

Michigan Celebrates

BLACKHISTORYMONTH

with Literature

WEEK 5

February 2023

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				

Student literacy engagement increases 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 Black authors and lifting up their works, we seek to create conditions for greater engagement with literature among Michigan students.

In celebration of Black History Month, the Michigan Department of Education and the Library of Michigan are excited to showcase Black authors and their literary works during each week in the month of February as featured below. The weekday recommendations were selected from nominations submitted by Michigan Teachers of the Year, Michigan Regional Teachers of the Year, and MDE educators and are intended for use by educators. Additionally, each weekend of February features a recommendation from a Michigan student.

February

27

Life Doesn't Frighten Me

Maya Angelou and Jean-Michel Basquiat

Grade: 3 – 12

ISBN: 978-1556702884

Nominator: Jen Saylor

School/District/Institution:

Assistant Director, Office of Educational Supports, Michigan Department of Education

Favorite Quote: "Don't show me the frogs and snakes, and listen to my scream. If I'm afraid at all, it's only in my dreams."

Incorporation in Curriculum: "This book is a collaboration of works from author and poet Maya Angelou and visual artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. It provides an opportunity to explore historical and pop culture contexts in which they worked, encouraging rich connections to student perspectives. Through poetry and other types of writing, visual and/or other fine arts, students find entry points for creative expression, identity development, and critical thinking."



February

28

Harlem Grown

Tony Hillery

Grades: 2 – 4

ISBN: 978-1534402317

Nominator: Leah Porter

School/District/Institution: 3rd grade teacher, 2021-22 Michigan Teacher of the Year, Wilcox Elementary, Holt Public Schools

Favorite Quote: “He began to clear the haunted garden, one piece of

trash at a time. Soon it was a clean slate. A blank canvas.”

Incorporation in Curriculum:

“This book is based on a true story of Tony Hillery and how he transformed a vacant lot in Harlem into a community garden. The story shows how community and teamwork can transform spaces and the people around them. This book can be used as inspiration for community projects and gardening projects for schools.”

Student Interviews

Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood

Trevor Noah

Grades: 9 – 12

ISBN: 978-1473635302

Student Nominator: Thomas

[Watch the Student Interview Online](#)

Thank you to all of the Michigan teachers of the year, regional teachers of the year, and MDE educators who nominated Black authors, their literary works, and shared how they used them with students. Thank you also to the students for sharing their perspectives.

For additional diverse literature recommendations please visit MDE’s [Equity in Literacy webpage](#).

Legendborn

Tracy Deonn

Grades: 9 – 12

ISBN: 978-1534441606

Student Nominator: Kyla

[Watch the Student Interview Online](#)

