

Michigan Celebrates

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

with Literature

WEEK 1

February 2021

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

The Michigan Department of Education and the Library of Michigan are excited to showcase African American authors and their literary works each week during the month of February in celebration of African American History Month. Seven authors and their works are featured and were selected from nominations submitted by educators for use by educators.

Student literacy increases powerfully as students see themselves (mirrors) and others (windows) portrayed accurately in their reading as presented in the work of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop. By raising the consciousness about great African American authors from educators to educators and by lifting up African American authors and their works, we seek to create conditions for greater engagement with literature among Michigan students.

February

01

Selected Poems (1959) (Reissued 1990)

Langston Hughes

Age: 6-18 years

Genre: Poetry

ISBN: 978-0679728184

Nominator: Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.

School/District/Institution:
Michigan Department of Education

Incorporation in Curriculum:
"I used the poetry of Langston Hughes first with my high school speech and debate students in the 1980s and later with elementary school students in the last decade. A particular favorite for the elementary students was "Mother to Son," a poem about the

power of resilience, which begins: 'Well, son, I'll tell you: Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.' I found that children were able to grasp and appreciate the "crystal stair" metaphor and to understand that the mother, though faced with challenges in her life, hadn't let the challenges impede her progress. Children were also able to relate the mother's lesson to similar lessons in their own life ("Has anyone ever told you not to give up? Who was it? What was the situation? Did the encouragement help?") Born on February 1, 1902, Hughes wrote and published poetry, essays, biographies, plays, autobiographies, children's books, newspaper columns, short stories, the first history of the NAACP, a novel, and even opera. Hughes's distinguished writing career spanned almost a half century and merits recognition and celebration."



February

02

The Rock and the River

Kekla Magoon

Age: Teen

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-1416978039

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books - Older Readers Category: 2010

Coretta Scott King Award: John Steptoe Award for New Talent (Authors)

YALSA Best Books for Young Adults: 2010

Nominator: Joshua Melvin

School/District/Institution: Stout Middle School/Dearborn Public Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"I have used this with small groups to discuss the Civil Rights movement and to build empathy for what African Americans dealt with under Jim Crow laws and in response to standing up for themselves."

February

03

Isaiah Dunn is My Hero

Kelly Baptist

Age: 9-12 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0593121368

Awards: 2021 Michigan Notable Book

Best Older Kids Fiction 2020 Growing Up (9-12)

Nominator: Rita Seay

School/District/Institution: Fairplain East Elementary School/Benton Harbor Area Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"This book helped my 5th grade students recognize that they can persevere through the challenges of life."

February

04

Piecing Me Together

Renée Watson

Age: Teen

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-1681191072

Awards: Coretta Scott King Award (Authors): 2018

School Library Journal Best Books: 2017

YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults: 2018

Nominator: Kelly Cesar

School/District/Institution: Chippewa Middle School/Okemos Public Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"I use the mirrors and windows idea with my students. The kids journal while reading the book and share what they learned or how they connected with the chapter. There are many lessons from microaggressions to deeply embedded racial issues."

February

05

The Other Side

Jacqueline Woodson

Age: 0-8 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0399231162

Awards: ALA Notable
Children's Books: 2002

School Library Journal Best
Books: 2001

Nominator: Maureen Kaczanowski

School/District/Institution: Southwood
Elementary/Kentwood Public Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"We use this text in our 4th grade classroom to learn inferencing, make connections between texts, interpret clues in illustrations, find the theme . . . and many more uses!"

February

06

Blended

Sharon M. Draper

Age: 9-12 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-1442495012

Awards: School Library
Journal Best Books: 2018

Nominator: Kristine Paquette

School/District/Institution: Marshall Greene
Middle School/ Birch Run Area Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"My students did a novel study on Blended and we discussed the importance of self-identity, of loving all skin colors, and that everyone is welcome in our classroom."

February

07

Brown Boy Dreams

Clamentia Hall, Jr.

Age: 4-8 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0578769028

Nominator: Kevin Kollar

School/District/Institution: National Heritage
Academies

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"I used this book to celebrate, encourage, and legitimize the aspirations of our Black and Brown students who are underrepresented in children's literature."

Thank you to all the Michigan K-12 educators who nominated African American authors and their literary works as well as how they used them with students.

Look for our next set of authors and titles on Friday, February 5, 2021