there's a New Year's Day parade, complete with a lion dance.

This bilingual board book adaptation of William Low's *Chinatown* is a feast for the eyes and a celebration of the ordinary and the [...More](#)



## Papa's Mark

By [Battle-Lavert, Gwendolyn](#)

Illustrator [Bootman, Colin](#)

2023-01 - Holiday House

9780823453702 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**In this timely reissue, a father and son help their community claim the right to vote in the post Civil-War South.**

A son teaches his father how to write his name so he can vote for the first time in this historical tale filled with warmth and strength by Coretta Scott King Honor winner Colin Bootman's expressive oil paintings.

In a new author's note, veteran teacher and [...More](#)



## My Hair Is a Garden

By [Cabrera, Cozbi A.](#)

Illustrator [Cabrera, Cozbi A.](#)

2018-04 - Albert Whitman & Company

9780807509234 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Taunted for her unruly hair, Mackenzie seeks guidance from her wise and comforting neighbor, Miss Tillie. Using the beautiful garden in the backyard as a metaphor, Miss Tillie shows Mackenzie that natural black hair is beautiful. Full color.. [...More](#)



## To the Other Side

By [Meza, Erika](#)

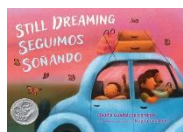
Illustrator [Meza, Erika](#)

2023-03 - Katherine Tegen Books

9780063073166 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Author-illustrator Erika Meza delivers a stunning and emotionally rich book from the viewpoint of those most impacted by border walls: young refugee children. This powerfully told tale highlights the spirit and strength of those embarking on a dangerous trek, and what awaits them on the other side.**

**Yoto Carnegie Medal Shortlist \* New York Public Library Best Book [...More](#)**



## Still Dreaming / Seguimos Soñando

By [Martínez, Claudia Guadalupe](#)

Illustrator [Mora, Magdalena](#)

Translator [Crosthwaite, Luis Humberto](#)

2022-10 - Children's Book Press (CA)

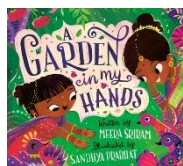
9780892394340 [Check Our Catalog](#) SPA

Pura Belpré Illustrator Award Honor 2023 - American Library Association (ALA)

## A 2023 Pura Belpré Illustrator Award Honor

**In the first children's book to describe the long-forgotten chapter of US history known as Mexican Repatriation, a boy and his family leave their beloved home to avoid being separated by the government.**

**En el primer libro infantil que [...More](#)**



## A Garden in My Hands

By [Sriram, Meera](#)

Illustrator [Prabhat, Sandhya](#)

2023-04 - Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

9780593427101 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## A Dupatta Is...

By [Abbas, Marzieh](#)

Illustrator [Chouhan, Anu](#)

2023-04 - Feiwel & Friends

9781250820945 [Check Our Catalog](#)

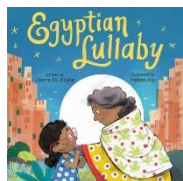
**A *Dupatta Is...*, written by Marzieh Abbas and vividly brought to life by the artwork of Anu Chouhan, is a loving and lyrical ode to the dupatta.**

*A dupatta is so much more than a beautiful piece of fabric.*

*A dupatta is sound--swooshing and swashing like a superhero cape.*

*A dupatta is scent--cinnamon and cardamom, crushed coriander and peppermint oil.*

A dupatta [...More](#)



## **Egyptian Lullaby**

By [Pliska, Zeena M.](#)

Illustrator [Aly. Hatem](#)

2023-04 - Roaring Brook Press

9781250222497 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A rich, beautifully layered ode to the great city of Cairo, Egypt, its people, and culture.**

Every night, my Ametti Fatma sings the sounds of Egypt to me as I fall asleep.

*This is the Nile,*

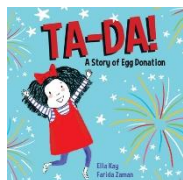
*that flows through the city.*

*Swish, swoosh, swish.*

*This is the boat,*

*that glides on the Nile,*

[...More](#)



## **Ta-Da! a Story of Egg Donation**

By [Kay, Ella](#)

Illustrator [Zaman, Farida](#)

2022-09 - Second Story Press

9781772602470 [Check Our Catalog](#)

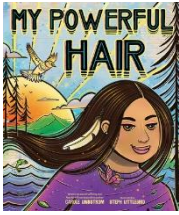
**Life was great.**

**But we asked, "what could make it better?"**

**...and the answer was you!**

A curious little girl loves to ask questions. Most of all, she loves to hear how she was made with the help of an egg donor! A quirky, funny, and celebratory story that teaches kids about one of the many ways babies join a family.

[...More](#)



## **My Powerful Hair**

By [Lindstrom, Carole](#)

Illustrator [Littlebird, Steph](#)

2023-03 - Harry N. Abrams

9781419759437 [Check Our Catalog](#)

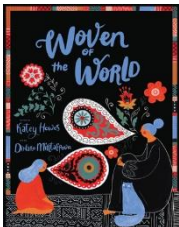
**From the award-winning and bestselling author of *We Are Water Protectors* comes an empowering picture book about family history, self-expression, and reclaiming your identity**

*Our ancestors say our hair is our memories,*

*our source of strength and power,*

*a celebration of our lives.*

Mom never had long hair-she was told it was too wild. [...More](#)



## **Woven of the World**

By [Howes, Katey](#)

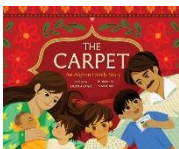
Author [Mirtalipova, Dinara](#)

2023-02 - Chronicle Books

9781452178066 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Told from the perspective of a young girl learning to weave, *Woven of the World* is a lyrical meditation on the ancient art of weaving and what this beautiful craft can teach us.**

As rhythmic as the swish of a loom, and as vibrant as a skein of brightly dyed wool, this lyrical picture book shares the history and practice of weaving through the centuries and around the world, as [...More](#)



## **The Carpet: An Afghan Family Story**

By [Azaad, Dezh](#)

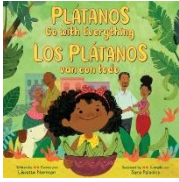
Illustrator [Cao, Nan](#)

2023-04 - Harry N. Abrams

9781419763618 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**This poignant story, about an Afghan refugee child and the family carpet that connects them to home, inspires readers to live and learn in love, not fear**

*The Carpet* follows a day in the life of an Afghan refugee child, where every moment revolves around love, family, and the carpet that connects them to home. The carpet is the centerpiece of family life, where meals, stories, [...More](#)



## **Plátanos Go with Everything: Bilingual Edition**

By [Norman, Lissette](#)

Illustrator [Palacios, Sara](#)

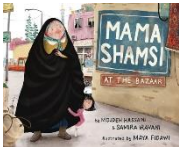
2023-01 - HarperCollins

9780063247789 [Check Our Catalog](#)

With the English and Spanish text side by side on the page, this bilingual edition of the vibrant picture book celebrating the strength of community and the versatility of plátanos is ideal for bilingual readers as well as Spanish speakers learning English and vice versa.

## **A 2024 Bank Street Best Spanish Language Picture Book!**

*Palettero Man* [...More](#)



## **Mama Shamsi at the Bazaar**

By [Hassani, Mojdeh](#)

Author [Irvani, Samira](#)

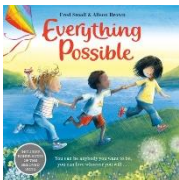
Illustrator [Fidawi, Maya](#)

2023-02 - Dial Books

9780593110614 [Check Our Catalog](#)

It's market day for Samira and her grandma! The bazaar is crowded, but this sweet pair knows how to stick together in this silly picture book set in Iran.

Mama Shamsi is off to the market, and today, Samira gets to go with her! Samira loves spending time with her grandmother, and she especially loves her chador, which Mama Shamsi wraps around herself every time they leave the house. As [...More](#)



## **Everything Possible**

By [Small, Fred](#)

Illustrator [Brown, Alison](#)

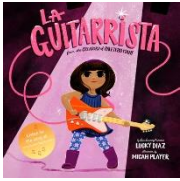
2023-05 - Nosy Crow

9798887770222 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A joyful and inclusive lullaby about love, acceptance, and following your heart . . .**

Strong and bold, or quiet and kind, every child is unique and their future filled with possibilities. Based on Fred Small's iconic folk song that became an anthem for generations, *Everything Possible* celebrates love and friendship, gently encouraging children to dream their own dream and choose [...More](#)





## La Guitarrista

By [Diaz, Lucky](#)

Illustrator [Player, Micah](#)

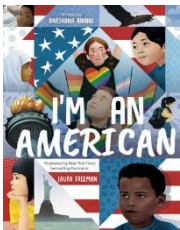
2023-05 - HarperCollins

9780063254152 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**From the creators of *Paletero Man*-Latin Grammy-winning musician Lucky Diaz and celebrated artist Micah Player-comes a story about a tenacious girl who achieves her wildest dreams with a little help from her community and a broken guitar.**

*Strum! Strum! Strum! Get ready to rock with la guitarrista!*

When Canta finds a guitar in the trash, she is one step closer [...More](#)



## I'm an American

By [Khiani, Darshana](#)

Illustrator [Freeman, Laura](#)

2023-05 - Viking Books for Young Readers

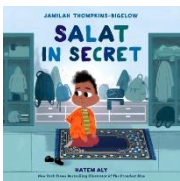
9780593464724 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A breathtaking, eye-opening look at the patchwork of cultures that make up our nation and the many ways we define what it means to be an American.**

**One of Chicago Public Library's Best Books of 2023!**

What does it mean to be American?

A classroom of children across many races, cultures, and origins explores the concept of Americanness as they each share bits of their family [...More](#)



## Salat in Secret

By [Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah](#)

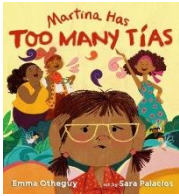
Illustrator [Aly, Hatem](#)

2023-06 - Random House Studio

9781984848093 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**From the critically acclaimed author of *Your Name Is a Song* and the bestselling illustrator of *The Proudest Blue* comes a story about a Muslim boy who receives a salat (prayer) rug on his seventh birthday and becomes empowered about his faith.**

In this beautiful story of community, family, and acceptance, a boy named Muhammad receives a special salat rug on his seventh [...More](#)



## Martina Has Too Many Tías

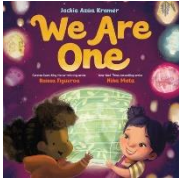
By [Otheguy, Emma](#)

Illustrator [Palacios, Sara](#)

2023-06 - Atheneum Books for Young Readers

9781534445369 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## We Are One

By [Kramer, Jackie Azúa](#)

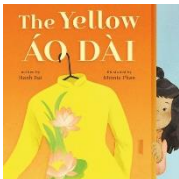
Illustrator [Figueroa, Raissa](#)

Illustrator [Mata, Niña](#)

2023-05 - Two Lions

9781542016940 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## The Yellow Áo Dài

By [Bui, Hanh](#)

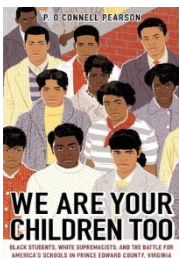
Illustrator [Phan, Minnie](#)

2023-04 - Feiwel & Friends

9781250842060 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Lovingly illustrated by Minnie Phan, Hanh Bui's debut picture book, *The Yellow Áo Dài*, is a warm story of family, identity, and remembering those who came before.

Naliah is excited to perform a traditional Vietnamese Fan Dance at her school's International Day. When she finds that her special áo dai no longer fits right, she goes to her mom's closet to find [...More](#)



## We Are Your Children Too: Black Students, White Supremacists, and the Battle for America's Schools in Prince Edward County, Virginia

By [Pearson](#)

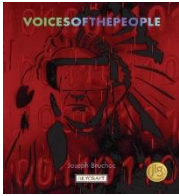
2023-01 - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

9781665901390 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This "detailed, fascinating" (*Booklist*, starred review) nonfiction middle grade book explores a deeply troubling chapter in American history that is still playing out today: the strange case of Prince Edward County, Virginia, the only place in the United States to ever formally deny its citizens a public education, and the students who pushed back.

In 1954, after the passing of [...More](#)





## Voices of the People

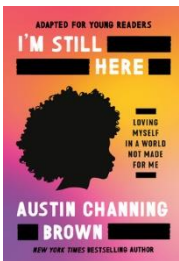
By [Bruchac, Joseph](#)

With [Various Artists](#)

2022-11 - Reycraft Books

9781478875161 [Check Our Catalog](#)

This critically reviewed and award-winning biographical poetry book will take you on a beautifully illustrated journey through time, while these poems capture the essence of each person's life. Acclaimed Native American writer, Joseph Bruchac, introduces readers to famous indigenous leaders, from The Peacemaker in 1000 A.D. to modern day dancer Maria Tallchief and Cherokee chief Wilma Mankiller. [...More](#)



## I'm Still Here (Adapted for Young Readers)

By [Channing Brown, Austin](#)

2023-04 - Convergent Books

9780593240182 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An adaptation of the powerful, *New York Times* bestselling account of growing up Black and female in America, completely rewritten with new stories for young readers.

Austin Channing Brown's first encounter with race in America came at age seven, when she discovered her parents named her Austin to trick future employers into thinking she was a white man. Growing up in [...More](#)



## Nic Blake and the Remarkables: The Manifestor Prophecy

By [Thomas, Angie](#)

2023-04 - Balzer & Bray/HarperTeen

9780063225138 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Instant #1 *New York Times* bestseller!**

Internationally bestselling superstar author Angie Thomas makes her middle grade debut with the launch of an inventive, hilarious, and suspenseful new contemporary fantasy trilogy inspired by African American history and folklore.

It's not easy being a Remarkable in the Unremarkable world. Some things [...More](#)



## Controlled Burn

By [Downing, Erin](#)

2022-11 - Scholastic Press

9781338776027 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From acclaimed middle-grade and chapter-book author, Erin Soderberg Downing, *Controlled Burn* is a story that blends family, friendship, fire, and the rocky path toward healing our deepest fears.

Twelve-year-old Maia's parents say she's lucky she noticed something as early as she did. Lucky to have smelled the smoke, lucky to have pulled her sister, Amelia, out of their [...More](#)



## Hamra and the Jungle of Memories

By [Alkaf, Hanna](#)

2023-03 - HarperCollins

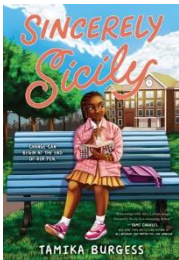
9780063207950 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A Malaysian spin on *Little Red Riding Hood* from the critically acclaimed author of *The Girl and the Ghost*, Hanna Alkaf.**

*Courage is the strongest magic there is.*

On Hamra's thirteenth birthday, she receives nothing but endless nagging and yet another errand to run in the Langkawi jungle that looms behind her home.

No one has remembered her special [...More](#)



## Sincerely Sicily

By [Burgess, Tamika](#)

2023-01 - HarperCollins

9780063159600 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**From debut author Tamika Burgess comes the captivating and empowering story of Sicily Jordan-a Black Panamanian fashionista who rocks her braids with pride-who learns to use her voice and take pride in who she is while confronting prejudice in the most unexpected of places.**

Sicily Jordan's worst nightmare has come true! She's been enrolled in a new school, with zero of her friends and [...More](#)



## My Nest of Silence

By [Faulkner, Matt](#)

Illustrator [Faulkner, Matt](#)

2022-10 - Atheneum Books for Young Readers

9781534477629 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**"Evocative prose and illustrations bring to life...[the] heart-wrenching decisions and considerations that Japanese Americans had to face...[and] their endurance, sacrifices, and resilience, even as their loyalty was questioned without cause." --Susan H. Kamei, author of *When Can We Go Back to America?***

Told in a brilliant blend of prose and graphic novel, this unforgettable [...More](#)



## The In-Between

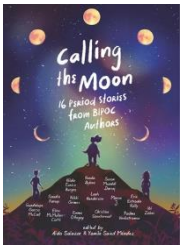
By [Wingate, Katie](#)

2023-01 - Aladdin Paperbacks

9781665920124 [Check Our Catalog](#)

For fans of *Enchanted Air* by Margarita Engle and *Life in Motion* by Misty Copeland, this middle grade memoir in verse with "stellar writing [and] perfect pacing" (*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review) chronicles a young girl and her family who must start over after losing their home.

In the early 2000s, thirteen-year-old Katie Van Heidrich has moved more times than she can [...More](#)



## My New Gift: 16 Period Stories from Bipoc Authors

By [Salazar, Aida](#)

Editor [Salazar, Aida](#)

Contribution by [Burgos, Hilda E.](#)

2023-03 - Candlewick Press (MA)

9781536216349 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An essential, highly relatable collection of short fiction and poems around the topic of menstruation, written exclusively by authors who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color

For Angela, it came on the basketball court--while playing on the boys' team. For Penny, it came on a school field trip to the lake (making for some cringeworthy moments of humor). And to Layla's [...More](#)



## Mirror to Mirror

By [Larocca, Rajani](#)

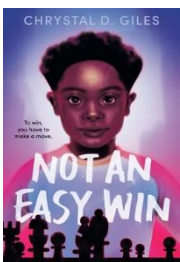
2023-03 - Quill Tree Books

9780063047471 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Rajani LaRocca, recipient of a Newbery Honor and Walter Award for *Red, White, and Whole*, is back with an evocative novel in verse about identical twin sisters who do everything together-until external pressures threaten to break them apart.

Maya is the pragmatic twin, but her secret anxiety threatens to overwhelm her.

Chaya is the outgoing twin. When she sees her [...More](#)



## Not an Easy Win

By [Giles, Chrystal D.](#)

2023-02 - Random House Books for Young Readers

9780593175217 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**FOUR STARRED REVIEWS!**

Twelve-year old Lawrence is new to chess--can he find a way to get on the board, even though the odds are stacked against him?

Find out in this powerful novel about family, forgiveness, and figuring out who you are when you don't make the rules--just right for middle-grade fans of Nic Stone and Jason Reynolds.

\*"Essential middle grade and tween [...More](#)



## The Enchanted Life of Valentina Mejía

By [Alessandra, Alexandra](#)

2023-02 - Atheneum Books for Young Readers

9781665917056 [Check Our Catalog](#)

*Encanto* meets *The Chronicles of Narnia* by way of Colombian folklore in this middle grade fantasy adventure. To save their father's life, a brother and sister must journey across a land full of mythical creatures and find the most powerful and dangerous of them all: the madre monte.

Twelve-year-old Valentina wants to focus on drawing the real world around her and hopefully get [...More](#)



## Grounded

By [Saeed, Aisha](#)

Author [Ali, S. K.](#)

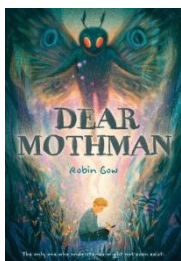
Author [Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah](#)

2023-05 - Harry N. Abrams

9781419761751 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Four kids meet at an airport for one unforgettable night in this middle-grade novel by four bestselling and award-winning authors--Aisha Saeed, Huda Al-Marashi, Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow, and S. K. Ali.

When a thunderstorm grounds all flights following a huge Muslim convention, four unlikely kids are thrown together. Feek is stuck babysitting his younger sister, but he'd rather be [...More](#)



## Dear Mothman

By [Gow, Robin](#)

2023-03 - Harry N. Abrams

9781419764400 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Winner, LGBTQ+ Middle Grade Lammy Award (Lambda Literary Award)

Robin Gow's acclaimed middle grade novel in verse about a young trans boy dealing with the loss of his friend by writing to his favorite cryptid, Mothman

Moving and lyrical, *Dear Mothman* is a story about finding belonging and hope in the most unexpected places.

A few months ago, Noah's best friend [...More](#)



## Home Away from Home

By [Lord, Cynthia](#)

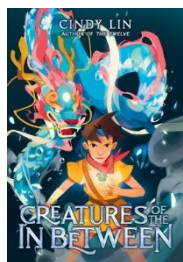
2023-04 - Scholastic Press

9781338726114 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From Newbery Honor Winner Cynthia Lord, a brilliant story about how to find home when everything around us is changing.

Mia and her mom visit Grandma in Maine every summer, but this year Mia is going alone. Her mom will stay behind to get their house ready to sell. It'll be a new start, she says, after the divorce.

Mia doesn't want a new start. She'd rather everything just [...More](#)



## Creatures of the in Between

By [Lin, Cindy](#)

2023-04 - HarperCollins

9780063064799 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## Storyteller

By [Hobson, Brandon](#)

2023-05 - Scholastic Press

9781338797268 [Check Our Catalog](#)

From National Book Award finalist Brandon Hobson, a kaleidoscopic middle-grade adventure that mixes the anxieties, friendships, and wonders of a Cherokee boy's life with Cherokee history and lore.

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