

Generation Queer: Stories of Youth Organizers, Artists and Educators

written by Kimm Topping

illustrated by Anshika Khullar

About the Book

Genre: Nonfiction

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Guided Reading Level: Z+

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*Reading level based on the ATOS Readability Formula

Themes: Breaking Gender Barriers, Disabilities, Discrimination, Diversity, Empathy and Compassion, Identity, Self Esteem and Confidence, LGBTQIA+, Nonfiction, Biography, Civic Engagement, Leadership, Optimism and Enthusiasm, Overcoming Obstacles, Persistence and Grit, Pride, Protest, Social Justice and Activism, U.S. History, Teen Interest

Resources on the web:

leeandlow.com/books/generation-queer

SYNOPSIS

Civil Rights activist Marian Wright Edelman once said, “You can’t be what you can’t see.”

In this collection of short biographies, readers will see the example of thirty young trailblazers representative of a generation that values intersectional, collaborative social justice and who are working to build a world that values everyone.

Meet leaders who founded organizations for their liberation as teenagers, leaders who brought Black transgender representation to people’s television screens, and leaders who successfully advocated for access to restrooms for transgender students. Meet the first transgender athlete to compete in Division I sports, and artists advocating for inclusiveness through poetry, film, fashion, and other mediums.

Whether their work involves protesting, working with policymakers for change, or just existing in the world as their creative selves, each of these young leaders shares what brings them joy and keeps them motivated to do the work they do— even when it’s hard—and their hope for better things to come.

All guided reading level placements may vary and are subject to revision. Teachers may adjust the assigned levels in accordance with their own evaluations.

BACKGROUND

Introduction from author Kimm Topping, in *Generation Queer*

"This book is a love letter to the many generations of queer and trans youth who have committed their time and energy to demanding a better future for themselves and for humanity. They have thoughtfully and intentionally built upon the legacies of so many trans and queer ancestors before them in order to bring that vision much closer to the present tense. It is also a commitment from older generations: we will partner with Gen Z and Gen Alpha; we will not just stand on the sidelines and say, 'The youth will save us.'

As you read the stories collected here, I hope you'll be reminded of the many ways we can celebrate the past, create the present, and envision the future. This book is an affirmation that there are so many people like you imagining similar solutions. An assurance that you are not alone, and never have been. A call to action to respond fearlessly to the legislation and systems that seek to erase us, and to create and build better ones instead. A promise that there is care and love for you in this world—and for so many people like you who share in your longing for a better future.

Generation Queer is the first collection of illustrated biographies about queer and trans youth who are leaders in social change. From Trinity Neal celebrating self-expression and family in her first book, *My Rainbow*, to grassroots organizer Lillian Lennon advocating for trans leadership in Alaska, to Sameer Jha providing education to teachers across the country, and many more, these young people are shifting cultural stereotypes about who is allowed to lead. This book is all about the brilliant and compassionate leadership of current queer and trans youth activists. It's a celebration of how youth today are applying queer as a verb—as in: queering education, organizing, and the arts. These are the three types of activism we'll explore in *Generation Queer*. Young people are creating a culture of radical self-expression, community care, and meaningful social change.

Each story shows us what can happen when young people lead—with a megaphone, with their camera, or at the front of the classroom. Their stories deserve a spotlight, and while they have many accomplishments to come as they grow, we should not wait until later to celebrate them. The contributions of youth are meaningful and worth our attention, especially right now." —Author Kimm Topping

Queer as a Verb in *Generation Queer*

"Throughout the book, I'll use the word queer as an umbrella term to describe ways of thinking, doing, and existing that defy the norms set out to control or restrict our ways of being. Colonization and systems of oppression have institutionalized ideologies that harm queer people, particularly BIPOC queer communities. Queering is about rethinking and reimagining, while also acknowledging our true histories that have been erased or ignored.

Saying someone or something is queer doesn't necessarily tell you anything about gender or sexuality (though it can), and that's what people find so freeing about it. And yet it's a term that also holds a painful history for many. It's been reclaimed by some from what was once a derogatory slur for

people like us (and still can be when used to cause harm or violence), so it's important to be mindful of the differences between queer as a verb, as an umbrella term for the community, and as a label for someone's identity. What matters is that we reflect back the language people use for themselves. People get to decide what language they use for themselves that best describes their own experiences. Building an intergenerational movement means meeting people where they're at, acknowledging their perspective, and respecting it.

There are so many terms that folks use to capture our community in its fullness, like 2SLGBTQIA+, which represents Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, aromantic, and many other ways of describing gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. PBS's Map of Gender-Diverse Cultures (pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map-html) is one place you can learn about the diversity of experiences around the world.

Pro tip: When someone shares their identity with you, you can ask "What does that mean for you?" to learn more about how they define it. This shows that you're curious, caring, and willing to learn. It also shows you're aware that these terms have more than one definition and are frequently expanding and being updated as people learn more about themselves, their histories, and the possibilities of language.

You may also see QTBIPOC (queer and trans Black and Indigenous people of color), LGBTQIA+, queer and trans, and other iterations. I'll use all interchangeably throughout—sometimes specific to a resource I'm referencing and I'll always attempt to respect the language that is used directly by the youth who were interviewed. There isn't a single agreement in the community about which terminology to use as the umbrella term, which is why I'll use a range of initialisms throughout. Language is always shifting and adapting as we gain greater access to understanding humanity, so we can expect that even more terminology will likely be used by the time of the publication of this book."—
Author Kimm Topping

National Organizations and Resources in *Generation Queer* Backmatter

Check out national organizations that are advocating for LGBTQ+ people curated by author Kimm Topping available at the end of *Generation Queer*. Explore their websites to learn more about the work they're doing in legal advocacy, mental health support, family engagement, inclusive curriculum, and much more.

Lee & Low Books LGBTQ+ Children's Books Webinar

Lee & Low's LGBTQ+ Children's Webinar features authors Kyle Lukoff (*When Aidan Became a Brother*), Lesléa Newman (*I Can Be... Me!* and *Sparkle Boy*) and Maya Christina Gonzalez (*I Can Be... Me!* and *Call Me Tree/Llámame Árbol*). They discuss the inspiration behind their books, the importance of LGBTQ+ children's literature in the classroom, and strategies for having conversations with educators, children and families (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LDg3fw4C3E>).

LGBTQ+ Curriculum

For LGBTQ+-inclusive curriculum, lesson plans, and booklists, consult the following organizations for more information:

Welcoming Schools: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/schools>

Garden State Equality: <https://www.gardenstateequality.org/trainings/safe-schools/>

Learning for Justice Gender & Sexual Identity: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/topics/gender-sexual-identity>

GLSEN Inclusive Curriculum Guide: <https://www.glsen.org/activity/inclusive-curriculum-guide>

Safe Schools Project Curriculum: <https://safeschoolsproject.org/curriculum/>

Inclusive Curriculum Materials from MA DESE/Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/safe-schools-program-for-lgbtq-students#inclusive-curriculum-materials>

History UnErased: <https://unerased.org/>

Nonfiction Text Features in *Generation Queer*

To best engage with students reading *Generation Queer*, utilize the following text features integrated throughout the book:

- Callout boxes in purple about specific LGBTQ+ terms, events, and topics
- Timelines
- Quotes from different activists
- Boldface type for names of people, organizations, events, certain terms, and questions for reflection

BEFORE READING

Prereading Focus Questions

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 5 and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Before introducing this book to students, you may wish to develop background knowledge and promote anticipation by posing questions such as the following:

- What is your school or district's policy for LGBTQ+ students? What rights and protections do students have? In your school? How can we make all spaces safe for LGBTQ+ people?
- What LGBTQ+ activists do you know? What are they known for? How do you know about them? What kind of work do they do?
- What are some important LGBTQ+ historical events you know about? When did they occur?

What happened? What comes to mind when you think about LGBTQ+ people and events in history?

- What does it mean to be persistent? How do you demonstrate persistence even though something may be challenging? Why is it important to be persistent? Do you think persistence can be learned? How so?
- How does someone "make a difference?" What do you think making a difference means? Who are some famous people who have made a difference in the United States?
- What does it mean to be a leader? How would you describe a leader? What do they do? How do they make people feel? Are there different types of leaders? How would you describe them?
- What does education mean to you? Why is education important in achieving your goals? How does education provide opportunities for people?
- Why are differences important? What would it be like if everyone was the same? Why is it important to be unique?
- How is a sense of belonging important to someone? Why is it important to feel like you belong? What do you think it feels like to not belong?
- What does it mean to be discriminated against? Why do people discriminate against other people? How does it feel? What are ways that you can defend people against discrimination? Why is it important to stand up to discrimination?
- What discrimination have LGBTQ+ people experienced politically? Do you know what laws have been passed to protect LGBTQ+ people's rights? What about laws that have been protested in favor of LGBTQ+ people's rights?
- Was there a time when you took a chance on something? What did you do? What was the result? Was it worth taking a chance? How are taking chances important in your life?
- What does it mean to stand up for what's right? What are some instances in history where people had to stand up for what they believed in even though they encountered opposition?
- **Note to Educators:** Consider referring to the different organizations and resources provided at the end of *Generation Queer* for further information on how to properly engage students prior to reading *Generation Queer* in the classroom.

Exploring the Book

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strand 1; Craft & Structure, Strand 5; and Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 7)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

Book Title Exploration: Talk about the title of the book, *Generation Queer*. Then ask students what they think this book will most likely be about and whom the book might be about. What do they think might happen? What information do they think they might learn? What makes them think that?

Read Kimm Topping's Biography: Kimm Topping, Ed.M. (they/them) is an educator, historian,

and artist. As the founder of Lavender Education, they lead a national initiative that celebrates LGBTQIA+ history through arts, education, and youth organizing. Their extensive collaborations with educational institutions and organizations focuses on promoting the well-being and leadership of queer and trans youth. Prior to founding Lavender Education, Kimm managed the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students in Massachusetts. They currently serve as a Lecturer on Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, specializing in gender and sexuality studies. In 2023, the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition awarded Kimm the inaugural In-Service Award in recognition of their significant contributions to the transgender community across Massachusetts. *Generation Queer* is Kimm's first full-length book. Residing in the Boston area, Kimm also leads historical tours highlighting queer and feminist landmarks. Find them online at <https://kimmtopping.com>.

Read Anshika Khular's Biography: Anshika Khullar (they/them) is a nonbinary artist, video creator, and speaker based in Southampton, England. They are an ALA Stonewall Book Award winner, Renaissance Accelerated Reader Award winner, and CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal longlist nominee for their work on *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta. They also published a coloring and activity book, *Color Me Queer*, and focus their work on identity and culture, including queerness, body neutrality, South Asian diaspora experiences, immigration, mental illness, and trauma. Find their work online at aorists.com.

Encourage students to stop and jot in their reading notebooks during the read-aloud when they: learn new information, see a powerful image, have an emotional reaction or an idea, have a question, or hear new words.

Have students quickly write a feeling in their notebooks during reading. After reading, ask students why they wrote that feeling down and have them write a journal entry about it.

Setting a Purpose for Reading

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

Have students read to find out:

- how the LGBTQ+ trailblazers featured in *Generation Queer* are representative of a generation that value intersectionality, collaborative social justice, and building a world that values everyone
- how we can be accepting of all people and celebrate their gender identity or sexual orientation how to advocate for LGBTQ+ people's rights and their freedoms
- what LGBTQ+ historical events shaped our history
- how LGBTQ+ people are at the forefront of historical movements
- how Latine and Brown people continue to fight for injustices against themselves and others
- how to work with policymakers for change for LGBTQ+ people's rights

- how art, film, fashion, poetry, sports, and other mediums of expressing yourself are valuable in the LGBTQ+ community and the world at large
- what things you can do to make LGBTQ+ people feel welcomed in your community
- how and why it's important to express yourself and identity
- how the joys of everyday life can inspire creativity and imagination
- why acceptance and love promotes a welcoming community

Encourage students to consider why the author, Kimm Topping, would want to share the stories of these trailblazers and critical LGBTQ+ history with young people.

VOCABULARY

(Reading Standards, Craft & Structure, Strand 4)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1 and 2)

The story contains several content-specific and academic words and phrases that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary below.

Encourage a variety of strategies to support students' vocabulary acquisition: look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, create a specific action for each word, list synonyms and antonyms, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.

Content Specific

lesbian, bisexual, queer, trans, anti-discrimination law, sexuality, "inviting in," straight, cisgender, queerness, LGBTQIA+, Gen Alpha, Gen Z, Millennials, BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+, STAR House, organizers, gender spectrum, Two-Spirit, adultism, transmasculine, conversion therapy, burnout, chosen family

Academic

equipped, ingrained, colonization, oppression, derogatory, slur, intergenerational, extroverted, activists, penal codes, ordinances, homophobia, transphobia, stigmatizing, discrimination, marginalization, intersectionality, truancy, ordinances, autonomy, mandated, prosecution, public accommodations, nonbinary, tokenism, stigma, plaintiff, self-love, self-acceptance, cultivate, unapologetically, abolitionist, disproportionate, interconnectivity, neurodivergent, accessibility, inclusion, advocacy, aberration, invasive, authentically, anti-oppression, sociology, whitewashing, alleviate

AFTER READING

Discussion Questions

After students have read the book, use these or similar questions to generate discussion, enhance comprehension, and develop appreciation for the content. Encourage students to refer to passages and/or illustrations in the book to support their responses. **To build skills in close reading of a text, students should cite textual evidence with their answers.**

Literal Comprehension

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1–3)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

Chapter 1: Organizers

1. What do community organizers do?
2. What were the Stonewall Inn riots and uprising of 1969?
3. Who were Marsha Johnson and Sylvia Rivera?
4. What was the STAR House?
5. Why is the Stonewall Inn significant?
6. Where did protests for gay and trans rights begin? What happened at those protests?
7. What was the first documented riot in a public space by LGBTQ+ people?
8. What is the history of the criminalization of queer and trans people in the US? How did it begin, and in what year?
9. When did it become legal to be gay in all states and territories?
10. How did Pride Month originate?
11. What were some of the first Pride marches? How did they evolve over time?
12. What are the issues that Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson worked toward still present today?

Activists:

- Andraya Yearwood (she/her)
- Cyn Macias-Gómez (they/he)
- Dehkontee Chanchan (she/her & they/them)
- Gavin Grimm (he/him)
- Kaylyn Ahn (she/they)
- L Austin-Spooner (they/he)
- Katherine Ferreira O'Connor (they/them)
- Lillian Lennon (she/the)

- Sherenté Mishitashin Harris (all pronouns)
- Skyler Morrison (she/her)
- Zander Moricz (he/him)

For each section, ask students the following questions:

- What activist is featured in this section?
- What is the activist known for?
- What accomplishments and accolades does the activist have?
- What obstacles did the activist have to overcome?
- What organizations does the activist work with?
- What is this activist working towards?
- What does this activist hope for the future?

Chapter 2: Artists

13. What is the possibility model?
14. Who is Jazz Jennings?
15. What are some examples of LGBTQ+ art and artists that have been influential?
16. What is Ballroom culture?
17. What are some examples of historical periods and LGBTQ+ artists associated with them?

Artists:

- ALOK Vaid-Menon (they/them)
- Ella McKenzie (she/her)
- Jess Guilbeaux (she/her)
- Joshua Allen (they/them)
- Meg (Miko) Lee (they/them)
- Reeves Gift (he/him)
- Ryan Cassata (he/him)
- Sara K. Dunn (she/her)
- Shannon Li (she/her & they/them)
- Somah Haaland (they/them)
- Trinity Neal (she/her)

For each section, ask students the following questions:

- What artist is featured in this section?
- What is the artist known for? What kind of art do they specialize in?

- What accomplishments and accolades does the artist have?
- What obstacles did the artist have to overcome?
- What organizations does the artist work with?
- What is this artist working towards?
- What does this artist hope for the future?

Chapter 3: Educators

18. How can educators dedicate their advocacy work to help others?
19. What are some examples of things that educators do for the LGBTQ community?
20. What platforms can educators use to spread awareness about LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum and history?
21. What are GSAs? Where did GSAs begin?
22. What was the George Washington high School group? Who proposed it? What did they do?
23. What was Project 10? Who discovered Project 10? What did they do?
24. Who was Dr. Virginia Uribe? What did she do?
25. How have Black and Latine students continue to be at the forefront of these movements?
26. What were the goals of LGBTQ students organizing in schools? What did and still hope to achieve?
27. What was the LGBTQ youth speakers bureau?
28. What was the Lavender scare?
29. What happened to teachers in Florida in the 1950s?
30. What is the Gay Teachers Association?

Educators:

- Ashton Mota (he/him)
- Blair Imani (she/her)
- Desmond (Desi) Napoles (they/them)
- JP Grant (he/him)
- Mallery Jenna Robinson (she/her)
- Mari Wrobi (they/them)
- Rebekah Bruesehoff (she/her)
- Sameer Hussain Jha (any pronouns)
- Schuyler Bailar (he/him)

For each section, ask students the following questions:

- What educator is featured in this section?
- What is the educator known for? What kind of work do they specialize in?
- What accomplishments and accolades does the educator have?
- What obstacles did the educator have to overcome?
- What organizations does the educator work with?
- What is this educator working towards?
- How does this educator hope for the future?

Chapter 4: From Walkouts to Marches: Demanding Queer Youth Safety, Autonomy, and Joy

31. What is the QYA? What are they working toward? What are QYA's Demands?
32. What happened on March 11, 2022?
33. What is the "Don't Say Gay" bill? Who does it impact?
34. What are walkouts?
35. What is Let Trans Athletes Play? Who was behind this initiative?
36. Who is Scout Cardillo? What did they do?

Chapter 5: Actions for Youth

37. What do the quotes in this section of the book highlight? What do the young people talk about? Why?
38. What do they say about their communities and chosen families?
39. How do these young people talk about trusting themselves and their wisdom?
40. What about on taking care of themselves and preventing burnout? What do they suggest?

Chapter 6: Actions for Educators

41. What are some of the suggested actions for educators? Where can educators begin?
42. How can schools best support LGBTQ+ students?
43. How can educators counter anti-LGBTQ bills in the classroom?
44. What are some organizations for educators and families to help LGBTQ+ students?

Extension/Higher Level Thinking

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 2 and 3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4 and 6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

There are questions posed throughout *Generation Queer*. Have students look at and answer the following questions from author Kimm Topping:

1. What do you envision when you imagine a future in which all young people are thriving, safe,

and able to achieve meaningful lives for themselves?

2. What would a future look like where all queer and trans young people are empowered with the education and tools to understand the possibilities available to them, as well as their availability to lead within their communities?
3. What hidden stories are behind the accomplishments of someone who is the “first”? Who came before them or supported them?
4. What is your definition of leadership? How do you recognize leaders in your life?
5. What issues are you most passionate about? Do you know of local community organizers in your neighborhood who are speaking out about those topics? Can you think of a time when you inspired others to get involved with an important movement or cause?
6. What is your theory of change? How do you think change is made for queer and trans people? Who are the most effective LGBTQIA+ organizers that you know of? What are your biggest priorities moving forward?
7. When was the first time you saw yourself reflected in the media, or in any work of art? A moment where you felt your identities, or lived experiences, were recognized through the representation of a character or artist? What was it like to connect with that artist through a screen, book, or performance?
8. When was the first time you learned about LGBTQ+ people in an educational setting? Not from friends or family, but in an educational space like a classroom or school. What did you learn? Do you remember what the messages were, and how you felt learning about LGBTQ+ people? Was it a positive experience?
9. If your school is not particularly safe or affirming to all students, what are ways students can find community?
10. What are ways that the three types of activists you have read about—organizers, artists, and educators—can come together to share their talents and skills to raise awareness, demand changes from those in power, and make history?
11. What brings you joy and hope? Who are your supportive people, and how do you stay connected with them? What are some ways you practice self care and community care?
12. Can you think of an educator who was influential in your life? How did you know you could trust them? What showed you that they were consistent, and would you show up for you fully and authentically? What were the qualities of that educator that made you feel welcomed, included, and confident in your own learning?

The below are additional questions to ask students during and after reading *Generation Queer*:

13. Why is it important for people to feel comfortable and free to express themselves? Why should we respect how other people choose to express themselves? How can we show others that we respect and accept their decisions?
14. How did these trailblazers advocate for themselves? What were some of the things that they did to stand up for what they believed in?

15. Why is it critical to learn about LGBTQ history? How can we advocate to let others know that LGBTQ history is also American history?
16. Why is it sometimes difficult to express yourself and make choices without worrying about what others think? Do people's opinions or thoughts affect how you think about yourself? Why or why not?
17. Describe a time that you or someone you know made a choice without worrying about what other people said and/or did. How did it make you feel? What advice might you give to someone who is always worried about what other people say and/or do?
18. How did your perception of community organizers change (or stay the same) after reading *Generation Queer*? How do community organizers work together?
19. How did seeing the portraits of the trailblazers, illustrations from artist Anshika Khullar, impact your reading of the book? What are some of her techniques to show the trailblazers' individuality throughout the book?
20. Explore the structure of this text. Was it written as chronology, comparison, cause/effect, or problem/solution, or a combination? Why do you think the author made this choice? How does *Generation Queer* compare to other books you've read?

Reader's Response

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4–6)

Use the following questions and writing activities to help students practice active reading and personalize their responses to the book. Suggest that students respond in reader's response journals, essays, or oral discussion. You may also want to set aside time for students to share and discuss their written work.

1. What is one big thought that you have after reading this book? Think about the people advocating for themselves and LGBTQ+ people's rights. How can young people change our future?
2. What do you think author Kimm Topping's message is to the reader? Think about possible motivations Kimm Topping's intentions in writing this book. What do you think they wanted to tell their readers?
3. Have students make a text-to-self connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to your own life? What do the young adults' experiences, thoughts, and feelings mean to you?
4. Have students make a text-to-text connection. Did you think of any other books while you read *Generation Queer*? Why did you make those connections?
5. Have students make a text-to-world connection. What kind of connections did you make from this book to what you have seen in the world, such as on television or in a news article? Why did this book make you think of that?
6. What does identity mean to students after reading? After reading *Generation Queer*, what does it mean to you to be yourself? Why? How might your understanding of identity have changed after reading *Generation Queer*?

7. What does making a difference mean to students after reading? After reading *Generation Queer*, what does the idea of making a difference mean to you? Why? Do these young people featured in the book inspire you to make a difference in your community? How?
8. What does education mean to you after reading this book? How does the history about LGBTQ+ rights and education and young people working in education for LGBTQ+ rights affect how you think about education? Why is education important?
9. How has a family member or other person close to you impacted your life? There are many caregivers, mentors, friends, and other people featured in *Generation Queer* who helped these trailblazers throughout their lives. Have you had a family member or other person who really changed your life? What were some things that teacher or person did that were significant to you?
10. Why are these organizers, artists, and activists in *Generation Queer* important people to learn about today? How do the trailblazers featured in *Generation Queer* pave the way for a more just future?

Multilingual Learners Teaching Activities

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1–3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 4–6)
(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 4–6)

These strategies might be helpful to use with students who are multilingual learners (ML).

1. Assign ML students to partner-read the story with another classmate. Afterwards, students can create their own drawing to connect with the book's message.
2. Have each student write three questions about the story. Then let students pair up and discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Depending on students' level of English proficiency, after the first reading: 1) Review the chapters in order and have students summarize what is happening on each page, first orally, then in writing. 2) Have students work in pairs to retell either the plot of the story or key details. Then ask students to write a short summary, synopsis, or opinion about what they have read.
4. Have students give a short talk about how they connected to *Generation Queer* and ways that they like to express themselves and their identities.
5. The book contains several content-specific and academic words that may be unfamiliar to students. Based on students' prior knowledge, review some or all of the vocabulary. Expose ML students to multiple vocabulary strategies. Have students make predictions about word meanings, look up and record word definitions from a dictionary, write the meaning of the word or phrase in their own words, draw a picture of the meaning of the word, list synonyms and antonyms, create an action for each word, and write a meaningful sentence that demonstrates the definition of the word.
6. Consider consulting www.multilinguallearningtoolkit.org/ for more ideas on how to support Multilingual Learners.

Social and Emotional Learning

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas & Details, Strands 1-3 and Craft & Structure, Strands 4-6)

(Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration, Strands 1-3 and Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas, Strand 4)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-2 and Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4-6)

(Language Standards, Vocabulary Acquisition & Use, Strands 6)

Social and emotional learning involves being aware of and regulating emotions for healthy development. In addition to understanding one's own feelings, strong socio-emotional development allows individuals to develop empathy for others and to establish and maintain relationships.

Use the following prompts to help students study the socio-emotional aspects of this book.

1. Analyze the "Self-Care and Community Care" chart in *Generation Queer*. What is the different between Self-Care and Community Care? How do they relate to organizing? Have students create their own "Self-Care and Community Care" charts relating to their own lives.
2. Some of the trailblazers experienced burnout. What is burnout? How did the trailblazers cope with burnout? How did they practice self-care when they experienced burnout? Have you ever struggled with burnout? What are some of the things that they trailblazers do when they're burnt out?
3. The organizers, artists, and activists featured in *Generation Queer* experienced discrimination because of their identities. How do you respond to discrimination, when you experience it yourself and/or when you see it happen? How did these trailblazers respond discrimination? How did they help others who also experienced discrimination?
4. What are the different ways that you can create a welcoming environment at school, in your home, and in your community? Why do students think those things are helpful?
5. Some of the trailblazers featured in *Generation Queer* experienced homelessness and/or were temporarily unhoused due to varying circumstances. Why did these trailblazers experience homelessness? Discuss how *Generation Queer* might change students' perspectives on homelessness.
6. In *Generation Queer*, many of the trailblazers mention their chosen family. What is a chosen family? Who was part of the trailblazers' chosen family? How are chosen families critical to the trailblazers featured in the book? Why do you think chosen families exist?
7. What are ways that you like to express yourself? What does it mean to express yourself? What makes you feel good? Students can share the ways that they like to show their identities through art, a writing piece, or any other kind of visual or written presentation.
8. What does it feel like to try something new? Were you inspired to try something that you don't typically do from *Generation Queer*? What would you like to do? Why? How do you think it would make you feel?
9. Did *Generation Queer* help you to think differently about yourself? What do the children in the story inspire you to appreciate about yourself?

10. Choose an emotion that interests you: happiness, sadness, frustration, anger, etc. Discuss or write about what that emotion looks like in *Generation Queer*.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES

(Introduction to the Standards, page 7: Students who are college and career ready must be able to build strong content knowledge, value evidence, and use technology and digital media strategically and capably)

Use some of the following activities to help students integrate their reading experiences with other curriculum areas. These can also be used for extension activities, for advanced readers, and for building a home-school connection.

English/Language Arts

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Have students select a quote from one of the trailblazers in the book and write a reaction to it.** Who was the trailblazer they chose, and why? Why did they choose to write about that quote? What are their reactions to those statements?
- **Ask students: What can *Generation Queer* teach us?** Have students share their findings. What lessons did the book teach readers over the course of the story? What did they learn from the story's message? Students can talk with partners, in small groups, or with the whole class. Consider creating a word cloud to find out what words came up the most often (<https://www.wordclouds.com>). Then students can come up with a big idea or statement about what they learned from *Generation Queer*.
- **Come up with questions to interview the author, Kimm Topping.** What was their process behind creating *Generation Queer*? What was their inspiration for the book? Read the Introduction from Kimm with students and have them discuss what they learned and how it made them think about the book differently. Why do you think they chose to feature trailblazers and LGBTQ history in this book, as opposed to an autobiographical or memoir format about their own life? Consider reaching out to Kimm Topping for an author visit, either in person or virtually (<https://www.kimmtopping.com/>).
- **Read other popular titles featuring LGBTQ+ leaders, including *Trans History: A Graphic Novel: From Ancient Times to the Present Day*** (<https://www.candlewick.com/9781536244175/trans-history-a-graphic-novel-from-ancient-times-to-the-present-day/>) **from Candlewick Press and *LGBTQ+ Heroes: 51 Inspiring Icons Who Changed the World*** (<https://read.sourcebooks.com/lgbtq-heroes.html>) **from Sourcebooks.** As students read both titles, have them think about the following questions: are there similar themes in both books? What do you think the authors' message is in both titles? How do they show readers critical LGBTQ+ history?
- **Encourage students to write a piece about something that is meaningful to them about their identities.** Using inspiration from *Generation Queer*, have students

think about what they want to communicate about themselves. What do they want to share and why did they pick that thing to write about? What makes them proud to be who they are? Students can share their work with a partner, a small group, or the whole class. Consider creating a class book with art pieces and have the book available to students in the classroom library.

- **Encourage students to research other books centering LGBTQ+ characters and history with from the lists provided in the Background section of this guide and in callout boxes throughout *Generation Queer*.** What did they find from their search? What similarities and differences do they notice in the books? What do students think could be done in their schools or the publishing industry to encourage more books with LGBTQ+ characters? How are these books critical for learning about LGBTQ+ history? Have students select a book that interests them the most from the list and have them find the book at their local and school library. Have students brainstorm different ways to advocate for more books with LGBTQ+ characters, through a letter, petition, or other ways to get involved in the community and their library.
- **Brainstorm different ways to support the LGBTQ+ community in students' schools, using resources from *Generation Queer*.** How can students create a safe environment for LGBTQ+ students at school? How does author Kimm Topping suggest how schools can advocate for LGBTQ+ students and their rights? Students can come up with an action plan about ensuring school safety for LGBTQ+ students.
- **Have students choose one of the trailblazers from the book to conduct additional research on.** Students can answer the following questions: what is this trailblazer known for? Why did you select this trailblazer to conduct additional research on? What organizations are they affiliated, or did they start? What kind of adversity have they encountered in their work? How have they experienced success? Students can prepare a visual presentation with additional documentation, such as photos, videos, and other resources to share with the class.
- **Students can write an autobiography of themselves in the style of *Generation Queer* highlighting what inspires you, what brings you joy, and what you envision for the future.** What causes are you passionate about? How did *Generation Queer* inspire you to fight for what you believe in? What do you want to share with others about what's meaningful to you? Students can accompany their writing piece with art, photography, or anything visual that feels good to them.
- **Select one of the purple callout boxes from *Generation Queer* about specific LGBTQ+ terms.** There are specific terms in *Generation Queer* that have designated callout boxes for more information. Students can choose one of the purple callout boxes to learn more. Why did students select that term? What else can they learn about that topic, for example, "Community Organizers?" Why do they think this term had a callout box?

Social Studies/Geography

(Reading Standards, Key Ideas and Details, Strands 1–3, Craft and Structure, Strands 4–6, Integration of Knowledge & Ideas, Strands 7–9, Range of Reading of Text Complexity, Strand 10)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1–3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strands 4 and 6, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7–9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1–3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4–6)

- **Use the Map of Archives in the Introduction section of *Generation Queer* to visit one archive digitally or in-person if accessible and research a bolded topic mentioned in the book.** Have students answer the following guiding questions about the organizations or location: what is significant about this place? Why is this a critical initiative or organization for LGBTQ history? What services do they provide? What is their mission? Who do they help? Consider reaching out to the organization to set up an interview with an employee to learn more about this specific landmark.
- **With the timelines found in each chapter, print out each event along the timeline and remove the year.** Have students organize the events along a timeline to discuss their thoughts/knowledge on the progression of history related to LGBTQ+ progress. How do these events shape LGBTQ+ history?
- **Investigate an event featured in each timeline, including the following timelines featured in the book: “LGBTQIA+ People in the Courts and Government”, “LGBTQ+ People Creating Art and Making History”, and “Advances in Education.”** Students can answer the following questions about the event that they selected: why did they choose this event? What happened? Why was this event significant? Who was involved? What happened? How did this impact LGBTQ efforts today? Students can write an essay or prepare a visual presentation, with photographs from the event, to share with a partner, small group, or the whole class.
- **Have students investigate the resources provided in the Background section of this guide.** Conduct additional research on LGBTQ+ that are happening in schools and in the government today. How can students get involved with helping advocacy groups with and supporting and fighting for LGBTQ+ rights? What are the organizations that are featured in *Generation Queer* that students want to learn more about? What piqued their interest the most? Brainstorm different ways that they can enact immediate change in their classroom, in their school, and in their community.
- **Choose one of the LGBTQ+ court cases featured in *Generation Queer*.** Have students answer the following question: what was the court case? What was the issue the court case was trying to resolve? Who was involved? What was the person trying to fight for? What was the result of the court case? Students can present their findings with photographs, videos (if possible), and other primary source documents, and talk about its significance in LGBTQ+ history.
- **Choose a book from “Books About Disability Justice.”** Have students learn more about Disability Justice and people advocating for Disability Justice. Students can also refer to *Tenacious: Fifteen Adventures Alongside Disabled Athletes* from Lee & Low Books, written by disability advocate and Paralympic gold medalist, Patty Cisneros Prevo (leeandlow.com/books/tenacious) and *Beauty is a Verb* (leeandlow.com/books/beauty-is-a-verb). Why did students

select this book? How are the disabilities represented in each book? Students can share out what they connected with and learned from and share their thoughts in an analytical essay. Why do you think this section was included in *Generation Queer*? How are the trailblazers also fighting for disability justice?

- **Choose an athlete from the “Notable Trans Athletes” section to conduct a research study on.** Students can answer the following guiding questions: Why did students select this athlete? What are this specific athlete’s goals and aspirations? What sport does the athlete play, what accomplishments they’ve achieved in their sport, and how have they made a difference in the LGBTQ+ community? Students can create informational posters with their findings and discuss why they chose this specific athlete to learn about and highlight.
- **Select one of the walkouts featured in *Generation Queer*.** Students can consider the following questions during their research: what is a walkout? Why did students select this walkout to focus on? What happened? Who was involved? Why did the walkout occur? What did the protesters want to happen? How are walkouts helpful forms of protest? Students can share their findings with primary source documents, photographs, and other excerpts that they encounter during their research.
- **Write an essay about the overlap between another movement for civil rights / social justice (like the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s or the Black Lives Matter movement) and the LGBTQ+ liberation movement as described in the book.** Focus on the efforts of Bayard Rustin, Kiyoshi Kuromiya, Angela Davis, James Baldwin, and Huey Newton. Consult Learning for Justice’s “Teaching the Civil Rights Movement” for culturally responsive accuracy when teaching students about Civil Rights (<https://www.learningforjustice.org/frameworks/teaching-the-civil-rights-movement>) and Zinn Education Project’s “We Had Ourselves Set Free’: Lessons on the Civil Rights Movement” (<https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/we-had-set-ourselves-free/>) to prepare and engage in teaching a Civil Rights Movement in your respective setting. Background knowledge leading up to the Civil Rights movement, examination of multiple leaders and perspectives, and current day applications are all integral to teaching the Civil Rights Movement in the classroom. Please examine the materials carefully and make sure all critical content areas are covered.

Art/Media

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Select an entry from the section in *Generation Queer*, “Photography Collections: Books and Websites.”** Students can answer the following guiding questions: Why did students select this book? What kinds of photographs are in the book? How did the photographs make them feel? What is the photography style of the artist? How are these photographs important? How are they critical to the LGBTQ+ community? Students can share their findings with a partner, small group, or whole class.
- **Choose an artist from the “Musicians, Writers and Poets, Visual Artists, and Performance” section of *Generation Queer*.** Students can answer the following guiding

questions: Why did students select this artist? What are this specific artist's goals and aspirations? What does the artist specialize in, what accomplishments have they made in their field, and how have they made a difference in the LGBTQ+ community? Has this artist won awards? Students can create informational posters with their findings and discuss why they chose this specific artist to learn about and highlight.

- **Have students write an essay about the contributions from the LGBTQ+ in the arts.** What did students learn about how LGBTQ+ have shaped the arts, music, and photography throughout history? What are some of the major accomplishments in the arts from the LGBTQ+ community? How have people in the LGBTQ+ been silenced when it comes to the arts? Students can provide their findings from *Generation Queer* in addition to other research they conduct throughout the project.
- **Come up with questions to interview the illustrator, Anshika Khullar.** What was their process behind creating the illustrations for *Generation Queer*? Why did they choose a particular artistic medium to create the illustrations? What was their inspiration to the depict the trailblazers the way that they did in the book? What were some of their favorite illustrations and why?
- **Have students create a piece of art that reflects themselves.** What are the things that make them different and unique? How would they create a self-portrait that reflects the things that they care and are passionate about? How did the children from the story inspire them in creating their artwork? Students can use whatever materials are readily available, including collage, paint, crayons, etc.
- **Encourage students to select an illustration that resonated with them the most from *Generation Queer*.** Have students write a reflection about the illustration. What stood out to them? How did it make them feel? What did it make them think about?

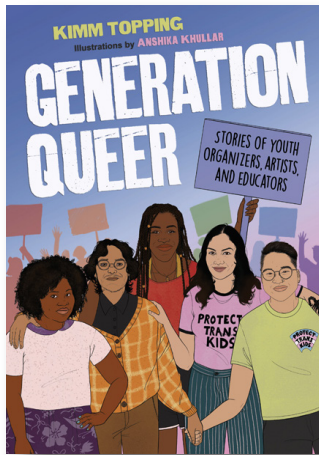
School-Home Connection

(Reading Standards, Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 7 and 9)

(Writing Standards, Text Types & Purposes, Strands 1-3, Production & Distribution of Writing, Strand 4, and Research to Build & Present Knowledge, Strands 7-9, Range of Writing, Strand 10)

(Speaking and Listening Standards, Comprehension and Collaboration, Strands 1-3, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Strands 4-6)

- **Have students and caregivers brainstorm how they can demonstrate respect and acceptance of all people.** What are some ways that you can show respect to people? How can students and families support LGBTQ+ in their immediate families and communities?
- **Ask students to interview family members about what they love about themselves.** Have students share what they learned about *Generation Queer* and how they can appreciate themselves. What do family members love about their own selves? How can they share their confidence with others? How does this make them feel good?
- **Consult PFLAG's website to learn more about how to involve families with the LGBTQ+ community.** PFLAG is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. Learn more about how to get involved with the PFLAG community in your area (<https://pflag.org/>).



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kimm Topping, Ed.M. (they/them) is an educator, historian, and artist. As the founder of Lavender Education, they lead a national initiative that celebrates LGBTQIA+ history through arts, education, and youth organizing. Their extensive collaborations with educational institutions and organizations focuses on promoting the well-being and leadership of queer and trans youth. Prior to founding Lavender Education, Kimm managed the Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students in Massachusetts. They currently serve as a Lecturer on Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, specializing in gender and sexuality studies. In 2023, the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition awarded Kimm the inaugural In-Service Award in recognition of their significant contributions to the transgender community across Massachusetts. *Generation Queer* is Kimm's first full-length book. Residing in the Boston area, Kimm also leads historical tours highlighting queer and feminist landmarks. Find them online at kimmtopping.com.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Anshika Khullar (they/them) is a nonbinary artist, video creator, and speaker based in Southampton, England. They are an ALA Stonewall Book Award winner, Renaissance Accelerated Reader Award winner, and CILIP Kate Greenaway Medal longlist nominee for their work on *The Black Flamingo* by Dean Atta. They also published a coloring and activity book, *Color Me Queer*, and focus their work on identity and culture, including queerness, body neutrality, South Asian diaspora experiences, immigration, mental illness, and trauma. Find their work online at aorists.com.

Reviews

"Readers are likely to see their own identities reflected in these pages, which highlight the voices of people from many different gender, sexual, racial, and cultural identities. . . . Joyful and inspiring."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"*Generation Queer* is an inspiring intersectional portrait of powerful young people enacting social change."—*Foreword Reviews*

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