
The Black Experience ... Twenty-six Adventures in Reading

Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin and Satia Marshall Orange

The following booklist—although originally published to help teachers, media specialists, and librarians to identify contemporary children's literature about the black experience—can also be used by readers of this publication as a tool for developing programs for children and families of all races and cultures. A most vital portion, however, is its introduction, which stresses the importance for "total inclusiveness" in the selection of materials for children.

*Programs highlighting different cultures may be developed for single and especially for ongoing introductions to children about the black experience. For example, sharing Ossie Davis's *Langston: A Play* may be included in the discussion of biographies, contemporary poets, and authors in addition to his well-publicized contributions to African American history (too often celebrated only in February, during African American History month). Arnold Adoff's *OUTside INside Poems*, and *Feelings and Greenfield's Daydreamers* highlight children's feelings about day to day experiences, regardless of culture, too seldom recorded from the experiences of black children. Too often these and other titles are categorized as "Black Fiction" or "Black Poetry" (see standardized subject areas in booklist).*

Creative programming will come easy with the use of contemporary literature included in the overall curriculum in schools and in the general collections in libraries and with cooperative efforts between these institutions and the minority community.

Introduction

This booklist is a concerted effort to provide a list of contemporary experiences in reading for all children, regardless of ethnic backgrounds, that should be available in public and school libraries. The fact that few or even no black children have access to these titles, due to the library's location or the school's racial make-up, has no bearing on the importance of exposing all child-

ren to the black American experience. The need for more exposure for North Carolina's non-black children is magnified by the fact that our state ranked seventh in black population in the United States, as noted in the 1980 census.

Black children, understandably, will benefit from the availability of black titles and authors. Critics who verbalize some black and non-black children's resistance to these titles need only to incorporate black and other ethnic minority literature into their curricula and collections in an air of total inclusiveness rather than selective inclusion, too often accepted as tokenism. It needs to be stated that "total inclusiveness" mandates involvement with black literature throughout the year, not only in February. There is no area of library or curriculum emphasis where blacks have not made contributions. Failure to present a "totally inclusive" picture of American life to North Carolina children is an injustice to them and is inconsistent with the principles of education and library service to them.

Adult blacks have experienced childhood with limited black printed materials. We hope that this booklist will promote interest in the valuable resources in our state so that North Carolina children, black and non-black, will not have to face being eliminated in the contemporary literature made available to them.

The new Roundtable on Ethnic Minority Concerns (REMC) of the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) and the newly-established Ethnic Minority Literature for Children Committee (EMLC) of the North Carolina State Library, Children's Section, have members who are more than willing to serve as resource persons.

The William Tucker Collection at North Carolina Central University is updated annually with the contributions of black authors and illustrators.

The biennial Charlemae Rollins Colloquium, co-sponsored by North Carolina Central University and the North Carolina State Library, features workshops, exhibits, and presentations by notable authors and illustrators dedicated to the black experience for children.

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The Mollie Huston Lee Collection, housed in the Richard B. Harrison Branch of the Wake County library system, is a research collection of historical and contemporary black titles.

Several state publications periodically identify new black materials for children, compiled by professional organizations and individuals, including the looseleaf service of the North Carolina State Library's Children's Section.

In other words, resources for information about black children's literature are available to those North Carolina professionals dedicated to the provision of "inclusive" curricula and collections. Assuredly, more contemporary titles are in print. These titles are determined by the compilers to be the *least* a library or school would include in its collection or curriculum.

"Total inclusiveness" mandates involvement with black literature throughout the year, not only in February.

The twenty-six titles herein should be expanded to include additional ones by many of these same authors, as well as the growing number of black authors on the literary scene today. Of course the booklist includes those titles considered essential by the compilers for preschool through early adolescence. Individual collection developers and curriculum planners must make their own added selections, based on their collection development policies. When funds are limited for children's materials, new titles from the ethnic minority experience should be a major budgeting priority, since their availability is too often scarce and short-lived.

The compilers thank the following persons for their suggestions, comments, information, and encouragement:

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Using the Booklist

Age Range. This booklist is developed with child-

ren, preschool through early adolescence (three years through fourteen years), in mind.

Title Selection. Titles may be about the black experience or from a black perspective, although not necessarily by a black author or on a black topic.

Additional Titles. (*) The asterisk by many authors' names identifies the availability of other noteworthy titles by those same authors.

Purchase Information. Each listing includes the documentation needed for purchase, along with suggestions for collection location and recommended subject areas.

Remember. These books are recommended for sharing with *all* children and should not be limited to children of African heritage.

These are presently available for purchase as documented by *Children's Books In Print*, 1983-84.

Only titles written since 1979 have been included.

Additional copies may be obtained from the Forsyth County Public Library, 660 West Fifth Street, Winston-Salem, N.C., 27101. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. This booklist may also be duplicated with discretion encouraged.

*Aardema, Verna. *Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain*. Dial, 1981. \$9.95; PLB 9.43, Dial pb 3.95 (ps-2nd gr.)

A well-told tale from Kenya that comes alive through its repetitious rhyme and carefully drawn illustrations.
Easy/398.2 Folklore-Africa. Blacks-Fiction

What's So Funny, Ketu? Dial, 1982. \$9.95; PLB 9.89 (ps-3rd gr.)

Ketu is given the power to hear what animals are thinking. This funny tale from the Sudan will delight young listeners who have trouble keeping secrets.
Easy/398.2 Folklore-African; Blacks-Fiction

*Adoff, Arnold. *All the Colors of the Race*. Lothrop, 1982. \$9.00; PLB 8.59 (4th gr. and up).

A powerful collection of poetry about race and its effects on children and adults. A warm, caring presentation of a sensitive subject, highlighted by John Steptoe's brilliant illustrations.
811 Blacks-Poetry

OUTside INside Poems. Lothrop, 1981. \$8.59; PLB 8.57 (ps-4th gr.)

Children's poetic reflections of daily experiences and feelings, indoors and out.
Easy/811 Emotions; Blacks-Poetry

Bang, Molly Garrett. *Ten, Nine, Eight*. Greenwillow, 1983. \$9.00; PLB 8.59 (ps-1st gr.)

The cozy story is of a young girl's bedtime ritual as her father

counts her backwards into bed.
Easy Blacks-Fiction

*Behrens, June. *Martin Luther King: The Story of a Dream*. Children's, 1979. PLB \$9.25 (K-3rd).
Biography on a child's level about Dr. King's life. Usable with younger children.
Biography King, Martin Luther. Blacks-Biography

*Bryan, Ashley. *Beat the Story-Drum, Rum-Rum*. Atheneum, 1980. \$10.95 (gr. K-4th)
Five Nigerian animal folk tales, told and illustrated by the author, that share informative insights into the culture.
Easy/398.2 Folktales-African; Nigerian Folktales.

I'm Going to Sing: Black American Spirituals, Vol. II. Atheneum, 1982. \$10.95 (2nd gr.-up)
Collection of Black American spirituals, including many less known selections.
783.6 Negro Spirituals

*Caines, Jeanette. *Just Us Women*. Harper, 1982. \$9.95; PLB \$9.98 (K-3rd gr.)
Details the warm relationship between a young girl and her favorite aunt on a long car trip with "no boys, no men, just us women".
Easy Blacks-Fiction; Aunts-Fiction; Travelers-Fiction

Window Wishing. Harper, 1980. \$7.95; PLB 7.89 (K-3rd gr.)

Memorable experiences of two children visiting their grandmother. A book every grandchild will enjoy!
Easy Grandmother-Fiction; Blacks-Fiction

Cendrars, Blaise. *Shadows*. Scribners, 1982. \$12.95 (K-4th gr.)
A creative literary presentation of the African bush culture and its rhythms, assisted by the use of colorful illustrations by Marcia Brown.
Easy/398.2 Folklore-African

*Clifton, Lucille. *Everett Anderson's Goodbye*. Holt, 1983. \$9.95 (ps-2nd gr.)
A supportive picture book to help young children to cope with death. A helpful tool to sensitize adults and children.
Easy/128.5 Family Life-Fiction; Death-Fiction; Black-Fiction

*Crews, Donald. *Light*. Greenwillow, 1981. \$10.25; PLB 9.84 (ps-1st gr.)
A visual poem showing city and country as twilight falls and the lights of the night begin to shine.
Easy Light

Parade. Greenwillow, 1983. \$10.00; PLB 9.55 (K-3rd gr.)
An additional title that captures all the colors and rhythms of a real parade.
Easy

*Davis, Ossie. *Langston: A Play*. Delacorte, 1982. \$9.95 (4th-10th gr.)

A dramatic presentation of the young black American poet's life, and those who affected his works, both in the U.S. and in Europe.

812/Biography Hughes, Langston-Drama; Blacks-Biography

*Feelings, Tom, and *Eloise Greenfield. *Daydreamers*. Dial 1981. \$9.43; PLB 9.95 (K-3rd gr.)
A book of poetic, imaginative expressions of daydreaming children, with sensitive illustrations reflecting the moods described.
Easy/811 Blacks-Poetry

*Greene, Bette. *Get on Out of Here, Philip Hall*. Dial, 1981. \$9.95; PLB 9.89; Dell 2.50. (3rd-6th gr.)

The continuation of a friendly, pre-adolescent relationship between two friends. A caring treatment of growing up.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction

*Hamilton, Virginia. *Dustland*. Greenwillow, 1980. \$11.95; PLB 11.47; Avon pb 1.95 (6th gr. and up)
Armed with supernatural powers, Justice and her brothers, the first of a new race, are projected to Dustland, where the mystifying unknown is the enemy. Sequel to *Justice and her Brothers*. Followed by *The Gathering*.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction

The Magical Adventures of Pretty Pearl. Harper, 1983. \$11.06; PLB 11.09 (6th-10th gr.)
By relating the experiences of the god-child, Pretty Pearl, the author develops a panorama of mythology, history, and real life, creating a mystical, literary masterpiece.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction

Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush. Putnam, 1982. \$10.95 (gr. 6-10)
The ghost of Brother Rush is only one of the many complex characters in this story of family experiences, past and present, and the effects on its younger generation.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction

Willie Bea and the Time the Martians Landed. Greenwillow, 1983. \$11.00 (4th-7th gr.)
A possible adventure in response to a radio program that shook America in the 1930s. Rich with cultural experiences of southern rural black life.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction

*Hurmen, Belinda. *A Girl Called Boy*. Paradox Publ., 1982. \$9.95 (5th-8th gr.)
The experience of her family during American slavery days shakes a young girl into appreciating her cultural heritage. Full of adventure and history.
Fiction Blacks-Fiction; Slavery in the U.S.-Fiction

Isadora, Rachel. *City Seen From A To Z*. Greenwillow, 1983. \$8.50 (ps-K)
Alphabet book of city adventures picturing multi-racial groups of adults and children.
Easy Alphabet

*Steptoe, John. *Jeffrey Bear Cleans Up His Act*. Lothrop, 1983. \$9.50; PLB 9.12 (K-3rd gr.)

Jeffrey Bear fantasizes putting himself in his teacher's place, only to face the reality of his own behavior.
Easy Blacks-Fiction

*Taylor, Mildred. *Let the Circle Be Unbroken*.

Dial, 1981. \$11.95 (gr. 6 & up)

Survival experiences of a black, sharecropper family in the 1930s, based on the author's family recollections. The continuation of *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*.

Fiction Blacks-Fiction

Yarbrough, Camille. *Cornrows*. Putnam, 1979.

\$7.95; pb 2.95 (K-3rd gr.)

Colorful language provides an easy look for children into the authentic background of the art of cornrowing.

Easy Blacks-Fiction; Hair-Fiction

Subject Analysis Symposium at North Carolina Central

The North Carolina Central University School of Library Science announces a Symposium on Subject Analysis which will be held Friday and Saturday, March 29-30, 1985.

The symposium will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of North Carolina Central University and honor the sixty-fifth anniversary of the late Dean Annette L. Phinazee, whose contri-

butions to subject analysis and library education are examples of excellence and service.

The speakers include: Melba Adams, assistant chief of Decimal Classification, Library of Congress; Lorene B. Brown, associate professor and dean, School of Library and Information Studies, Atlanta University; Lois Chan, professor, College of Library Science, University of Kentucky; Doris Clack, professor, Florida State University, School of Library Science; Mary Dykstra, associate professor, School of Library Service, Delhousie University; Eleanor H. Hoytt, assistant professor, School of Library and Information Studies, Atlanta University; Mary K. Pietris, chief of Subject Cataloging Division, Library of Congress; Phyllis Richmond, professor and dean, Baxter School of Information and Library Science, Case Western Reserve University; Jane Stevens, retired, associate professor, School of Library Service, Columbia University; and Elaine Svenonious, assistant professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of California at Los Angeles.

For additional information on the symposium, call Dr. D. McAllister-Harper, associate professor, School of Library Science, 919-683-6485 or 683-6415.

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