

Michigan Celebrates

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

with Literature

WEEK 4

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
22

Each Kindness

Jacqueline Woodson

Age: 0-8 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0399246524

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books - Middle Readers Category: 2015

Coretta Scott King Award (Authors)

National Book Awards: Young People's Literature

Nominator: Ed Spicer

School/District/Institution: (Formerly) North Ward Elementary/Allegan Public Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"I adore this book due to its unexpected outcome. I use this book as a mentor text for personal narrative writing with my third graders. Many books are used for immersion to narrative writing but few stand out and stick with the students like this book. The main character is mean to a new girl and refuses to befriend her and almost stops her from having other friends in her new school. At the end of the story the mean girl cannot think of any kind thing she has done to add to the class discussion and she is never able to make things right with the new girl because she leaves! It really impacts my students and leads to discussion of how important it is to try to always be kind. As for being a mentor text, we use it to delve into the heart of the message and talk about how sometimes there isn't a happy ending."

February
23

Freedom in Congo Square

Carole Boston Weatherford

Age: 0-8 years

Genre: Nonfiction

ISBN: 978-1499801033

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books - All Ages Category: 2017

Booklist Editors' Choice - Books for Youth - Young Readers Category: 2016

School Library Journal Best Nonfiction Books: 2016

Nominator: Shari Apol

School/District/Institution: Lansing School District

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"I think this book helps young children learn not only about slavery but also about how the slaves valued freedom and celebrated their connectedness and musical culture in an actual place – Congo Square, Louisiana."

February
24

The Hate U Give

Angie Thomas

Age: Teen

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0062498533

Awards: Booklist Editors' Choice - Books for Youth - Older Readers Category: 2017

School Library Journal Best Books: 2017

YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults: 2018

Nominator: Staci Vought

School/District/Institution: Troy Athens High School/Troy School District

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"This book helped make Black Lives Matter and racial discontent with the police force accessible to high school students. It also helped students either see themselves within an African American main character or empathize with an African American main character. I have recommended this book to ALL types of readers and have always gotten impactful feedback."

February
25

Ghost

Jason Reynolds

Age: 9-12 years

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-1481450164

Awards: National Book Award Finalist

School Library Journal Best Books: 2016

YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults: 2017

Nominator: Tammi Kantola

School/District/Institution: Ravenna Middle School/Ravenna Public Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

"This text has the ability to invite reluctant readers through the door of loving literature. I have featured Jason Reynolds on the Author of the Month board and used this book for First Chapter Friday."

February
26

A Raisin in the Sun

Lorraine Hansberry

Age: Teen

Genre: Fiction/Drama

ISBN: 978-0679755333

Awards: 1960 Tony Award®
Nominee for Best Play -
written by Lorraine Hansberry;
produced by Philip Rose,
David J. Cogan

Nominator: Chi-Tuyen Richmond

School/District/Institution: Ypsilanti Community
Middle School/Ypsilanti Community Schools

Incorporation in Curriculum:

“I use this literary work to explore diverse themes
such as: assimilation, gentrification, White flight,
racism, colorism, classism, as well as feminism,
to help students understand the link between
Black urban culture and poverty in America.”

February
27

Revolutionary Girls

Torie J. Anderson

Age: Teen

Genre: Non-fiction

ISBN: 1645431835

Nominator: Porsche Lee

School/District/Institution: University
Prep Academy Elementary School/Mark
Murray Campus

Incorporation in Curriculum:

“I used this book to show students that they
have a voice to speak out and become
social activists.”

February
28

The Bluest Eye

Toni Morrison

Age: Teen

Genre: Fiction

ISBN: 978-0307278449

Awards: Toni Morrison was
recognized for her contributions
to literature when she received
the Nobel Prize in Literature
in 1993, more than 20 years
following the original publication
of *The Bluest Eye*.

Must-read Classics (Teens)

Nominator: Deanna Holman

School/District/Institution: Educational
Services Center/Muskegon Area ISD

Incorporation in Curriculum:

“I used this novel with high school seniors in a
unit of African American Literature Study.”

Thank you to all the Michigan Pre-K-12 educators who nominated African American authors and their literary works as well as how they used them with their students. The 28 titles and authors showcased during the month of February provide only a snapshot of the volume of literary works by an expansive number of outstanding African American authors. To find more books featuring African American authors visit the MDE website and click on [Authors of Color List](#), and visit your school or local public library.