

Juneteenth, a blending of the words June and nineteenth, is an annual celebration on June 19th commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is currently recognized by more than 47 states as a state holiday or observance, with propositions to make it a federal holiday.

While Juneteenth is a celebration, it's also critical to acknowledge and learn about slavery and enslaved people in American history, which will support and frame your teaching about Juneteenth with a special focus on accuracy and cultural responsiveness.

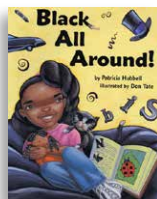
The following books address Black and African American culture and joy, as well as slavery and enslaved people during American history. These books can be found in the Lee & Low Juneteenth collection online at leeandlow.com/collections/juneteenth-webinar-collection. You can also check out the video recording of Lee & Low's webinar, "Teaching About Juneteenth with Children's Books" with award-winning author of *Juneteenth Jamboree*, Carole Boston Weatherford (youtube.com/watch?v=3hCc1n1vZy8).

Black & African American Culture & Celebration



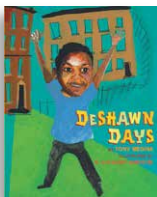
Juneteenth Jamboree • written by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Yvonne Buchanan

The story of a young girl who experiences the sights, sounds, and traditions of Juneteenth—a holiday that celebrates the emancipation of the last slaves in the United States. Available in Spanish.



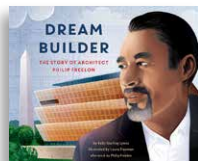
Black All Around! • written by Patricia Hubbell, illustrated by Don Tate

"Look high, look low, look everywhere . . . The wonderful color black is there!" A young girl discovers all the marvelous things that are black – just like her!



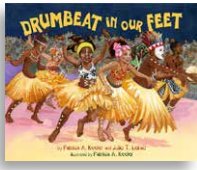
DeShawn Days • written by Tony Medina, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

In this uplifting story told in verse, a young boy living in the projects of the inner city speaks about his hopes, fears, and dreams.



Dream Builder: The Story of Architect Philip Freelon • written by Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by Laura Freeman

You've seen the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Now meet the man whose life went into building it.



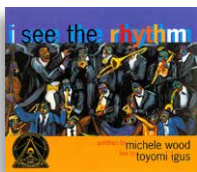
Drumbeat in Our Feet • written and illustrated by Patricia A. Keeler and Júlio Leitão

A journey into the deep-rooted traditions, artistry, and energetic spirit that make up the world of African dance, past and present.



Grandma's Purple Flowers • written and illustrated by Adjoa J. Burrowes

The story of a young girl who cherishes her frequent visits to her grandma, then finds a way to remember her with hope and joy after she passes away



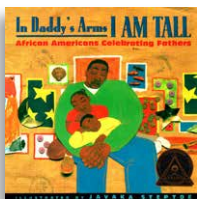
i see the rhythm • written by Toyomi Igus, illustrated by Michele Wood

This book explores African American music throughout history, starting with its roots in Africa.



I Remember: Poems and Pictures of Heritage • edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, featuring a poem from Carole Boston Weatherford

In a 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.



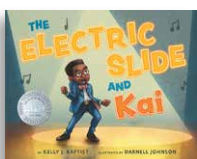
In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall: African Americans Celebrating Fathers • edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, featuring a poem from Carole Boston Weatherford

In this intergenerational collection of poetry by new and established African American writers, fatherhood is celebrated with honor, humor, and grace.



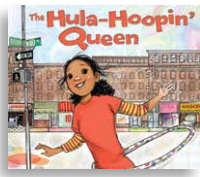
Janna and the Kings • written by Patricia Smith, illustrated by Aaron Boyd

A young African American girl learns to keep her grandfather's memory alive by rediscovering their special place—the local barbershop where they spent Saturdays together.



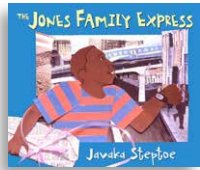
The Electric Slide and Kai • written by Kelly J. Baptist, illustrated by Darnell Johnson

Kai is the only member of his family who can't get the dance steps to the Electric Slide right. But Kai is determined to bust a move in this fun and sweet celebration of African American families.



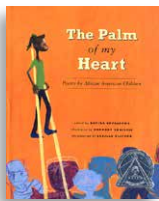
The Hula-Hoopin' Queen • written by Thelma Lynne Godin, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton

A spunky African American girl has a hula-hooping competition with her friends in Harlem, and soon everyone in the neighborhood, young and old alike, joins in on the fun.



The Jones Family Express • written and illustrated by Javaka Steptoe

Javaka Steptoe's inventive collage illustrations, bursting with color and energy, bring his heartwarming story about making his aunt feel special to families everywhere.



The Palm of My Heart: Poetry by African American Children • edited by Davida Adedjouma, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

When children are encouraged to celebrate their lives – their joys, their influences, their hopes – the results are pure poetry.



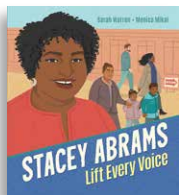
Sweet Music in Harlem • written by Debbie Taylor, illustrated by Frank Morrison

Searching his Harlem neighborhood for his uncle's missing hat, an energetic African American boy unintentionally creates an exuberant gathering of the neighborhood's jazz musicians for a magazine photograph; a fictional story inspired by Art Kane's historic photograph of jazz greats, Harlem 1958.



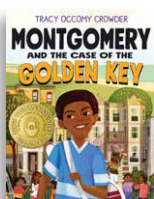
Magic Like That written by Samara Cole Doyon, illustrated by Geneva Bowers

In this celebration of Black Girl Magic, a young girl finds confidence and excitement in the versatility of her natural hair and the way her different hairstyles reflect the natural world.



Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice • written by Sarah Warren, illustrated by Monica Mikai

How do we move our country forward? Stacey Abrams has an answer in this bright and stirring biography, perfect for discussions of voting rights and how people working together can make a difference.



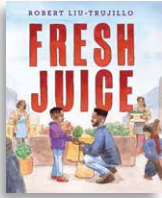
Montgomery and the Case of the Golden Key • written by Tracy Ocomy Crowder

It's 2008, and ten-year-old Montgomery "Monty" Carver is out to find the origin of a golden key found in his Southside Chicago community—which may or may not host the next Olympic games, or supply the next President of the United States, or... have a potential ghost hanging around.



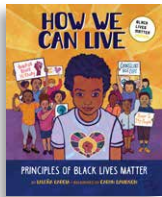
Miles of Style: Eunice W. Johnson and the EBONY Fashion Fair • written by Lisa D. Brathwaite, illustrated by Lynn Gaines

A chic biography about Eunice W. Johnson who brought elegant and contemporary fashion to Black America through the annual EBONY Fashion Fair!



Fresh Juice • written and illustrated by Robert Liu-Trujillo

What makes a great juice that keeps everyone healthy? Art and his dad discover it takes carrots... collards... cayenne... and community! (also available in Spanish)



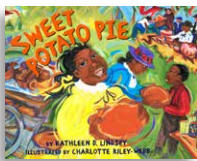
How We Can Live • written by Laleña Garcia, illustrated by Caryn Davidson

The first children's book to feature material from the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, this beautiful picture book will engage hearts and minds as it introduces children to the guiding principles of the Black Lives Matter movement.



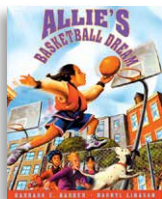
Marvelous Mabel: Figure Skating Superstar • written by Crystal Hubbard, illustrated by Alleanna Harris

Meet Mabel Fairbanks, the skating superstar who became the first Black athlete inducted into the US Figure Skating Hall of Fame.



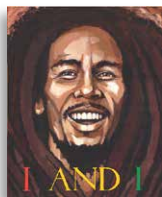
Sweet Potato Pie • written by Kathleen D. Lindsey, illustrated by Charlotte Riley-Webb

In this fictional story set in the South in the 1920s, an African American girl and her family sell Mama's sweet potato pies at the Harvest Celebration to raise money and save their farm.



Allie's Basketball Dream • written by Barbara E. Barber, illustrated by Darryl Ligan

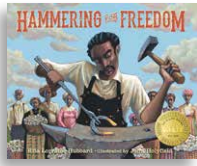
Allie's story of self-determination and perseverance is one that all young athletes will recognize, and perfect for anyone who has experienced the ups and downs of practicing and playing hard.



I and I Bob Marley • written by Tony Medina, illustrated by Jesse Joshua Watson

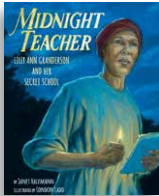
A biography in verse of reggae legend Bob Marley, exploring the influences that shaped his life and music on his journey from rural Jamaican childhood to international superstardom.

History of Slavery & Enslaved Peoples



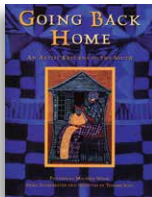
Hammering for Freedom: The William Lewis Story • written by Rita Lorraine Hubbard, illustrated by John Holyfield

The inspirational story of William "Bill" Lewis, a hardworking blacksmith who slowly saved his money and bought the freedom of every member of his enslaved family.



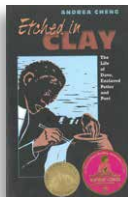
Midnight Teacher: Lilly Ann Granderson and Her Secret School • written by Janet Halfmann, illustrated by London Ladd

This historical fiction picture book reveals the unknown story of Lilly Ann Granderson, an African American teacher who risked her life to teach others during slavery.



Going Back Home: An Artist Returns to the South • pictures by Michele Wood, story interpreted and written by Toyomi Igus

More than half a century after her family moved North to find a better life, artist Michele Wood returned to the South to see and experience where her ancestors lived, struggled, and thrived.



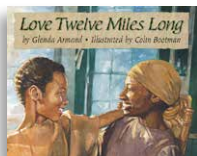
Etched in Clay: The Life of Dave, Enslaved Potter and Poet • written by Andrea Cheng

This biography in verse reveals the life of Dave, an enslaved potter who inscribed his works with sayings and short poems, in spite of the slave anti-literacy sentiment in the years leading up to the Civil War.



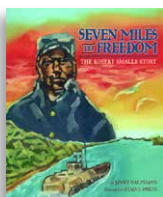
In the Time of the Drums • written by Kim Siegelson, illustrated by Brian Pinkney

Mentu, an enslaved child, learns the stories, songs, and drum rhythms of his people from his grandmother, Twi, and then must find the strength to carry on this heritage after his grandmother leads the insurrection of enslaved people at Teakettle Creek.



Love Twelve Miles Long • written by Glenda Armand, illustrated by Colin Bootman

Set on a plantation in the 1820s in Maryland, this story based on the life of young Frederick Douglass shows the power of his mother's love.



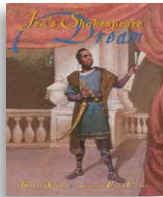
Seven Miles to Freedom: The Robert Smalls Story • written by Janet Halfmann, illustrated by Duane Smith

The true story of Robert Smalls, a slave steamboat wheelman who commandeered a Confederate ship during the Civil War and escape with his family and crew to freedom.



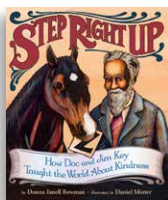
It Jes' Happened: When Bill Traylor Started to Draw • written by Don Tate, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

A biography of self-taught (outsider) artist Bill Traylor, a former slave who at the age of eight-five began to draw pictures based on his memories and observations of rural and urban life in Alabama.



Ira's Shakespeare Dream • written by Glenda Armand, illustrated by Floyd Cooper

This biography chronicles the life of Ira Aldridge, an African American man who is considered to be one of the greatest Shakespearean actors of the nineteenth century.



Step Right Up: How Doc and Jim Key Taught the World About Kindness • written by Donna Janell Bowman, illustrated by Daniel Minter

A biography of William "Doc" Key, a formerly enslaved man and self-trained veterinarian who taught his horse, Jim, to read, write, and do math, and who together with Jim became a famous traveling performance act and proponent for the humane treatment of animals around the turn of the twentieth century.



Stone River Crossing • written by Tim Tingle

From the award-winning author of *How I Became a Ghost*, a tale of unlikely friendship and miracles. When Martha Tom helps Lil Mo and his family escape from the plantation across the river, it's just the beginning of a Choctaw adventure of a lifetime.



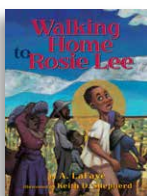
Black Was the Ink • written by Michelle Coles, illustrated by Justin Johnson

Through the help of a ghostly ancestor, sixteen-year-old Malcolm is sent on a journey through Reconstruction-era America to find his place in modern-day Black progress.



Speculation • written by Nisi Shawl

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



Walking Home to Rosie Lee • written by A. LaFaye, illustrated by Keith D. Shepherd

A post-Civil War story about a young boy who journeys tirelessly to reunite with his beloved mama.



Teaching About Juneteenth With Children's Books Webinar: Book & Resource List

Listed below are resources and additional texts mentioned in the webinar to further ground and inform teaching about slavery and Juneteenth.

Online Resources

- **"Teaching Juneteenth" from Learning for Justice**
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/teaching-juneteenth>
- **"Slavery in America: A Resource Guide" from Library of Congress**
<https://guides.loc.gov/slavery-in-america/introduction>
- **"Lies My Bookshelf Told Me: Slavery in Children's Literature" from Learning for Justice**
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/summer-2019/lies-my-bookshelf-told-me-slavery-in-childrens-literature>
- **"This Is Why Juneteenth Is Important for America" from *The Root***
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu6ntwHws5g>
- **"Celebrating Juneteenth" from The National Museum of African American History & Culture, Smithsonian**
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/celebrating-juneteenth>
- **Austin History Center**
<https://library.austintexas.gov/ahc/about-us>
- **Teaching Hard History Framework Grades K-5**
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery/k-5-framework>
- **Teaching Hard History Framework Grades 6-12**
<https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-hard-history/american-slavery/6-12-framework>

Additional Texts

Relevant Works by Carole Boston Weatherford

Freedom in Congo Square (Little Bee Books)

Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement (Penguin Random House)

The Sound Jazz Makes (Two Lions)

The Beatitudes: From Slavery to Civil Rights (Eerdmans Books for Young Readers)

Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People To Freedom (Hyperion)

Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library (Penguin Random House)

Suggested Books & Read-Alouds

On Juneteenth (WW Norton & Company)

Four Hundred Souls (Penguin Random House)

A Black Women's History of the United States (Penguin Random House)

Freedom Over Me (Simon & Schuster)

Freedom Soup (Candlewick Press)

The Undefeated (Versify, HMH Books)

Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans (HarperCollins)

Henry's Freedom Box (Scholastic)