3rd Annual African American Literature Read-In Week Recommended Book List!

February 6th – 10th, 2017



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O A K L A N D S C H O O L VOLUNTEERS

Recommended Read Aloud Books By and About African Americans

TK – 2nd Grade

Reading aloud is a fantastic way to get young learners excited about reading! Be sure to have energy while you read and invite students to interact with the text as you read. You can ask for their opinion or if they have any predictions from time to time to help them stay engaged and support their comprehension ability.

TITLE &	SUMMARY	BOOK COVER
AUTHOR		
"Honey, I Love" by Eloise Greenfield	Describes a young girl's favorite summer activities and a boy's riding fantasy as he is led around on a gentle horse. The verses are simple, with flowing language and limited rhyme and repetition. Gilchrist's pictures fill the pages with large realistic portraits brimming with the warmth and pleasures of childhood.	
"Tar Beach" by Faith Ringgold	Ringgold recounts the dream adventure of eight-year-old Cassie Louise Lightfoot, who flies above her apartment-building rooftop, the "tar beach" of the title, looking down on 1939 Harlem. Part autobiographical, part fictional, this allegorical tale sparkles with symbolic and historical references central to African American culture. The spectacular artwork resonates with color and texture. Children will delight in the universal dream of mastering one's world by flying over it.	ATH REGOLD

	Twins Callie and Charlie have a lot in	
	common, but they are also very	My Breiner
"My Brother	different: Charlie has autism. Callie	Charlite
Charlie"	narrates the story, describing what	ATTOTT TRA
by	autism is and exploring the issues that	
Holly Robinson	come along with it. The theme is of love,	
Peete	patience, and acceptance. Endnotes give	
And	a few basic facts for children unfamiliar	and the second
Ryan Elizabeth	with the disorder. The authors, a	written by
Peete	mother-daughter team, based this story	HOLLY ROBINSON PEETE
	on personal experience. Evans's bright,	RYAN ELIZABETH
	mixed-media illustrations skillfully depict	PEETE pictures by
	the family's warmth and concern.	SHANE W. EVANS
	Jake Makes a World follows the creative	
	adventures of the young Jacob Lawrence	
	as he finds inspiration in the vibrant	
"Jake Makes a	colors and characters of his community	E LENT
World"	in Harlem. From his mother's	
by	apartment, where he is surrounded by	
Sharifa	brightly colored walls; to the streets full	
Rhodes-Pitt	of familiar and not-so-familiar faces,	
	sounds, rhythms, and smells; to the art	
	studio where he goes each day after	JAKE MAKES A WURLD
	school to transform his world on an	Jacob Lawrence, an Artist in Harlem
	epic scale, Jake takes readers on a	Sharifa Rhodes-Pitt mustrated by Christopher Myers
	journey through the bustling sights of his	
	neighborhood.	
	There is no one like Nana in the whole	TONI MORRISON
	wide world. She is the <i>best</i> . Nana knows	& SLADE MORRISON
"Peeny Butter	how to take an ordinary afternoon and	Desty Butter Fude
Fudge"	make it extra special! Nap time, story	-08919 - 04108
by	time, and playtime are transformed by	Star Anna
Toni Morrison	fairies, dragons, dancing, and pretending	
and Slade	- and then mixing and fixing yummy,	
Morrison	yummy fudge just like Nana and Mommy	
	did not so many years ago	
		Illustrated by Joe Cepeda

Recommended Read Aloud Books By and About African Americans

3rd – 5th Grade

Many students in older grades will be able to read very well on their own. Be sure to make your read aloud interactive by asking if any students would like to help you read, or asking for thoughtful reflections or predictions while you read.

TITLE & AUTHOR	SUMMARY	BOOK COVER
"Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum" by Ashley Bryan	Here are five Nigerian folktales, retold in language as rhythmic as the beat of the story-drum, and illustrated with vibrant, evocative woodcuts. "Hen and Frog," "Why Bush Cow and Elephant are Bad Friends," "The Husband Who Counted the Spoonfuls," "Why Frog and Snake Never Play Together," and "How Animals Got Their Tails"	Beat the Story-Drum, pum-Pum
"Bud, Not Buddy" by Christopher Paul Curtis	 It's 1936 in Flint, Michigan. Times may be hard, and ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but Bud's got a few things going for him: I. He has his own suitcase full of special things. 2. He's the author of Bud Caldwell's Rules and Things for Having a Funner Life and Making a Better Liar Out of Yourself. 3. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: flyers advertising Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression! 	Bub, Not Bub,

"Major Taylor, Champion Cyclist" by Lesa Cline- Ransome	Marshall Taylor could ride his bike forward, backward, even perched on the handlebars. When his stunts landed him a job at the famous Indiana bike shop, folks were amazed that a thirteen-year-old black boy in 1891 could be such a crackerjack cyclist. How Marshall Taylor through dedication, undeniable talent, and daring speed transformed himself into the extraordinary Major Taylor is chronicled in this inspiring biography. The story of a kid who turned pro at the age of eighteen, went on to win the world championship title just three years later, and battled racism and the odds to become a true American hero.	RANDR TANKOR CHAMPION CYCLIST CHAMPION C
"President of the Whole Fifth Grade" by Sherri Winston	 When Brianna Justice's hero, the famous celebrity chef Miss Delicious, speaks at her school and traces her own success back to being president of her fifth grade class, Brianna determines she must do the same. She just knows that becoming president of her class is the first step toward her own cupcake-baking empire! But when new student Jasmine Moon announces she is also running for president, Brianna learns that she may have more competition than she expected. This hilarious, heartfelt novel will appeal to any reader with big dreams, and the determination to achieve them. 	Start counting your votes and your friends.
"Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions" Illustrated by Don Tate Authored by Chris Barton	A love for rockets, robots, inventions, and a mind for creativity began early in Lonnie Johnson's life. Growing up in a house full of brothers and sisters, persistence and a passion for problem solving became the cornerstone for a career as an engineer and his work with NASA. But it is his invention of the Super Soaker water gun that has made his most memorable splash with kids and adults.	Chris Barton Chris Barton

Recommended Books By and About African Americans

6th – 8th Grade

Make sure to ask middle school students to share their ideas and opinions about what you are reading. You can invite students to take turns reading part of the text as well. In middle school, there is a heavy emphasis on students building their comprehension ability. Ask open ended questions about what is going on in the text to help students practice this skill. Plan ahead for some discussion questions to ask students after you read to facilitate a conversation. If the book is too long for the volunteer time that you have, please pre-select which excerpt you will read.

TITLE &	SUMMARY	BOOK COVER
AUTHOR		
"JAZZ" by Walter Dean Myers	Poetry. There's a crazy syncopation /and it's tearing through the nation / and it's bringing sweet elation / to every single tune./ It's Jazz/ From bebop to New Orleans, from ragtime to boogie, and every style in between, this collection of Walter Dean Myers's energetic and engaging poems, accompanied by Christopher Myers's bright and exhilarating paintings, celebrates different styles of the American art form, jazz. "JAZZ" takes readers on a musical journey from jazz's beginnings to the present day. Includes time line and jazz glossary.	Matter Dear Agreet
"Ninth Ward" by Jewell Parker Rhodes	Twelve-year-old Lanesha lives in a tight-knit community in New Orleans' Ninth Ward. She doesn't have a fancy house like her uptown family or lots of friends like the other kids on her street. But what she does have is Mama Ya-Ya, her fiercely loving caretaker, wise in the ways of the world and able to predict the future. So when Mama Ya-Ya's visions show a powerful hurricane – Katrina – fast approaching, it's up to Lanesha to call upon the hope and strength Mama Ya-Ya has given her to help them both survive the storm.	As the waters rise will hope survive NNNNHARDO VARADO VA

"One Crazy Summer" by Rita Williams- Garcia	Eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. When they arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with her, Cecile is nothing like they imagined. While the girls hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers. Unexpectedly, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern learn much about their family, their country, and themselves during one truly crazy summer.	
"The Crossover" by Kwame Alexander	Josh Bell and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood from Kwame Alexander. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family	BULDI EXPLOSIVET I LUVE THE CROSSOVER EVERYONE WILL"NIKKI GUVANNI
"The Great Greene Heist" by Varian Johnson	Jackson Greene swears he's given up scheming. Then school bully Keith Sinclair announces he's running for Student Council president, against Jackson's former friend Gaby de la Cruz. Gaby wants Jackson to stay out of it – but he knows Keith has "connections" to the principal, which could win him the presidency no matter the vote count. So Jackson assembles a crack team: Hashemi Larijani, tech genius. Victor Cho, bankroll. Megan Feldman, science goddess. Charlie de la Cruz, reporter. Together they devise a plan that will take down Keith, win Gaby's respect, and make sure the election is done right. If they can pull it off, it will be remembered as the school's greatest con ever – one worthy of the name THE GREAT GREENE HEIST.	

Recommended Books By and About African Americans

9th – 12th Grade

Volunteering at the secondary level for a read-in week takes significant additional planning and preparation. The subject matter of adult literature can be sensitive and may be challenging to share with students who you do not already have a relationship with.

You can think of volunteering at the secondary level is more of a presentation than a read aloud. Students want their voices heard, so be sure to allow for discussion. Some ideas include: reading aloud a short story together, reading a play together, or sharing a poem together and then discussing afterwards. Creating discussion questions in advance will help facilitate a meaningful discussion.

TITLE & AUTHOR	SUMMARY
"A Raisin in the Sun" by Lorraine Hansberry	Play. Set on Chicago's South Side, the plot revolves around the divergent dreams and conflicts within three generations of the Younger family: son Walter Lee, his wife Ruth, his sister Beneatha, his son Travis and matriarch Lena, called Mama. When her deceased husband's insurance money comes through, Mama dreams of moving to a new home and a better neighborhood in Chicago. Walter Lee, a chauffeur, has other plans, however: buying a liquor store and being his own man. Beneatha dreams of medical school.
	The tensions and prejudice they face form this seminal American drama. Sacrifice, trust and love among the Younger family and their heroic struggle to retain dignity in a harsh and changing world is a searing and timeless document of hope and inspiration.
"Bronx Masquerade" by Nikki Grimes	Open Mic Friday is everyone's favorite day in Mr. Ward's English class. On Fridays, his 18 high-school students dare to relax long enough to let slip the poets, painters, readers, and dreamers that exist within each of them. Raul Ramirez, the self-described "next Diego Rivera," longs "to show the beauty of our people, that we are not all <i>banditos</i> like they show on TV, munching <i>cuchfritos</i> and sipping beer through chipped teeth." And while angry Tyrone Bittings finds dubious comfort in denying hope: "Life is cold. Future?wish there was some future to talk about. I could use me some future," overweight Janelle Battle hopes to be seen for what she really is: "for I am coconut / and the heart of me / is sweeter / than you know" They are all here: the tall girl, the tough-talking rapper, the jock, the beauty queen, the teenage mom, the artist, and many more. While it may sound like another <i>Breakfast</i> <i>Club</i> rehash, Grimes uses both poetry and revealing first-person prose to give each character a distinct voice.

"Dreams from My Father" by Barack Obama "No Name in the Street" by James Baldwin	In this lyrical, unsentimental, and compelling memoir, the son of a black African father and a white American mother searches for a workable meaning to his life as a black American. It begins in New York, where Barack Obama learns that his father—a figure he knows more as a myth than as a man—has been killed in a car accident. This sudden death inspires an emotional odyssey—first to a small town in Kansas, from which he retraces the migration of his mother's family to Hawaii, and then to Kenya, where he meets the African side of his family, confronts the bitter truth of his father's life, and at last reconciles his divided inheritance. Short stories. This stunningly personal document and extraordinary history of the turbulent sixties and early seventies displays James Baldwin's fury and despair more deeply than any of his other works. In vivid detail he remembers the Harlem childhood that shaped his early consciousness, the later events that scored his heart with pain—the murders of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, his sojourns in Europe and in Hollywood, and his return to the American South to confront a violent America face-to-face.
"Recitatif" by Toni Morrison	Short story. "Recitatif" is the French form of recitative, a style of musical declamation that hovers between song and ordinary speech, particularly used for dialogic and narrative interludes during operas and oratories An obsolete sense of the term was also "the tone or rhythm peculiar to any language." Both of these definitions suggest the story's episodic nature, how each of the story's five sections happens in a register that is different from the respective ordinary lives of its two central characters, Roberta and Twyla. The story's vignettes bring together the rhythms of two lives for five, short moments, all of them narrated in Twyla's voice. The story is, then, in several ways, Twyla's "recitatif." "Recitatif" is a pioneering story in racial writing as the race of Twyla and Roberta are debatable. Though the characters are clearly separated by class, neither is affirmed as African American or Caucasian. Morrison has described the story as "an experiment in the removal of all racial codes from a narrative about two characters of different races for whom racial identity is crucial."

Full List of Recommended Books to Share with Students that are By and About African Americans

Compiled by Our Read-In Partners, a Group of Talented and Knowledgeable Educators

Organized by grade level, then Author's last name

(Please keep in mind that there are many, many more books out there! These are just a few of our favorites, since it would be impossible to capture all of the literature out there that fits the theme.)

TITLE	AUTHOR'S FIRST NAME	AUTHOR'S LAST NAME	GRADE LEVELS
Full, Full, Full of Love	Trish	Cooke	TK – K
I Got the Rhythm	Connie	Schofield-Morrison	TK – K
50 Cents and a Dream	Jabari	Asim	TK – I
Knock Knock: My Dad's Dream for Me	Daniel	Beaty	TK – I
Max and the Tagalong Moon	Floyd	Cooper	TK – I
Please, Puppy, Please	Spike	Lee	TK – I
Every Little Thing	Cedella	Marley	TK – I
Bippity Bop Barbershop	Natasha Anastasia	Tarpley	TK – I
I Love My Hair!	Natasha Anastasia	Tarpley	TK – I
Beautiful Blackbird	Ashley	Bryan	TK – 2
Puffy: People Whose Hair Defies Gravity	Aya	De Leon	TK – 2
Harlem's Little Blackbird	Renee	Watson	TK – 2
Bronzeville Boys and Girl	Gwendolyn	Brooks	TK – 3
POETRY: ABC's of African American Poetry	Ashley	Bryan	TK – 3
African Dream	Eloise	Greenfield	TK – 3
Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fair			
Tales, and True Tales	Virginia	Hamilton	TK – 3
Salt In His Shoes	Deloris	Jordan	TK – 3
The Honest-to-Goodness Truth	Patricia	McKissack	TK – 3
Wings	Christopher	Myers	TK – 3
Nelson Mandela	Kadir	Nelson	TK – 3
Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky	Faith	Ringgold	TK – 3
Cassie's World Quilt	Faith	Ringgold	TK – 3
Loki & Alex	Charles R.	Smith	TK – 3
Rар а Тар Тар	Leo & Diane	Dillon	TK – 4
Harlem Renaissance Party	Faith	Ringgold	TK – 4
Black Cat	Christopher	Myers	TK – 5
You Can Do It!	Tony	Dungy	K – 2
Trombone Shorty	Troy	Andrews	K – 3
We March	Shane	Evans	K – 3
Underground	Shane	Evans	K – 3
Precious and the Boo Hag	Patricia	McKissack	K – 3
Thunder Rose	Jerdine	Nolen	K – 3
Thunder Rose	Jerdine	Nolen	K – 3
Alvin Ailey	Andrea Davis	Pinkney	K – 3

TITLE	AUTHOR'S FIRST NAME	AUTHOR'S LAST NAME	GRADE LEVELS
Before John was a Jazz Giant	Carol Boston	Weatherford	K – 3
This is the Rope	Jacqueline	Woodson	K – 3
All Different Now	Angela	Johnson	K – 4
Lottie Paris & the Best Place Ever	Angela	Johnson	K – 4
Sojourner Truth's Step-Stomp Stride	Andrea Davis	Pinkney	K – 4
Tar Beach	Faith	Ringgold	K – 4
Little Melba and Her Big Trombone	Katheryn	Russell-Brown	K – 4
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-			
Michel Basquiat	Javaka	Steptoe	K – 4
If a Bus Could Talk	Faith	Ringgold	K – 5
Gordon Parks	Carol Boston	Weatherford	I — 3
A Dance Like Starlight: One Ballerina's Dream	Kristy	Dempsey	I – 4
Almost to Freedom	Vaunda Micheaux	Nelson	I – 4
It Jes' Happened	Don	Tate	I – 4
Sugar Hill: Harlem's Historic Neighborhood	Carol Boston	Weatherford	2 – 4
The Bat Boy & His Violin	Gavin	Curtis	2 – 5
Malcolm Little: The Boy Who Grew Up To Be			
Malcolm X	Ilyasah	Shabazz	2 – 6
Cleo Edison Oliver, Playground Millionaire	Sundee T.	Frazier	3 – 5
The Sweetest Sound	Sherri	Winston	3 – 6
Beat the Story - Drum, Pum-Pum	Ashley	Bryan	3 – 7
Bud, Not Buddy	Christopher Paul	Curtis	3 – 7
Elijah of Buxton	Christopher Paul	Curtis	3 – 7
POETRY: Words with Wings	Nikki	Grimes	3 – 8
Heart and Soul: The Story of America and			
African-Americans	Kadir	Nelson	4 – 6
Two Naomis	Olugbemisola	Rhuday-Perkovich	4 – 6
President of the Whole Fifth Grade	Sherri	Winston	4 – 6
One Crazy Summer	Rita	Williams – Garcia	4 – 7
P. S. Be Elevan	Rita	Williams – Garcia	4 – 7
Gone Crazy in Alabama	Rita	Williams – Garcia	4 – 7
The Cruisers	Walter Dean	Myers	4 – 8
Bad News Outlaws	Vaunda Micheaux	Nelson	4 – 8
As Brave as You	Jason	Reynolds	4 – 12
Ninth Ward	Jewell Parker	Rhodes	4 – 12
The Jumbies	Tracey	Baptiste	5 – 8
Brown Girl Dreaming	Jacqueline	Woodson	5 – 8
Ghost	Jason	Reynolds	5 – 9
The Crossover	Kwame	Alexander	5 – 12
Booked	Kwame	Alexander	5 – 12
	Sampson, Rameck,	Davis, Hunt, Jenkins,	
We Beat the Streets	George, Lisa	Page	5 – 12
The Great Greene Heist	Varian	Johnson	6 – 9
Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer	Carole	Boston Weatherford	
47	Walter	Mosley	6 – 12

TITLE	AUTHOR'S FIRST	AUTHOR'S LAST NAME	GRADE LEVELS
Amiri and Odette: A Love Story	Walter Dean	Myers	7 – 9
	John Lewis & Andrew		
March: Book One	Aydin	Aydin & Lewis	7 – 12
Go Tell It On The Mountain	James	Baldwin	7 – 12
Before the Mayflower: A History of Black			
America	Lerone	Bennett Jr.	7 – 12
Manchild in the Promised Land	Claude	Brown	7 – 12
	Sampson, Rameck,	Davis, Hunt, Jenkins,	
The Pact	George, Lisa	Page	7 – 12
Black Boy	Denise	Dennis	7 – 12
The African Origin of Civilization	Cheik Anta	Dlop	7 – 12
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass	Frederick	Dougless	7 – 12
The Battle of Jericho	Sharon M.	Draper	7 – 12
World and Africa	W.E.B.	Du Bois	7 – 12
Invisible Man	Ralph	Ellison	7 – 12
The Wretched of the Earth	Frantz	Fanon	7 – 12
			7 – 12
Philosophy and Opinion of Marcus Garvey	Amy Jacques	Garvey	
Roots	Alex	Haley	7 – 12
Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a	V:		7 12
Fugitive Slave	Virginia Hill	Hamilton	7 – 12
Letter to a Young Sister: DeFINE Your Destiny	НШ	Harper	7 – 12
Letters to a Young Brother: MANifest Your Destiny	Hill	Harper	7 – 12
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		Haskins	
Andrew Young, Man with a Mission Introduction to African Civilizations	Andrew John G.	Jackson	7 – 12 7 – 12
Think and Grow Rich: A Black Choice	Dennis	Kimbro	7 – 12
Young, Gifted, and Black	Walter Dean	Myers	7 – 12
Darius & Twig	Walter Dean	Myers	7 – 12
Ghetto Cowboy	G.	Neri	7 – 12
Because We Are	G. Mildred	Pitts-Walter	7 – 12
The World's Great Men of Color	J. A.	Rogers	7 – 12
Another Way to Dance	Martha	Southgate	7 – 12
The Miseducation of the Negro	Carter G.	Woodson	7 – 12
March: Book I	John	Lewis	8 – 12
March: Book 2	John	Lewis	8 – 12
March: Book 3	John	Lewis	8 – 12
They Came Before Columbus	Ivan	van Sertima	8 – 12
The Golden Age of the Moor	Ivan	van Sertima	8 – 12
POETRY: Becoming Billie Holiday	Carol Boston	Weatherford	8 – 12
The Autobiography of Malcolm X	Malcolm	X	8 – 12
Things Fall Apart	Chinua	Achebe	9 – 12
A Taste of Power: A Black Women's Story	Elaine	Brown	9 – 12
Dawn	Octavia E.	Butler	9 – 12

TITLE	AUTHOR'S FIRST	AUTHOR'S LAST NAME	GRADE LEVELS
Will You Die With Me?: My Life and the Black			
Panther Party	Flores A.	Forbes	9 – 12
My People	Langston	Hughes	9 – 12
Blood in My Eye	George L.	Jackson	9 – 12
Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches	Audre	Lord	9 – 12
How It Went Down	Kekla	Magoon	9 – 12
When I Was the Greatest	Jason	Reynolds	9 – 12
Autobiography of Assata Shakur	Assata	Shakur	9 – 12
The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights	Steve	Sheinkin	9 – 12
Courage Has No Color: The True Story of the Triple Nickles, America's First Black			
Paratroopers	Tanya Lee	Stone	9 – 12
Blue Rage, Black Redemption: A Memoir	Stanley Tookie	Williams	9 – 12