



## 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.

## December 2023 Inclusive Literature



### **Hair Love ABCs**

By [Cherry, Matthew A.](#)

Illustrator [Harrison, Vashti](#)

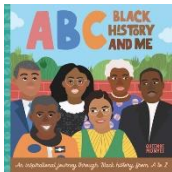
2023-08 - Kokila

9780593695647 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**An alphabet board book inspired by the bestselling *HAIR LOVE*, from the original award-winning author and illustrator duo--and perfect for baby gift baskets.**

A is for Afro, N is for Natural, and W is for Waves. Letter by letter, follow Zuri and her father in their joy-filled journey through the kinks and curls of Black hair.

This 7x7 board book is perfect as a baby gift, for [...More](#)



## **ABC Black History & Me: An Inspirational Journey Through Black History, from A to Z**

By [Monyei, Queenbe](#)

2023-03 - Walter Foster Jr.

9780760380239 [Check Our Catalog](#)

***ABC Black History and Me* presents 26 historical concepts, events, and people--from A to Z--that are important in Black American history.**

From **A is for Advocate** to **Z is for Zest**, each letter of the alphabet is paired with inspirational historical concepts in this 9 1/2"-9-inch board book. Along with the upbeat, rhyming text covering both well-known and more obscure [...More](#)



## **My Hair Is Like the Sun**

By [Detrick-Jules, St Clair](#)

Illustrator [Brown, Tabitha](#)

2023-09 - Chronicle Books

9781797221793 [Check Our Catalog](#)

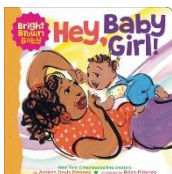
**AS SEEN ON THE TODAY SHOW!**

**A 2023 Good Housekeeping Kids Book Award Winner**

**A 2023 Chicago Public Library Best of the Best Book**

**From the creator of *My Beautiful Black Hair*, this joyful board book celebrates the natural beauty of Black hair in all its shapes, styles, and textures!**

*My hair is like the sun . . . the stars . . . the* [...More](#)



## **Hey, Baby Girl!**

By [Pinkney, Andrea](#)

Illustrator [Pinkney, Brian](#)

2023-10 - Cartwheel Books

9781338672435 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## **My Dad Is a DJ**

By [Erskine, Kathryn](#)

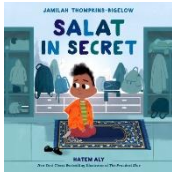
Author [Brown, Keith Henry](#)

Illustrator [Brown, Keith Henry](#)

2023-05 - Farrar, Straus and Giroux (Byr)

9780374307424 [Check Our Catalog](#)

National Book Award winner Kathryn Erskine teams up with Keith Henry Brown on this lyrical picture book that celebrates music and Black identity and gently discusses divorce. [...More](#)



## Salat in Secret

By [Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah](#)

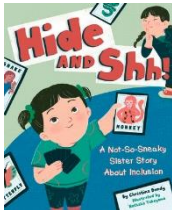
Illustrator [Aly, Hatem](#)

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](#)



## Hide and Shh!: A Not-So-Sneaky Sister Story about Inclusion

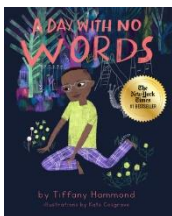
By [Dendy, Christina](#)

Illustrator [Takeyama, Nathalia](#)

2023-04 - Cardinal Rule Press

9798985805130 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## A Day with No Words

By [Hammond, Tiffany](#)

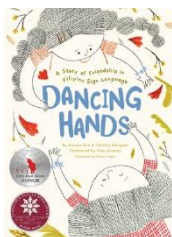
Illustrator [Cosgrove, Kate](#)

2023-05 - Wheat Penny Press

9781736949795 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An instant #1 *New York Times* bestselling picture book and Dolly Gray Award winner! *A Day With No Words* invites readers into the life of an Autism Family who communicates just as the child does, without spoken language.

The American Library Association Booklist starred review boasts, "The story is written from the boy's first-person perspective, however--a clever [...More](#)



## Dancing Hands: A Story of Friendship in Filipino Sign Language

By [Que, Joanna](#)

Author [Marquez, Charina](#)

Illustrator [Alvarez, Fran](#)

2023-07 - Chronicle Books

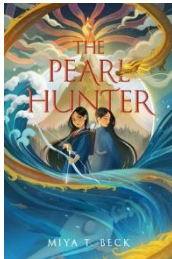
9781797213323 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A Schneider Family Book Award Honor Book

An Ezra Jack Keats Illustrator Honor Winner

Read the world to change the world! This artful picture book about friendship and sign language, originally published in the Philippines in concert with nonprofit Room to Read, is beautifully revised for this global edition.

*Our new neighbors' hands are dancing. Their hands move [...More](#)*



## The Pearl Hunter

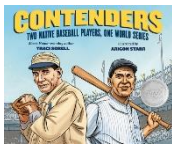
By [Beck, Miya T.](#)

2023-02 - Balzer & Bray/HarperTeen

9780063238190 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Set in a world inspired by pre-Shogun era Japan, this is a stunning debut fantasy in the vein of Grace Lin about how a young pearl diver goes to the ends of the earth to rescue her twin sister, who has been stolen by a ghost whale.

Kai and Kishi share the same futon, the same face, and the same talent for pearl diving. But Kishi is the obedient daughter, while Kai tries to push the [...More](#)



## Contenders: Two Native Baseball Players, One World Series

By [Sorell, Traci](#)

Illustrator [Starr, Arigon](#)

2023-04 - Kokila

9780593406472 [Check Our Catalog](#)

The true story of John Meyers and Charles Bender, who in 1911 became the first two Native pro baseball players to face off in a World Series. This picture book teaches important lessons about resilience, doing what you love in the face of injustice, and the fight for Native American representation in sports.

Charles Bender grew up on the White Earth Reservation in Northwestern [...More](#)



## Ari Arranges Everything

By [Vernon, Katie](#)

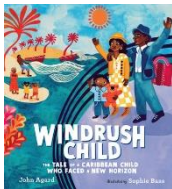
2023-02 - Running Press Kids

9780762481750 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Empower young children to let go of control and to embrace a little chaos in this delightful and humorous picture book.

Ari arranges absolutely everything.

For as long as anyone can remember, Ari has loved arranging things. From blocks to flowers to produce to unicorn toys, each arrangement feels perfect—though maybe not for everyone. But when Ari sets out to create the ultimate [...More](#)



## Windrush Child

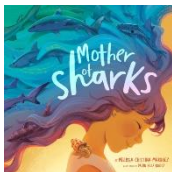
By [Agard, John](#)

Illustrator [Bass, Sophie](#)

2023-04 - Candlewick Press (MA)

9781536228533 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## Mother of Sharks

By [Marquez, Melissa Cristina](#)

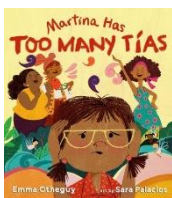
Illustrator [Kurtz, Devin Elle](#)

2023-05 - Penguin Workshop

9780593523582 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Forbes 30 Under 30 Honoree and globally renowned shark scientist Melissa Cristina Márquez teams up with award-winning illustrator Devin Elle Kurtz to create an informative, powerful picture book. With lyrical writing and gorgeous art, this moving story explores Melissa's personal journey from inquisitive ocean-loving child in Puerto Rico to becoming the Mother of Sharks.**

As the [...More](#)



## Martina Has Too Many Tías

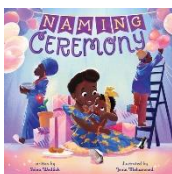
By [Otheguy, Emma](#)

Illustrator [Palacios, Sara](#)

2023-06 - Atheneum Books for Young Readers

9781534445369 [Check Our Catalog](#)

[...More](#)



## Naming Ceremony

By [Wedlick, Seina](#)

Illustrator [Mohammed, Jenin](#)

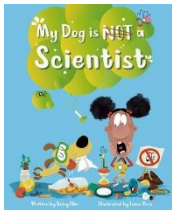
2023-04 - Harry N. Abrams

9781419756269 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A sweet sibling picture-book story all about making family traditions your own--perfect for fans of *Alma* and *How She Got Her Name* and *Welcome to the Party*.**

Today's the day! It's Baby Sister's naming ceremony, and big sister Amira could not be more excited. She has the perfect name picked out . . . or, at least, she hopes it's the perfect name.

One by one, friends and [...More](#)



## **My Dog Is Not a Scientist**

By [Ellor, Betsy](#)

Illustrator [Vera, Luisa](#)

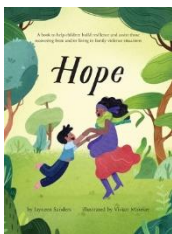
2023-04 - Yeehoo Press

9781953458469 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A humorous, endearing story about a passionate, young scientist who is determined to achieve her goal--no matter what!**

Yara is out to prove that she's the greatest scientist in town!

Her annoying neighbor Eddie always wins the Science Fair, but this year is going to be HER year. Like every good scientist, Yara starts with a question, makes observations, and comes up with a [...More](#)



## **Hope: A book to help children build resilience and assist those recovering from and/or living in family violence situations**

By [Sanders, Jayneen](#)

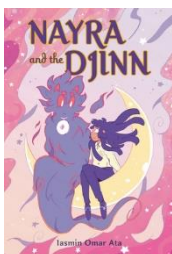
Illustrator [Mineker, Vivian](#)

2021-08 - Educate2empower Publishing

9781761160295 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Jonathon's home was not a happy one. But hope soon arrived when Auntie Edie came to stay. This beautifully illustrated book was written to provide children in family violence homes with a sense of hope and to lessen the traumatic effects of their living situations. As Jonathon knows, there is always hope that things might change.

This book aims to help children voice [...More](#)



## **Nayra and the Djinn**

By [Omar Ata, Iasmin](#)

Illustrator [Omar Ata, Iasmin](#)

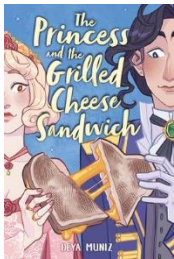
2023-02 - Viking Books for Young Readers

9780593117118 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**In this coming-of-age graphic novel with a fantastical twist, Nayra Mansour, a Muslim American girl, is helped on her journey to selfhood by a djinn.**

Nothing is going right for Nayra Mansour. There's the constant pressure from her strict family, ruthless bullying from her classmates, and exhausting friendship demands from Rami -the only other Muslim girl at school. Nayra has had [...More](#)





## **The Princess and the Grilled Cheese Sandwich (a Graphic Novel)**

By [Muniz, Deya](#)

2023-05 - Little, Brown Ink

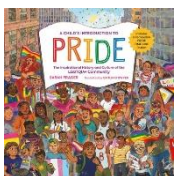
9780316538725 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**NATIONAL BESTSELLER!**

***A New York Public Library Best Book of 2023 - Chicago Public Library Best Book of 2023 - YALSA 2024 Great Graphic Novel for Teens - An ALA Rainbow List Pick - 2024 ALA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers***

**"A spectacular, feel-good, comfy romance." --Kirkus Reviews**

A nobleman with a [...More](#)



## **A Child's Introduction to Pride: The Inspirational History and Culture of the Lgbtqia+ Community**

By [Prager, Sarah](#)

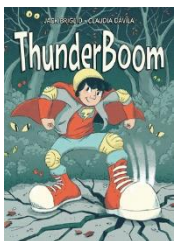
Illustrator [O'Dwyer, Caitlin](#)

2023-05 - Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers

9780762481910 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**The perfect primer for kids ages 8-12, this book celebrates love, hope, equality, and progress by taking an inspirational and essential look at the rich history and culture of the LGBTQIA+ community in the United States and around the world. Now a 2024 Rainbow Book List Top 10 Books for Young Readers!**

The history of the LGBTQIA+ community has often been overlooked, but it's one that [...More](#)



## **Thunderboom**

By [Briglio, Jack](#)

Illustrator [Dávila, Claudia](#)

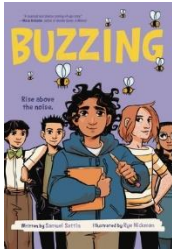
2023-05 - Kids Can Press

9781525304965 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**An action-packed superhero story about the power of imagination.**

In this exciting graphic novel, Logan is thrilled when his parents tell him they're all taking the train to see the Santa Claus parade. But Logan isn't like most 11-year-olds - he can't speak, and he mostly lives in his head. On this adventure, Logan must face some of his greatest fears: masks, dogs and the unknown.

[...More](#)



## Buzzing (a Graphic Novel)

By [Sattin, Samuel](#)

Author [Hickman, Rye](#)

2023-07 - Little, Brown Ink

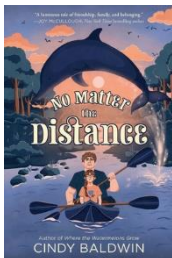
9780316628419 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**2024 Eisner-Nominated for Best Publication for Kids - A 2024 ALA Notable Children's Book - New York Public Library Best Book of 2023**

★ "Heartwarming [and] authentic" --*Shelf Awareness*, starred review

A moving middle grade graphic novel about friendship, belonging, and learning to love yourself despite the voices in your head.

Isaac Itkin can't get [...More](#)



## No Matter the Distance

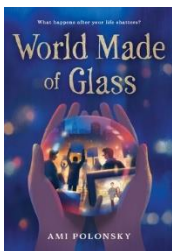
By [Baldwin, Cindy](#)

2023-02 - Quill Tree Books

9780063006447 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An unexpected animal companion helps a girl with cystic fibrosis learn to write her own story in this captivating novel in verse by award-winning author and disabled activist Cindy Baldwin.

Penny Rooney has cystic fibrosis, which means she has to do breathing treatments to help her lungs work. Some days, it seems like her CF is the only thing Penny knows about herself for [...More](#)



## World Made of Glass

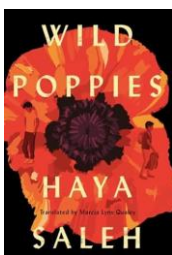
By [Polonsky, Ami](#)

2023-01 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

9780316462044 [Check Our Catalog](#)

An "inspiring" (*Kirkus*, starred review), "heartfelt" (*The Horn Book*, starred review) coming-of-age novel about a girl finding her way to activism in the early years of the AIDS pandemic, from award-winning author Ami Polonsky.

Iris tries to act normal at school, going through the motions and joking around with her friends. But nothing is normal, and sometimes it feels [...More](#)



## Wild Poppies

By [Saleh, Haya](#)

Translator [Qualey, Marcia Lynx](#)

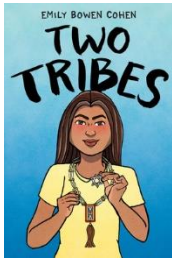
2023-05 - Levine Querido

1646142012 [Check Our Catalog](#)

***Two brothers fight to reunite amidst the turmoil of the Syrian War.***



Since the passing of their father, Omar has tried--and in his little brother Sufyan's eyes, failed--to be the man of his family of Syrian refugees. As Omar waits in line for rations, longing for the books he left behind when his family fled their home, Sufyan explores more nontraditional methods to provide for [...More](#)



## Two Tribes

By [Cohen, Emily Bowen](#)

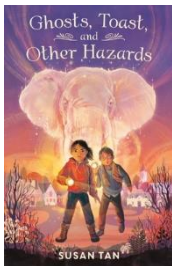
Illustrator [Cohen, Emily Bowen](#)

2023-08 - Heartdrum

9780062983596 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**In her poignant debut graphic novel inspired by her own life, Emily Bowen Cohen embraces the complexity, meaning, and deep love that comes from being part of two vibrant tribes.**

Mia is still getting used to living with her mom and stepfather, and to the new role their Jewish identity plays in their home. Feeling out of place at home and at her Jewish day school, Mia [...More](#)



## Ghosts, Toast, and Other Hazards

By [Tan, Susan](#)

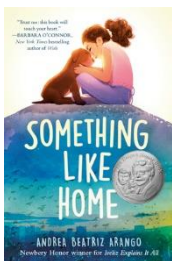
2023-04 - Roaring Brook Press

9781250797001 [Check Our Catalog](#)

"Susan Tan's writing is funny, fun, and hits straight to the heart."--Christina Soontorvat, two-time Newbery Honor recipient

**From APALA Honor award-winning author Susan Tan, a middle-grade novel about a girl who must overcome her worries to find the truth behind her town's urban legend.**

Moving to a new town is never easy, but it's even [...More](#)



## Something Like Home

By [Arango, Andrea Beatriz](#)

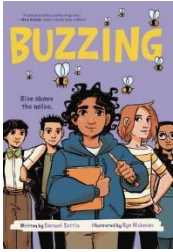
2023-09 - Random House Books for Young Readers

9780593566183 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**The Pura Belpré Honor winning novel in verse, in which a lost dog helps a lonely girl find a way home to her family . . . only for them to find family in each other along the way. From the Newbery Honor winning author of *Iveliz Explains It All*.**

"Trust me: this book will touch your heart." --Barbara O'Connor, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Wish*

Titi [...More](#)



## Buzzing

By [Sattin, Samuel](#)

Author [Hickman, Rye](#)

2023-07 - Little, Brown Ink

9780316628433 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**2024 Eisner-Nominated for Best Publication for Kids - A 2024 ALA Notable Children's Book - New York Public Library Best Book of 2023**

★ "Heartwarming [and] authentic" --*Shelf Awareness*, starred review

**A moving middle grade graphic novel about friendship, belonging, and learning to love yourself despite the voices in your head.**

Isaac Itkin can't get [...More](#)



## Just Under the Clouds

By [Sarno, Melissa](#)

2018-06 - Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

9781524720087 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Can you still have a home if you don't have a house? In the spirit of *The Truth About Jellyfish* and *Fish in a Tree* comes a stunning debut about a family struggling to find something lasting when everything feels so fleeting.**

Always think in threes and you'll never fall, Cora's father told her when she was a little girl. Two feet, one hand. Two hands, one foot. That was all [...More](#)



## Speculation

By [Shawl, Nisi](#)

2023-02 - Tu Books

9781620149591 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**A wonderful middle-grade fantasy debut about Black families, family history, family curses ... and a really marvelous pair of spectacles.**

After Winna's little sister breaks her glasses, her grandfather gives her an old-timey pair of spectacles that belonged to her great-aunt Estelle. The specs are silver and perfectly circular, with tiny stars on the bridge and earpieces that curl [...More](#)