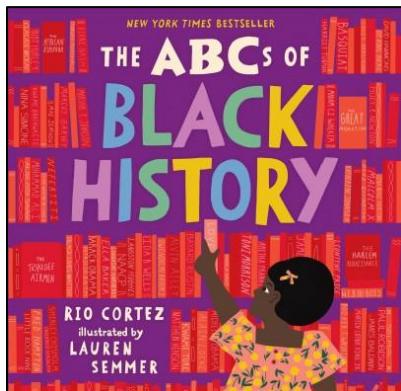


Lucy Robbins Welles LIBRARY

CHILDREN'S BOOKSLIST

Black History Books for Grades K – 3

Learn about Black history all year long with these books about the events, culture, hardships, triumphs and daily lives of Black Americans.



The ABCs of Black History

by Rio Cortez; illustrated by Lauren Semmer

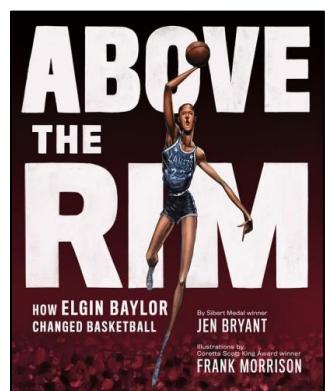
Nonfiction Picture Book (2020)
J973.04 Cortez

Letter by letter, *The ABCs of Black History* celebrates a story that spans continents and centuries, triumph and heartbreak, creativity and joy. In addition to rhyming text, the book includes back matter with information on the

events, places, and people mentioned in the poem.

Also available as a Hoopla Ebook.

Suggested for ages 5-10



Above the Rim: How Elgin Baylor Changed Basketball

by Jen Bryant; illustrated by Frank Morrison

Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Baylor

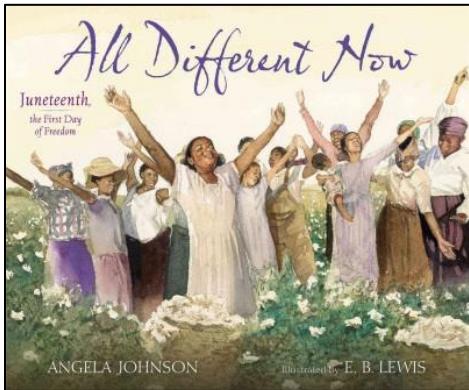
Elgin Baylor was one of basketball's all-time greatest players; an innovative athlete, team player, and quiet force for change. One of the first professional African-American players, he

inspired others on and off the court. But when traveling for away games, many hotels and restaurants turned Elgin away because he was black. One night, Elgin had enough and staged a one-man protest that captured the attention of the press, the public, and the NBA.

Also available as a Freading Ebook.

Suggested for ages 5-10





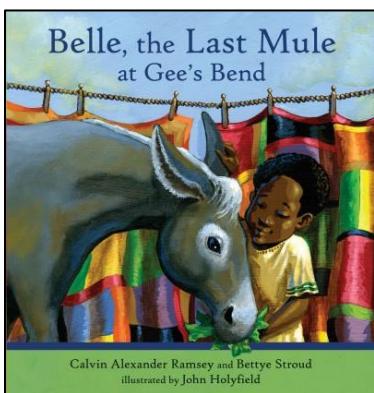
All Different Now: Juneteenth, the First Day of Freedom

by Angela Johnson; illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Picture Book (2014)
P* Johnson

Through the eyes of one little girl, *All Different Now* tells the story of the first Juneteenth, the day freedom finally came to the last of the slaves in the South. Since then, the observance of June 19 as African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond.

Suggested for ages 6-10



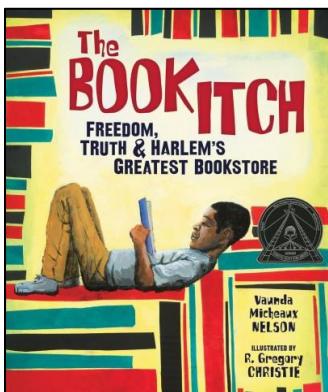
Belle, the Last Mule at Gee's Bend

by Calvin Alexander Ramsey & Bettye Stroud;
illustrated by John Holyfield

Picture Book (2011)
P* Ramsey

In Gee's Bend, Alabama, Miz Pettway tells young Alex about the historic role her mule played in the struggle for civil rights led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Suggested for ages 5-8



The Book Itch: Freedom, Truth & Harlem's Greatest Bookstore

by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson;
illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

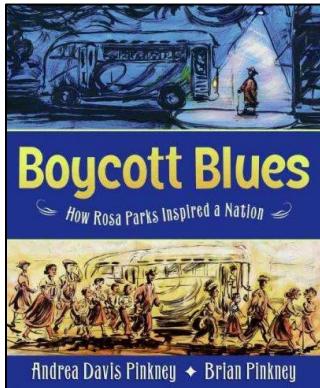
Nonfiction Picture Book (2015)
J323.1 Nelson

In the 1930's, Lewis's dad, Lewis Michaux Sr., started a bookstore in Harlem and named it the National Memorial African Bookstore. Helping out at the store, Lewis met all kinds of people, even famous one like Muhammad Ali, Malcolm X, and Langston Hughes! Read the story of how Lewis Michaux Sr. and his bookstore brought people together, fostered new ideas and helped people stand up for what they believed in.

Also available as an OverDrive Ebook.

Suggested for ages 6-10





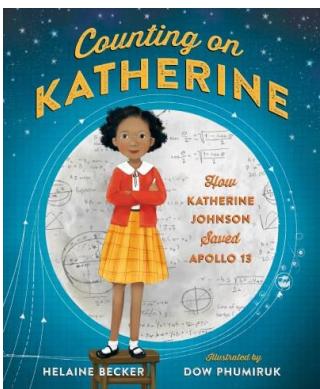
Boycott Blues: How Rosa Parks Inspired a Nation

by Andrea Davis Pinkney; illustrated by Brian Pinkney

Picture Book (2008)
P* Pinkney

Rosa Parks took a stand by keeping her seat on the bus. When she was arrested for it, her supporters protested by refusing to ride. Soon a community of thousands was coming together to help one another get where they needed to go. Meet the men and women of the Montgomery bus boycott, who refused to give up until they got justice.

Suggested for ages 7-11



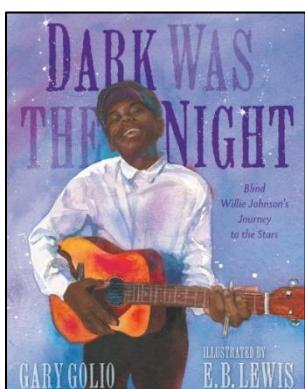
Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13

by Helaine Becker; illustrated by Dow Phumiruk

Picture Book Biography (2018)
JB Johnson

An introduction to the boundary-breaking mathematician, Katherine Johnson, describes how her early love of numbers led her to a job at NASA where she calculated the course of moon landings and helped save the Apollo 13 mission.

Suggested for ages 6-10



Dark Was the Night

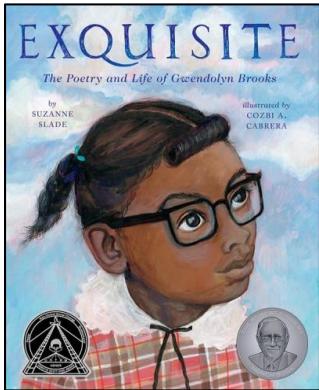
by Gary Golio; illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Johnson

The story of Blind Willie Johnson – the legendary Texas musician whose song “Dark Was the Night” was included on the Voyager 1 space probe’s famous Golden Record.

Suggested for ages 5-8





Exquisite: The Poetry and Life of Gwendolyn Brooks

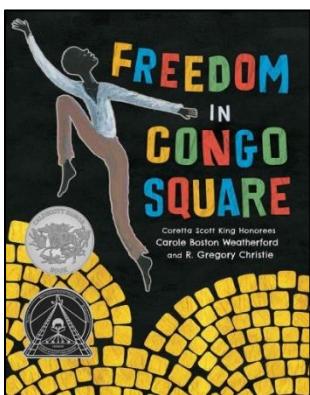
by Suzanne Slade; illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera

Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Brooks

A picture book biography of celebrated poet Gwendolyn Brooks, the first Black person to win the Pulitzer Prize, follows her from early girlhood into her adult life, showcasing her desire to write poetry from a very young age.

Also available as a Freading Ebook.

Suggested for ages 6-10



Freedom in Congo Square

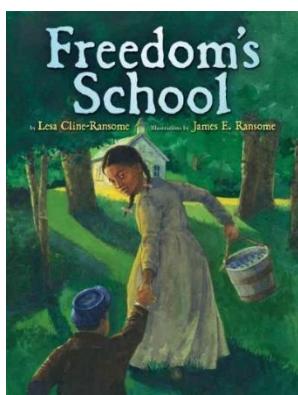
by Carole Boston Weatherford;
illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Picture Book (2016)
P* Weatherford

Six days a week, slaves labor from sunup to sundown and beyond, but on Sunday afternoons, they gather with free blacks at Congo Square outside New Orleans, free from oppression.

Also available as a Hoopla E-Video.

Suggested for ages 5-9



Freedom's School

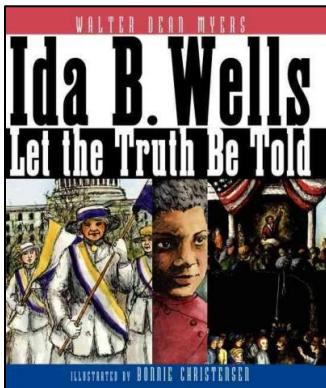
by Lesa Cline-Ransome; illustrated by James E. Ransome

Picture Book (2015)
P* Cline-Ransome

Enrolling in school when their parents are freed from slavery, Lizzie and her brother endure long walks in harsh weather and the animosity of racist neighbors to attend their plain but beloved school.

Suggested for ages 6-10





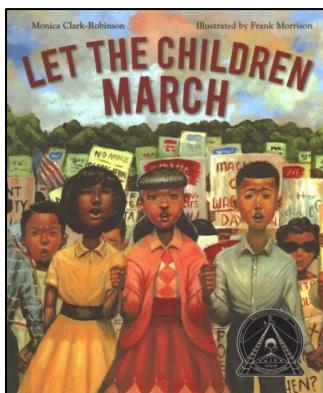
Ida B. Wells: Let the Truth Be Told

by Walter Dean Myers; illustrated by Bonnie Christensen

Picture Book Biography (2008)
JB Wells

Long before boycotts, sit-ins, and freedom rides, Ida B. Wells was hard at work to better the lives of African Americans. An activist, educator, writer, journalist, and suffragette, she used fierce determination and the power of the pen to educate the world about the unequal treatment of Blacks in the United States.

Suggested for ages 7-11



Let the Children March

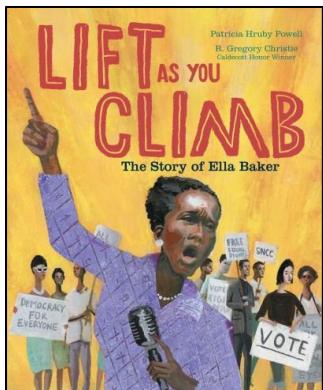
by Monica Clark-Robinson; illustrated by Frank Morrison

Nonfiction Picture Book (2018)
J323 Clark-Robinson

In 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, thousands of African American children and adults volunteered to march for their civil rights after hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak. They protested the laws that kept black people separate from white people.

Facing, fear, hate, and danger, these children used their voices to change the world.
Also available as an OverDrive Ebook, Hoopla E-Video, DVD, & Audiobook on CD.

Suggested for ages 6-10



Lift as You Climb: The Story of Ella Baker

by Patricia Hruby Powell; illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

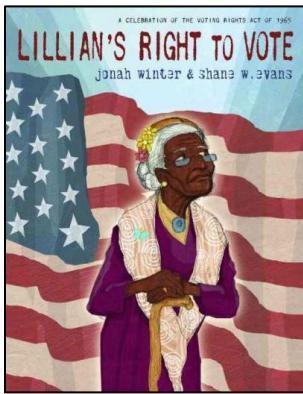
Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Baker

Long before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, Ella Baker worked to lift others up by fighting racial injustice and empowering poor African Americans to stand up for their

rights. This stirring biography of one of the most influential women in the civil rights movement paints a vivid portrait of the fight for the freedom of the human spirit.

Suggested for ages 5-9





Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

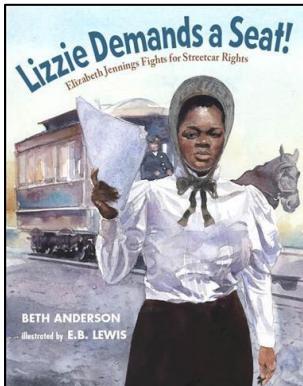
by Jonah Winter; illustrated by Shane W. Evans

Picture Book (2015)
P* Winter

As Lillian, a one-hundred-year-old African American, makes a long haul up a steep hill to her polling place, she sees more than trees and sky; she sees her family's history. She sees the

passage of the Fifteenth Amendment and her great-grandfather voting for the first time. She sees her parents trying to register to vote. And she sees herself marching in protest from Selma to Montgomery.

Suggested for ages 6-10



Lizzie Demands a Seat!: Elizabeth Jennings Fights for Streetcar Rights

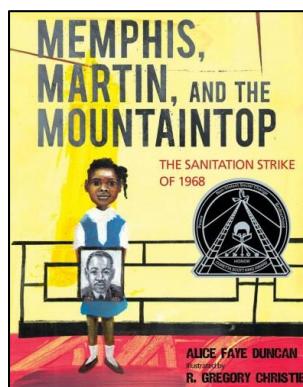
by Beth Anderson; illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Jennings

In 1854, Elizabeth "Lizzie" Jennings, an African American schoolteacher, fought back when she was unjustly denied entry to a New York City streetcar, sparking the beginnings of the long

struggle to gain equal rights on public transportation.

Suggested for ages 6-10



Memphis, Martin, and the Mountaintop: The Sanitation Strike of 1968

by Alice Faye Duncan; illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

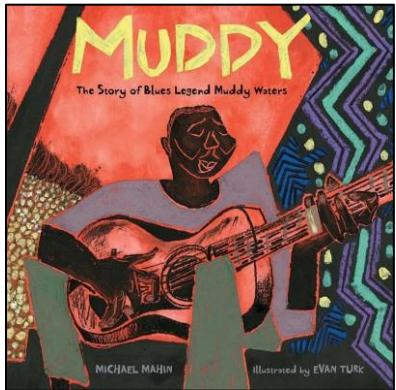
Nonfiction Picture Book (2018)
J323.092 Duncan

This picture book tells the story of the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from the perspective of young girl whose father was a sanitation

worker. Fully researched, with cited sources, author Alice Faye Duncan was inspired by the memories of a teacher who participated in the strike as a child.

Suggested for ages 7-11





Muddy: The Story of Blues Legend Muddy Waters

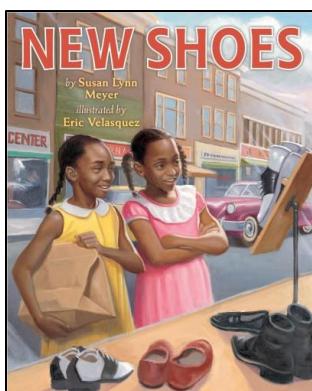
by Michael Mahin; illustrated by Evan Turk

Picture Book Biography (2017)
JB Waters

A picture book celebration of the indomitable Muddy Waters, a blues musician whose fierce and electric sound laid the groundwork for what would become rock and roll.

From a hardscrabble childhood in Mississippi to the smoky juke joints of Chicago, Muddy Water's story is one of struggle, determination, and hope.

Suggested for ages 5-9



New Shoes

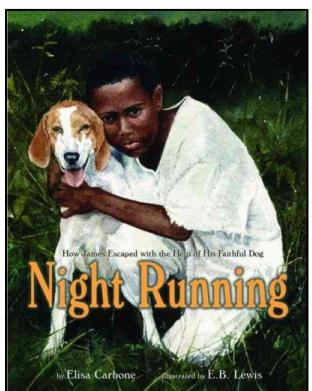
by Susan Lynn Meyer; illustrated by Eric Velasquez

Picture Book (2015)
P* Meyer

When Ella Mae and her mother go to the shoe store, they are told to wait until there are no white customers to serve first. She doesn't get to try anything on, either – her mother traces her feet on a sheet of paper, and the salesman brings them a pair

he thinks will fit. Disappointed by her treatment, Ella Mae and her cousin Charlotte hatch a plan to help others in their community find better-fitting shoes without humiliation.

Suggested for ages 5-9



Night Running

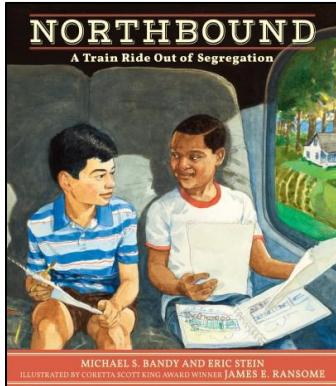
by Elisa Carbone; illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Picture Book (2008)
P* Carbone

A runaway slave makes a daring escape to freedom with the help of his faithful hunting dog, Zeus. Based on the true story of James Smith's journey from Virginia to Ohio in the mid-1800s.

Suggested for ages 6-10





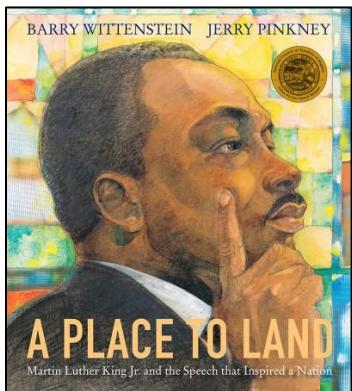
Northbound

by Michael S. Bandy & Eric Stein;
illustrated by James E. Ransome

Picture Book (2020)
P* Bandy

When Michael and his grandmother board a train for his first train ride, the conductor directs them to the “colored only” section. But when the train pulls out of Atlanta, the signs come down, and a boy from the “whites only” section runs up to Michael, inviting him to explore. How come Michael can go as he pleases in some states, but he has to sit in segregated sections in others?

Suggested for ages 6-9



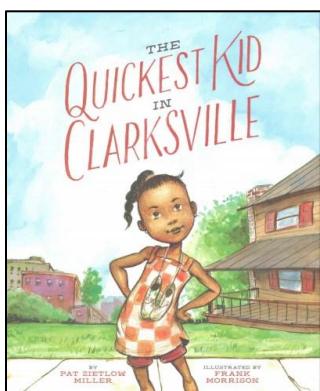
A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Speech that Inspired a Nation

by Barry Wittenstein; illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Picture Book Biography (2019)
JB King

An introduction to Martin Luther King Jr.’s legendary “I Have a Dream” speech shares the lesser-known story of how it was written and had not been originally intended to coincide with the history-changing 1963 March on Washington.

Suggested for ages 7-10



The Quickest Kid in Clarksville

by Pat Zietlow Miller; illustrated by Frank Morrison

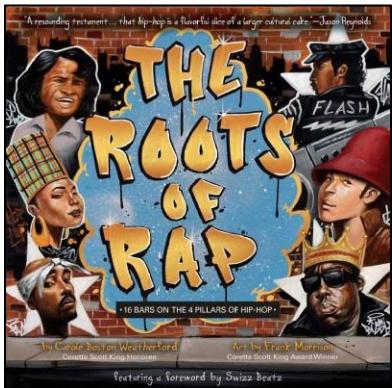
Picture Book (2016)
P Miller

Growing up in the segregated town of Clarksville, Tennessee, in the 1960s, Alta’s family cannot afford to buy her new sneakers – but she still plans to attend the parade celebrating her hero Wilma Rudolph’s three Olympic gold medals.

Also available as an OverDrive Ebook.

Suggested for ages 5-8





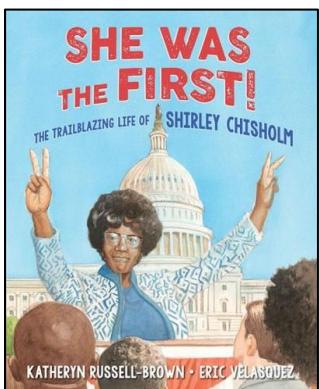
The Roots of Rap: 16 Bars on the 4 Pillars of Hip-Hop

by Carole Boston Weatherford;
illustrated by Frank Morrison

Nonfiction Picture Book (2019)
J782.42 Weatherford

Explore the roots of rap in this stunning, rhyming, triple-timing picture book! Learn about how it evolved from folktales, spirituals, and poetry, to the showmanship of James Brown, to the culture of graffiti art and breakdancing that formed around the art form.

Suggested for ages 5-10



She Was the First! : The Trailblazing Life of Shirley Chisholm

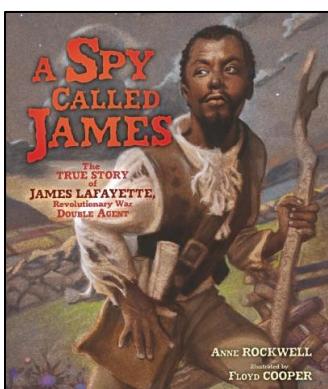
by Katheryn Russell-Brown; illustrated by Eric Velasquez

Picture Book Biography (2020)
JB Chisholm

An introduction to educator and politician Shirley Chisholm, who in 1968 was the first Black woman elected to Congress and in 1972 was the first Black candidate from a major political party

to run for the United States presidency.

Suggested for ages 5-10



A Spy Called James: The True Story of James Lafayette, Revolutionary War Double Agent

by Anne Rockwell; illustrated by Floyd Cooper

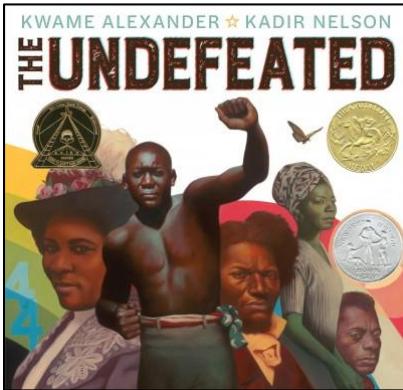
Picture Book Biography (2016)
CH Book-DVD Lafayette

The remarkable story of James Lafayette, a slave who volunteered to serve the Continental Army in order to secure his freedom and became a spy for the Americans under the command of Marquis de Lafayette.

Also available as an OverDrive Ebook, Hoopla E-Video, DVD & Audiobook on CD.

Suggested for ages 5-9





The Undefeated

by Kwame Alexander; illustrated by Kadir Nelson

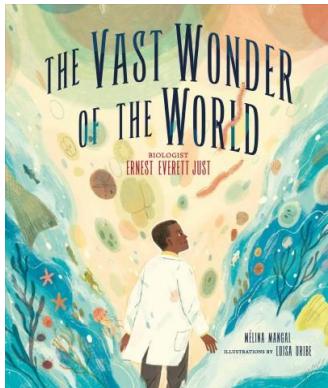
Poetry Picture Book (2019)
J811.6 Alexander

This poem is a powerful tribute to Black life in the United States. It highlights the unspeakable trauma of slavery, the faith and fire of the civil rights movement, and the perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes.

Stunning oil paintings accentuate the impact of the text and celebrates black athletes, writers, musicians, activists, and icons.

Also available as an OverDrive Ebook.

Suggested for all ages



The Vast Wonder of the World: Biologist Ernest Everett Just

by Mélina Mangal; illustrated by Luisa Uribe

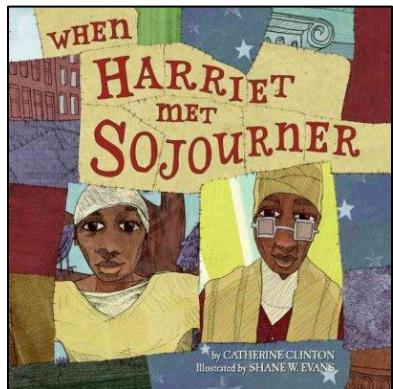
Picture Book Biography (2018)
JB Just

This introduction to scientific pioneer Ernest Everett Just describes how his all-encompassing approach to research was challenged by discrimination but ultimately led to important

discoveries about egg cells and the origins of life.

Also available as an OverDrive Ebook.

Suggested for ages 6-10



When Harriet Met Sojourner

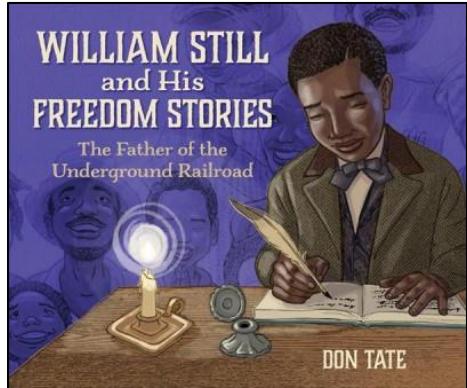
by Catherine Clinton; illustrated by Shane W. Evans

Nonfiction Picture Book (2007)
J973.7 Tubman

This picture book relates the lives of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth on alternating pages, leading up to the day they likely met in Boston in 1864.

Suggested for ages 5-8





William Still and His Freedom Stories: The Father of the Underground Railroad

by Don Tate

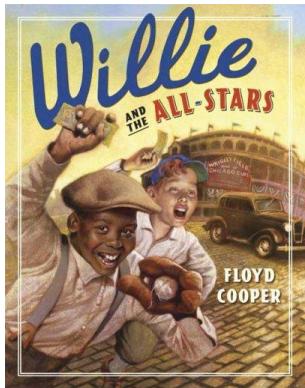
Picture Book Biography (2020)

JB Still

The incredible, stranger-than-fiction true story of

William Still, a man who dedicated his life to recording the stories of enslaved people fleeing to freedom. William collected the stories of thousands of freedom seekers, and worked to reunite separated family members.

Suggested for ages 5-9



Willie and the All-Stars

by Floyd Cooper

Picture Book (2008)

P* Cooper

In 1942 Chicago, Willie sees a game between the Negro League All-Star team and the Major League All-Stars, and realizes that his dream of becoming a professional baseball player could come true.

Suggested for ages 6-10



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(Updated April 2021)