



# Centering Youth Agency: Nurturing and Inspiring the Current Generation of Young Activists

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# Session Agenda

- **NEH Week One Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC) Lab Reflections**
- **HER-Story of the CDF Freedom Schools Program**
- **National Day of Social Action (NDSA)**
- **Break**
- **Let's Talk About It**
- **Resources to Support Your Classrooms**
- **Q&A**



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# NEH Week One Integrated Reading (IRC) Lab Reflections

**Explain the ways in which each of the following components of your IRC lab served as an intentional opportunity to encourage youth agency throughout the lesson:**

Facilitation  
style

Discussion  
questions  
posed while  
reading

Main activity  
tied to  
common core  
standards

Social action  
or  
conflict-  
resolution  
activity



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# Freedom Summer of 1964

- **Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and the Council of Federated Organization (COFO)** organized and mobilized a group of college students to go down to Mississippi to inform African-Americans about their right to vote and encourage them to exercise that right.

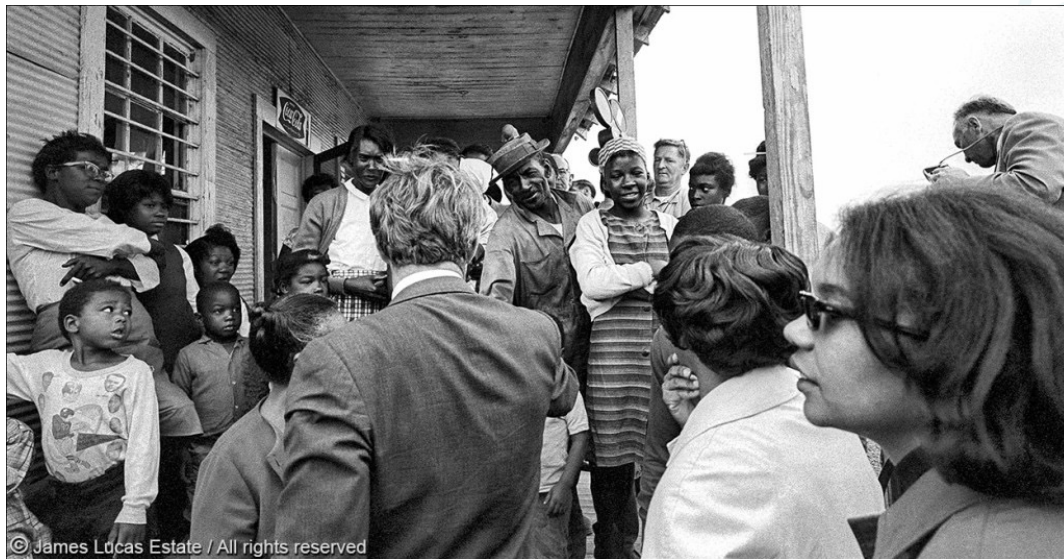
**Drop some of the facts that you learned, or knew about these groups prior to NEH, in the chat!**



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# Johnson, Kennedy, Wright, Oh My!



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# D.I.Y.: The Washington Research Project

In 1969, Mrs. Edelman began the Washington Research Project (WRP) which grew out of the Poor People's Campaign following Dr. King's death.

WRP was a public interest law firm that monitored federal programs for low-income families and researched and exposed widespread illegal diversion of federal money designed to close educational inequities across the South.

Out of WRP, Mrs. Edelman founded the Children's Defense Fund in 1973.



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# 1990 Black Community Crusade for Children

## BLACK COMMUNITY CRUSADE FOR CHILDREN



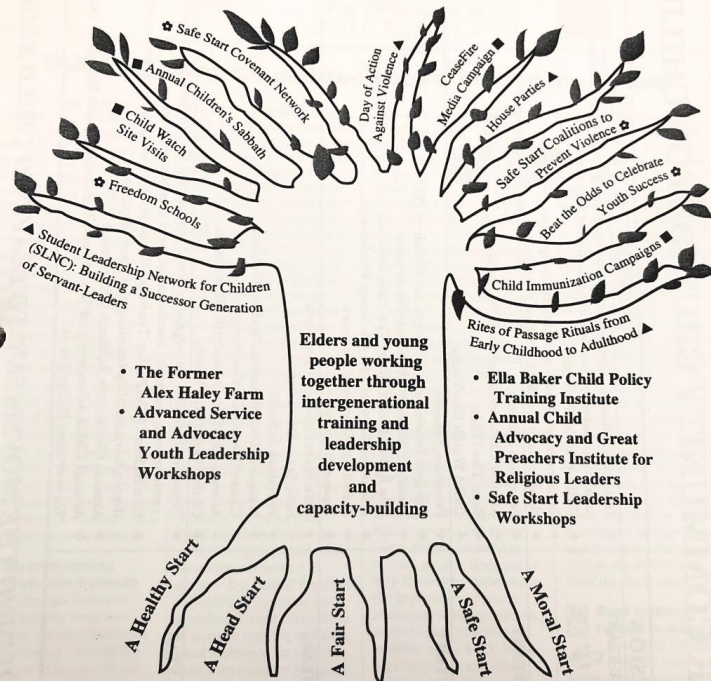
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Left to right: Dorothy Height, Angela Glover Blackwell, Geoffery Canada, Marian Wright Edelman, John Hope Franklin



# Black Community Crusade for Children

Healthy, Educated, Safe, and Caring Children with Positive Values  
Are the Blossoms of Our Labor



- The Former Alex Haley Farm
- Advanced Service and Advocacy Youth Leadership Workshops

- Ella Baker Child Policy Training Institute
- Annual Child Advocacy and Great Preachers Institute for Religious Leaders
- Safe Start Leadership Workshops

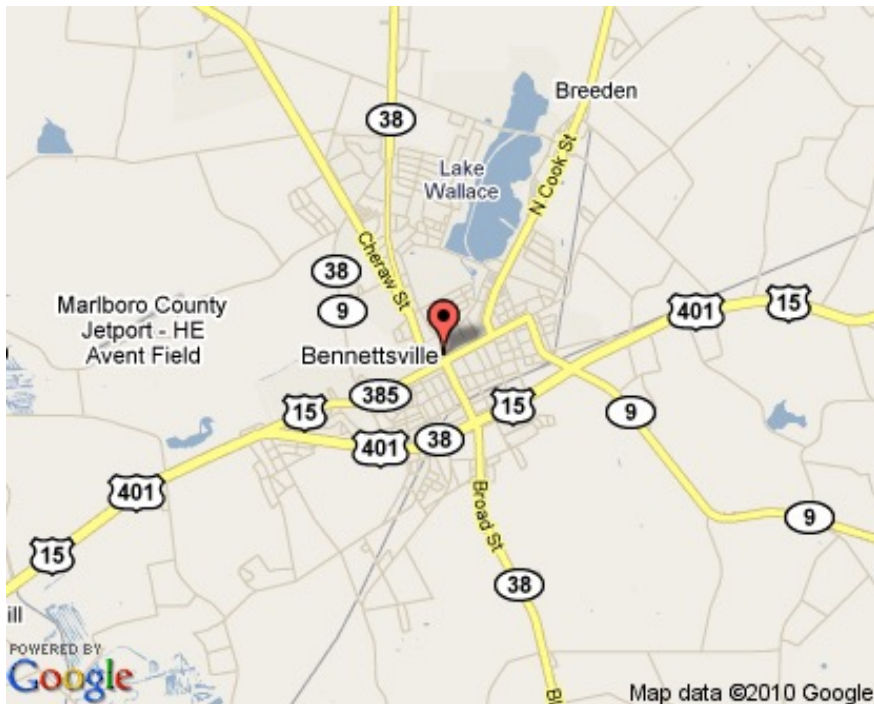
Caring Parents and Nurturing Communities  
**Building and Sustaining the Movement to Leave No Child Behind™**

■ Initiated by CDF ▲ Initiated by BCCC ☆ Initiated by Both



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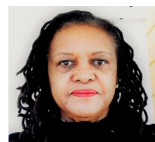
# The HER-Story of the CDF Freedom Schools® Integrated Reading Curriculum



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# Growth of a Vision

Since its inception in 1993, *CDF Freedom Schools* has served hundreds of thousands of K-12 scholars, their families, and their communities.



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# National Day of Social Action: Overview

Each year all CDF Freedom Schools® sites participate in the National Day of Social Action: **a collective effort organized around the Children's Defense Fund's principles and Leave No Child Behind® mission.**



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# 1996: March for Peace



# National Day of Social Action: Connection

## CDF Freedom Schools Essential Components:

- **High-quality academic enrichment.** *NDSA provides sites with well-researched resources so scholars can use facts to back their words and actions.*
- **Parent and family development.** *NDSA encourages sites to involve parents and families in taking action and viewing their scholar's voice as important.*
- **Civic engagement and social action.**
- **Intergenerational servant leadership development.** *Serves as opportunities for scholars to be the leaders.*
- **Nutrition, health and mental health.** *Provides scholars a safe place to discuss feelings, develop public speaking skills, and learn how to galvanize others in support of their cause.*



**Social Action:** An organized program of socioeconomic reform.

**Collective Action:** Refers to action taken together by a group of people whose goal is to enhance their status and achieve a common objective.



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# 2023 National Day of Social Action Theme

This year's National Day of Social Action will take place on Wednesday, July 19, 2023.

It will focus on the issue of gun violence and the impact that it has on our children and youth's sense of safety within their community as well as their visions for the future.

While the topic is gun violence, the theme for this year is "health, hope, and healing". All actions will reflect both the theme and topic.



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# National Day of Social Action: Goals

- **Understand** the mental and physical impact of gun violence on scholars and communities.
- **Amplify** scholar's visions for safe communities.
- **Encourage** communities to hold community members accountable in the fight for safer communities.



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# National Day of Social Action: Activities

## ACTIVITY #1: “HEALTH, HOPE, AND HEALING” CELEBRATION/RALLY

Organize an event that truly uplifts and centers scholars’ visions for what it will take to provide safe and healthy communities free of gun violence, what it will take to heal trauma that already exists, and what their hopes are for a better future.



While time may only some scholars will be included in the speaker line-up, allow all scholars to contribute to building a memorial for those who have lost their lives to gun violence.

# National Day of Social Action: Activities

## Activity #2: Letter Writing Campaign



Work with scholars to write letters about their vision for a safe community that prioritizes health, hope, and healing for those effected mentally or physically by gun violence.

Toolkit gives prompts for problems like...

- I do/do not (choose one) not feel safe from gun violence when playing in the neighborhood because....
- Gun violence is/is not a normal part of everyday life because....

And solutions like...

- To have a mentally health community we must....
- To heal our community we must....
- My hope for the future is....

# National Day of Social Action: Activities

## ACTIVITY#3: SOCIAL MEDIA SKITS AND BLITZ

### SKITS

#### Create informational TikTok's and Instagram reels

- Share national and state facts about gun violence as told by poetry, skits, raps, songs, artwork time lapses, or other creative messages for communities across the nation.
- Center healing and hope instead of normalizing gun violence.

**Allow scholars to create, edit, and finalize all content ahead of NDSA.**

### BLITZ

**Then on Wednesday, July 19th have scholars flood social media with posts between the hours of 1:00 p.m. ET/11:00 a.m. PT- 3:00 p.m. ET/1:00 p.m. PT.**



# Resources to Empower Scholars



**2023 NDSA Organizer's  
Toolkit**

## Other resources in the Basecamp folder:

- [Gun Violence Fact Sheet](#) with 2021 Stats by State
- [Social media graphics](#)
- Social media tips and video training (for use during local training)
- NDSA [lesson plans](#)
- Sample [rally agenda](#)
- [Template letters](#) to elected officials



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# NDSA Role Assignment

## Leadership Style Assessment

*How will each of us, as site staff, work together to accomplish our goals for this year's National Day of Social Action (NDSA)?*



<https://bit.ly/2022NDSARoles>

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Ambassadors instinctively know how to handle a variety of situations with grace. They tend to be the people diffusing nasty situations. The ones getting involved in conflicts on behalf of broad constituencies, as opposed for their own benefit. They are apt to be persistent in a gentle way -- to be persuasive and at the same time respectful.

## Advocate

Advocates instinctively act as the spokesperson in a group. They tend to be articulate, rational, logical, and persuasive. They also tend to be relentless (in the positive sense of the word), championing ideas or strategic positions. Advocates tend to use both linear and non-linear approaches when they argue a point. Many Advocates tend to see things in black and white only. Advocates need Ambassadors to help them temper their messages and persuade others to “buy into” their decisions.)

***NDSA Roles: Logistics planning, creative messaging, branding, strategizing the official message, and prepping scholars for interview.***

Motivator, someone with parental, nurturing qualities. People Movers instinctively take the lead in building teams. They're also instinctive mentors. They generally have large contact lists; they are always introducing new people to new ideas and new paths. They're also generally mindful of their peoples' lives outside of work; they view performance through the larger lens of potential.

**NDSA Roles:** Community liaison to help make connections with potential guests and volunteers, contact people to receive letters, figure out best people to tag in socials, etc.



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# NDSA Role Assignment

## Truth-Seeker

Think: fairness, good judgment, equalizer, level-headed, process-oriented, scrupulous neutrality, objectivity is the high standard. Truth-Seekers instinctively level the playing field for those in need. They also help people understand new rules and policies. They act to preserve the integrity of processes. They try to identify the root-cause issues, or pivotal issues. They also step in to ensure the just and fair outcome if the process has failed to yield the same.

*NDSA Roles: Help prepare official statement for the sponsoring organization and ensure scholar's are camera ready.*

## Creative Builder

These individuals are visionaries and entrepreneurs. They instinctively: see new opportunities; spot niche markets; take ideas and make them real. Creative Builders instinctively understand that building is not necessarily about invention, but about process of making an invention real. Builders are constantly energized by new ideas, yet they have the staying power to see them through to fruition. They feel most rewarded when a project gets underway, or is newly completed. Strength of belief in end result + Ability to tolerate the process = Creative Builder

*NDSA Roles: Lead poster writing exercises, creation of flyers, and other creative materials.*

## Experienced Guide

Experienced Guides have to have an ability to listen, and to put themselves in others' shoes. They have a way of helping people think through their own problems; they are natural therapists. Often, they are seemingly bottomless wells of information on a diverse range of topics. These are the people who can always be counted on to supply the right quotation or the right historical connection.

The experienced guide role naturally lends itself today to the position of minister, counselor, trusted advisor. They get their greatest satisfaction helping others get through the day and helping others see the brighter future.

*NDSA Roles: Support for scholars or families who may struggle with this topic and need someone to stick with during the day of action.*



# 15 MINUTE BREAK

While you are on break, check these youth organizations out:

- **Youth Vs. Apocalypse:** <https://www.youthvsapocalypse.org/organizing-at-school>
- **March for Our Lives:** <https://marchforourlives.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/It-Ends-With-Us-March-For-Our-Lives.pdf>



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# Group Work: Talk About It

## THE CHALLENGE:

What are the major issues facing scholars in your communities and how do the issues show up in your classroom?

## THE SYSTEM:

What books do you have in your curriculum or classroom library that help scholars process these issues?

## THE INDIVIDUAL:

What time have you built into the day or after-school to help scholars process these issues (either through reading or otherwise)?



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# Group Work: Centering Youth Agency Activity

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Work in groups to review and select a title (*CDF Freedom Schools* or otherwise), CDF policy resources, and CDF advocacy resources to build a social action activity that addresses the challenge identified in the first part of this activity. Time permitting, create one conflict-resolution activity that could be used to address the underlying cause for the challenge identified by the group.

**SELECT TITLE FROM ONE OF THE PREVIOUS SLIDES (OR FROM NEH WEEK ONE LESSON) AND SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES FROM THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:**

- **2023 CDF State of America's Children (SOAC) Report:** <https://www.childrendefense.org/the-state-of-americas-children/>
- **CDF TX YOUth Project:** <https://cdfutexas.org/youthtx/>
- **CDF Office of the Founder ChildWatch Column:** <https://www.childrendefense.org/child-watch-columns/>



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# Group Work: Building Upon The Talk

## **THE CHALLENGE:**

Most pressing issue facing our youth, as uplifted by the group, is:

---

## **THE SYSTEM:**

The title we will add to our classroom library to address this topic or its root cause is:

---

## **THE INDIVIDUAL:**

The social action and conflict-resolution activities we built based on the selected text are:

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# Book Selection

The Selection of *Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools* books requires thoughtful attention. After reading these books that represent the great, diverse work of the industry's best authors and illustrators, the children should feel good about who they are no matter their current circumstances. With the help of well-prepared and caring adults, these books have the power to instill in them a lifelong love of reading and help them better understand themselves and the world.

**The below basic points are considered as books are selected.**

- Reflect the children's own images through the characters.
- Provide reflections of diversity as it relates to characters' age, gender, race, ethnicity,
- socio-economic status, and capabilities and disabilities.
- Include age and developmentally appropriate Content.



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# Book Selection continued

- Introduce children to different cultures, customs, and traditions while encouraging them to love and appreciate their own.
- Include relevant topics and issues that children and youth are facing such as bullying, homelessness, food insecurity, gun violence, etc.
- Introduce readers to adults and children who have and continue to make a difference of the lives of others and their own lives.
- Offer readers ideas and encouragement to participate in community service, no matter their circumstances.
- Represent diversity in readability levels, genre, format, proportion of informational and narrative texts, students' interests, and real-world application.



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# Book Selection continued

- Commemorate Civil Rights related anniversaries.
- Focus on college and career readiness (Level IV).

## Sources

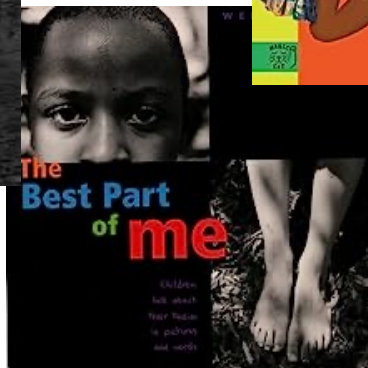
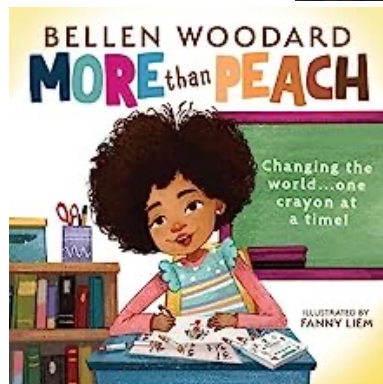
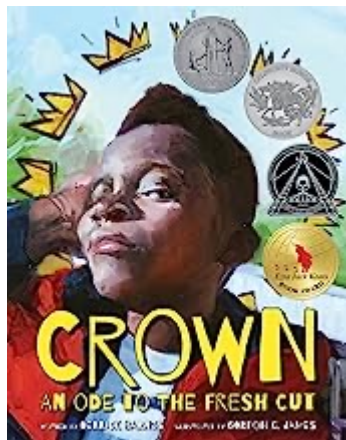
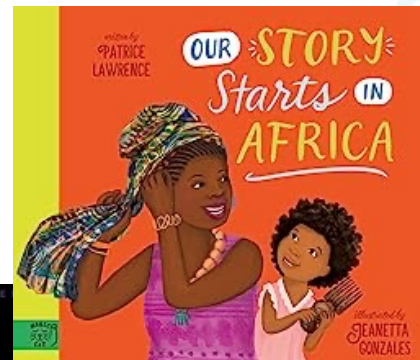
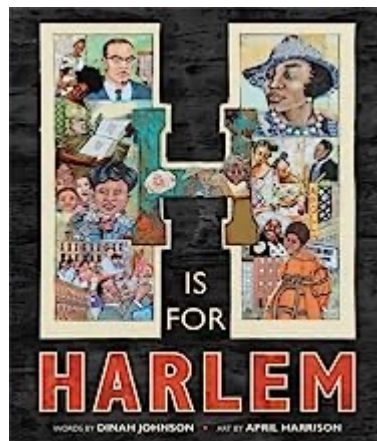
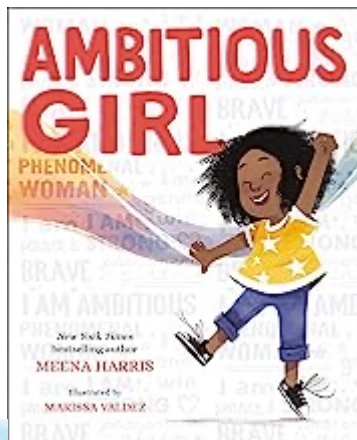
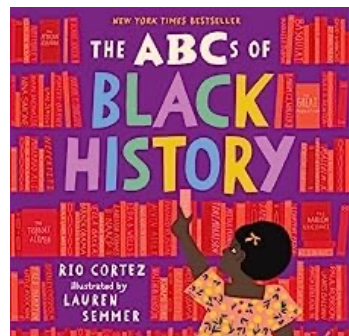
- Author, illustrator and publisher submissions
- Publishers' latest collection (Lee & Low, Just Us Books, Scholastic, Abrams, Penguin, and others)
- Individual recommendations
- Favorite authors and illustrators' latest titles
- Book stores, book talks, online resources, etc.

[Book recommendation form July 2023.docx](#)



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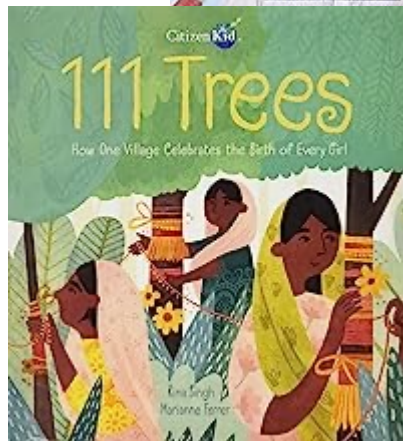
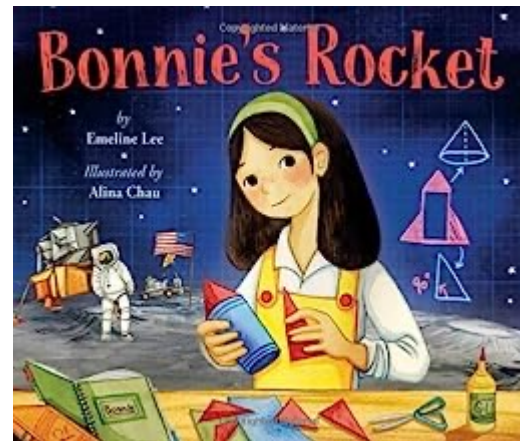
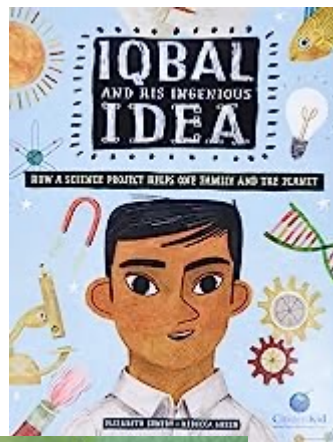
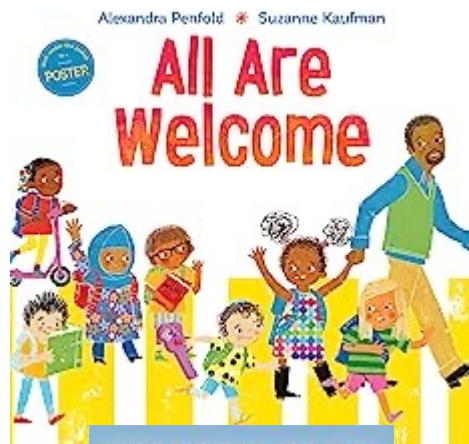
# Characters reflect children's images.



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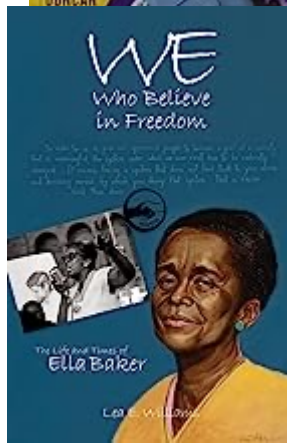
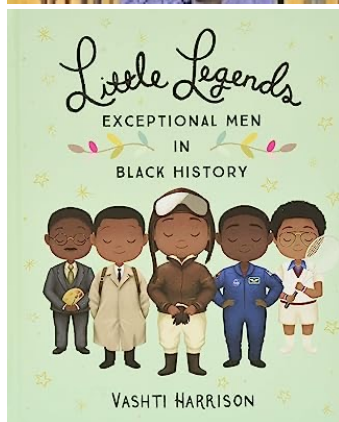
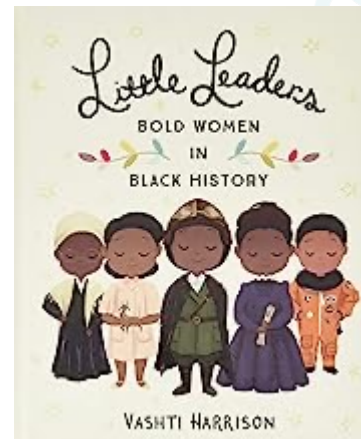
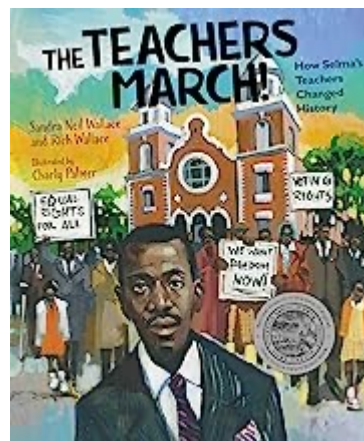
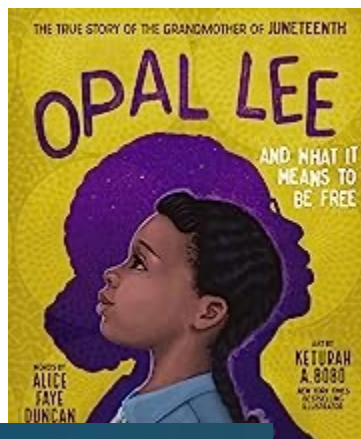
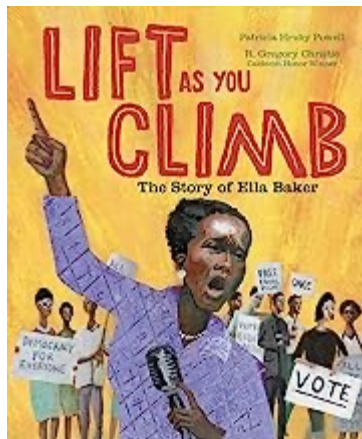
# Children are introduced to different customs, cultures and traditions.



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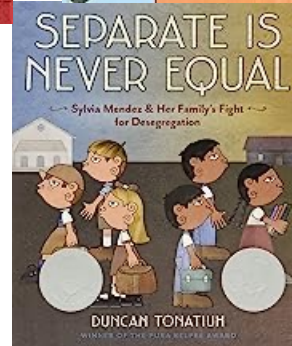
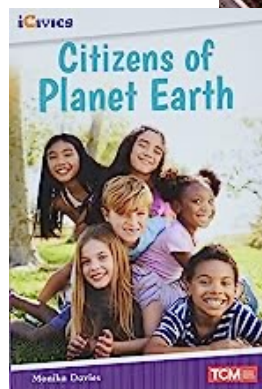
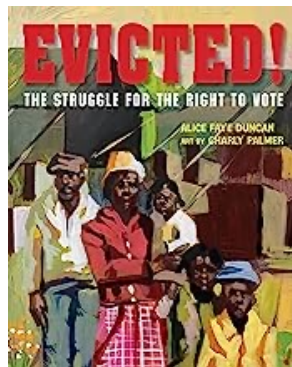
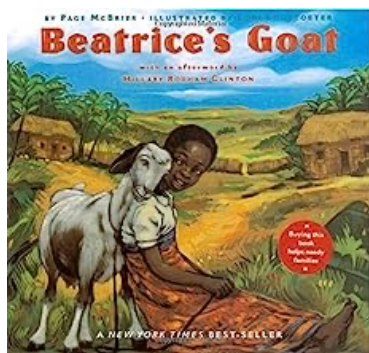
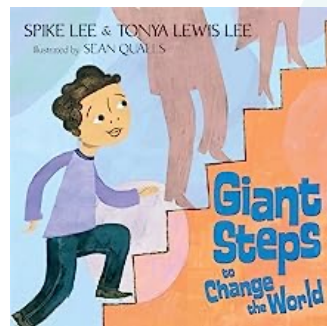
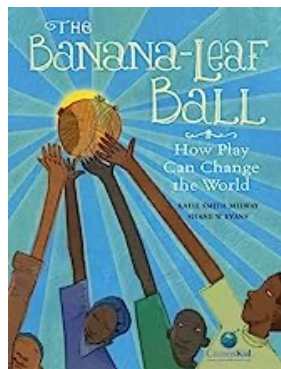
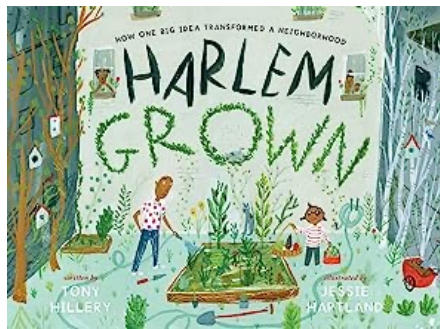
# to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others.



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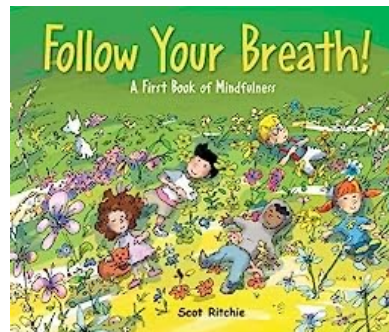
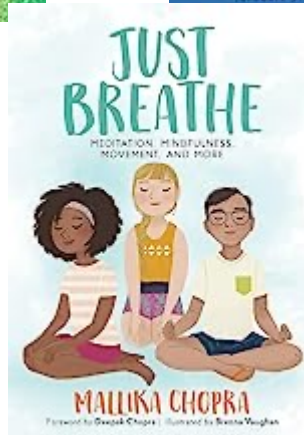
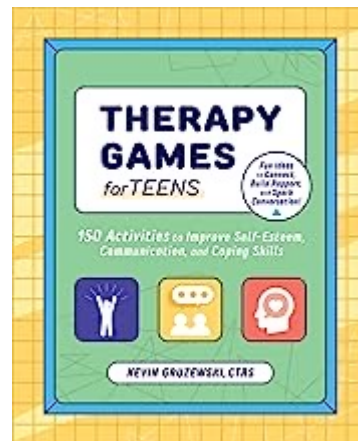
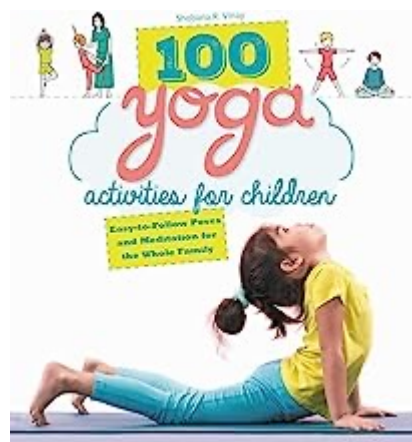
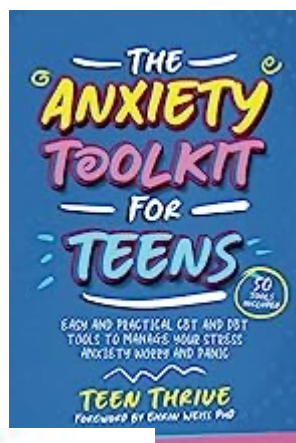
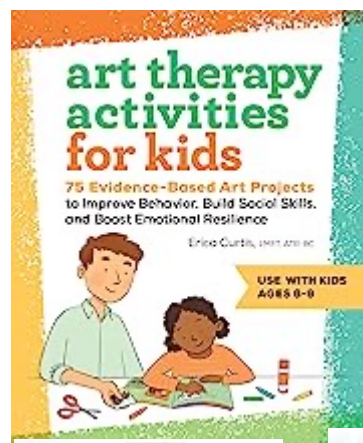


# Children are inspired to make a difference and get involved in community service and other activism.



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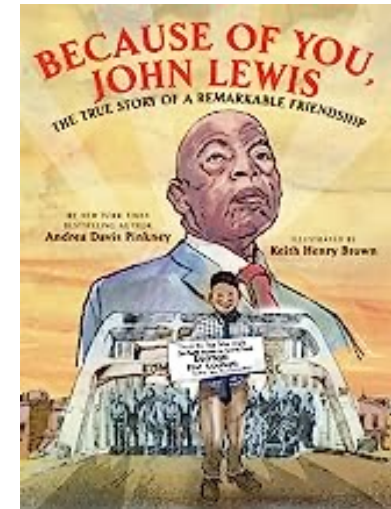
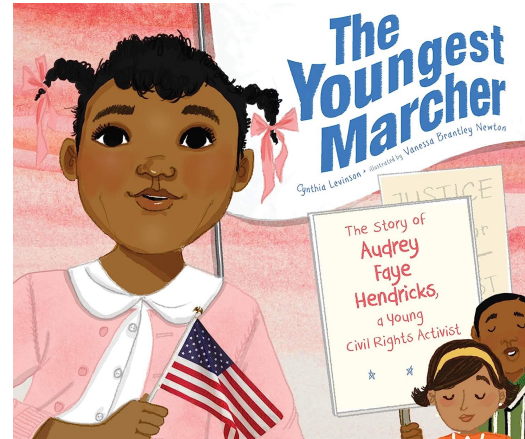
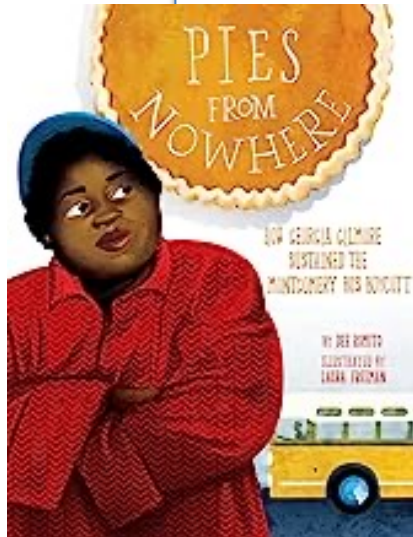
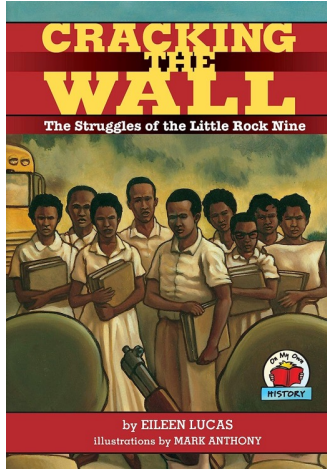
# Children are engaged in mindfulness activities and self-regulating practices.



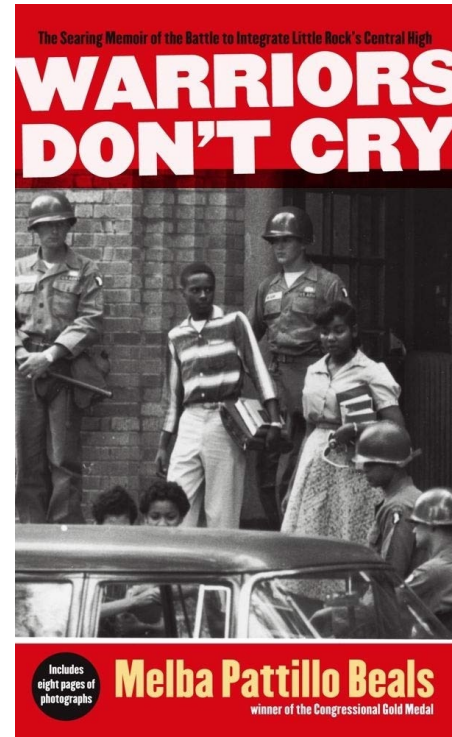
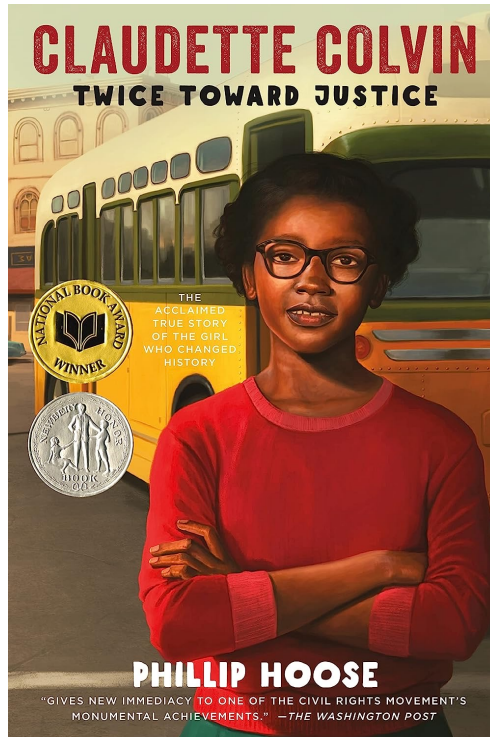
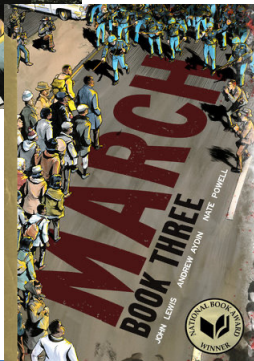
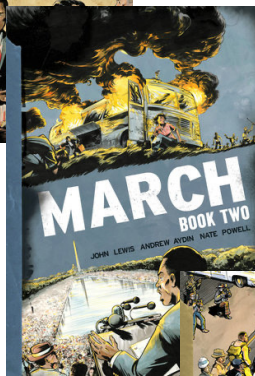
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# Resources to Support Your Classroom: CDF Freedom Schools Favorite Titles (E.S.)

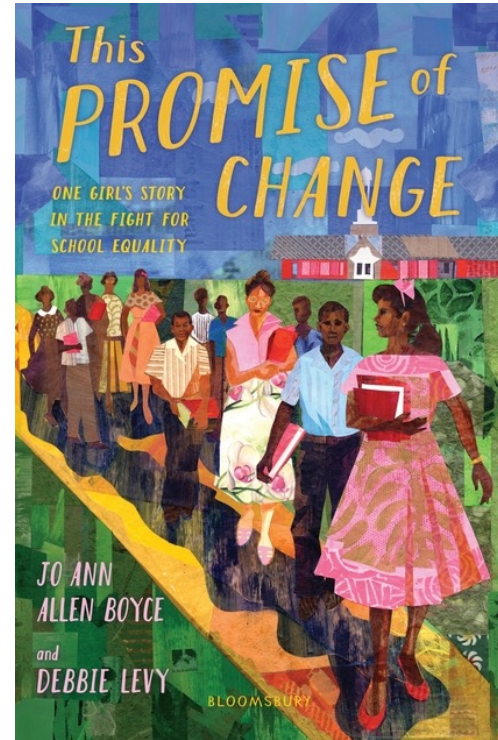
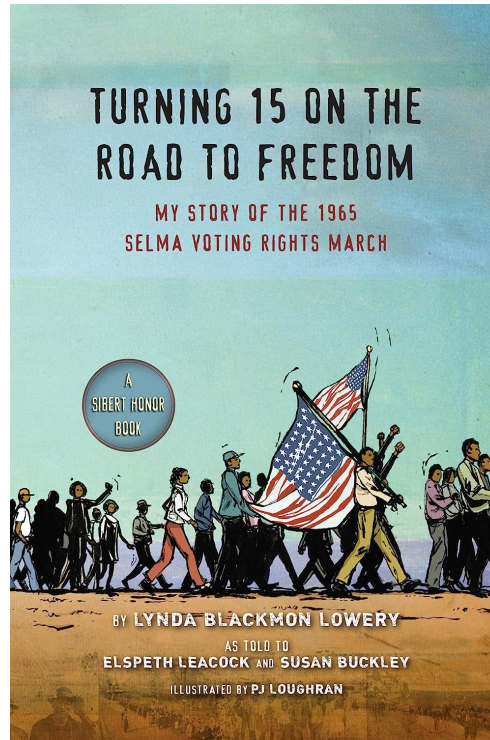
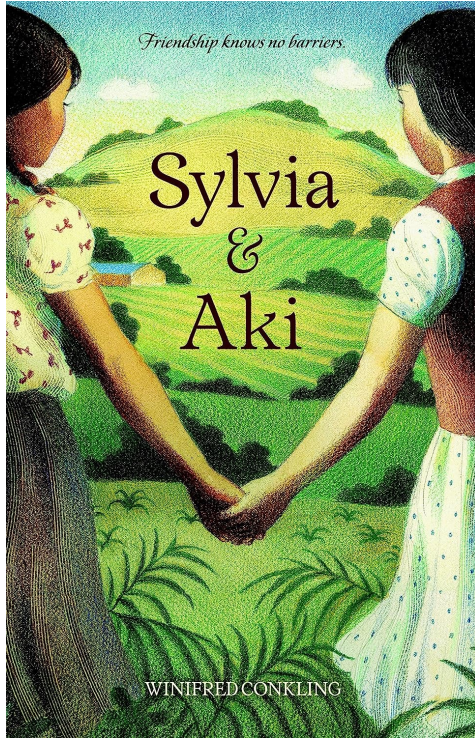


# Resources to Support Your Classroom: CDF Freedom Schools Favorite Titles (M.S.)





# Resources to Support Your Classroom: CDF Freedom Schools Favorite Titles (H.S.)





# Resources to Support Your Classrooms: School and Classroom Library Grants

- [Dollar General Literacy Foundation](#)

Supports rebuilding classroom libraries affected by natural disasters, funding books for new or established literacy programs, family literacy initiatives, and more. **Application for 2023 closed.**

- [The Snapdragon Book Foundation](#)

Supports school library programs including building classroom or central libraries, covering processing and cataloguing fees for books connected with your Snapdragon project, reference materials used by students, and magazine or newspaper subscriptions. **Application opens in November 2023 and closes in February 2024. May/June notification with funds released for next school year.**

- [Wish You Well Foundation](#)

Supports school central library building. **Rolling application deadline.**

- [The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries](#)

Supports school central library building for Title I schools and private/parochial schools with 50% of scholars demonstrating need for financial aid. **Last deadline listed was November 2022, reach out to organization directly.**

- [The Lisa Libraries](#)

Supports organizations in under-served areas with receiving free books. Applicant must pay for shipping and handling. **Rolling application deadline.**

- [The Lois Lenski Covey Foundation](#)

Supports literacy programs and initiatives (from classroom libraries to after-school programs) that work to instill a lifelong love of reading in students. **Not currently accepting 2023 applications but you can send a Letter of Intent (LOI) to show your interest in funding once they re-open that process. To submit LOI, follow instructions on their website.**

- [The National Home Library Foundation](#)

Supports building classroom libraries, school central libraries, and more. **Rolling application deadline.**

- [Believe in Reading](#)

Supports building school central libraries and potentially classroom as well. **Rolling application deadline.**

- [Sarah Jaffarian School Library Program Award](#)

Supports building central school libraries. Application closed for 2023 but you can receive alerts on other American Library Association (ALA) grants as they are announced by signing up for the [Programming Library Newsletter](#).



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# Resources to Support Your Classrooms: Building Up Your School and Classroom Library

## **Crowdfunding- Virtual**

- [Adopt a Classroom](#)
- [DonorsChoose](#)
- [Scholastic ClassroomsCount](#)

## **Crowdfunding- People Driven**

- Check with your school's PTA/PTO for their grant schedule
- Reach out to your public library for additional information on grants available to your community
- Consult your state's Department of Education website for a list of additional grants

## **Other Resources:**

Lee & Low Publisher

<https://www.leeandlow.com/educators/grant-assistance>

Grant-writing resources for educators

- [The NEA Foundation: Writing Tutorial](#)

Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy

<https://www.barbarabush.org/literacy-resources/>



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# Resources to Support Your Classrooms: Activities to Incorporate



**NPR Student  
Podcast Contest**



**Learning For Justice  
Story Corner**



**NEW: Learning For  
Justice Student Voices**



# Resources to Support Your Classrooms:

## Activities to Incorporate

- **Questions for a new school year:**

- When and how have you felt shut down or celebrated by teachers or classmates?
- When and how do you feel your voice matters?
- Are class assignments fair? Why or why not?
- What class did you like most last year? Why?
- What things help you feel welcomed and understood by a teacher? What gets in the way of you feeling understood?

- **Activities to use throughout the school year:**

- Create a bookmark that represents yourself. Use newspaper and magazine clippings, art supplies, and more.
- Recommend books on TikTok based on aesthetics (find examples). *Alternatively, allow scholars to share examples of popular influencers they follow and let them make shows in a similar format or style.*
- Have scholars create book reviews or newsletters about what they've read by designing something in store Smore and Canva.
- Partner with another school to create VoiceThread read alouds for other grades.
- Have scholars create Zagat type reviews of places in their neighborhood citing places like "best place to get over a break-up", "best place to get garlic breath", etc. based on events from the book.
- Draw comics as alternate endings using Makebeliefs , howtune
- Use Anchor.fm for student created podcasts
- Use Creative Book Builder website to let scholars write their own books w/ table of content and everything.
- Have scholars recreate books in the form of reality T.V. , or radio show interview, using main events.

# Book-Stagrams to Follow

## Book Reviewers

- @miloureadsbooks
- @ihaveabook4that
- @mrsbrownsbookbox
- @diversereads
- @helpingkidsrise
- @hereweread
- @diversebooks
- @littlefreediverselibraries

## Bookstores

- @mahagonybooks
- @cafeconlibros
- @eyeseeme\_bookstore

## Publisher Accounts

- @leeandlow
- @haymarketbooks
- @abramskids
- @candlewickpress
- @kokilabooks



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# Questions & Answers

- Q&A (5 minutes)



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