

Culver Community ~

With summer approaching, we wanted to share a variety of book suggestions that celebrate hope and diversity. Our staff is full of readers, and we love sharing book titles with our families. We hope you all find value in these books and that they lead to beneficial conversation at home.



Title/Author	Targeted Grade Range	Summary
<p>The Undefeated by Kwame Alexander, Kadir Nelson (illustrations)</p> <p>Winner of the 2020 Caldecott Medal</p> <p>A 2020 Newbery Honor Book</p> <p>Winner of the 2020 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award</p> <p>On the 2021 Monarch Award Nominee List</p> <p>Please email Dr. Smolinski to be entered into a raffle to win a copy of</p>	All grades	<p>This poem is a love letter 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 grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes. The text is also peppered with references to the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others, offering deeper insights into the accomplishments of the past, while bringing attention to the endurance and spirit of those surviving and thriving in the present. (Goodreads summary)</p>

<p>this book. esmolinski@niles71.org</p>		
<p>Antiracist Baby (released June 16) by Ibram X. Kendi Ashley Lukashevsky (Illustrations)</p>	<p>All ages</p>	<p><i>Antiracist Baby</i> introduces the youngest readers and the grown-ups in their lives to the concept and power of antiracism. Providing the language necessary to begin critical conversations at the earliest age, <i>Antiracist Baby</i> is the perfect gift for readers of all ages dedicated to forming a just society. (Goodreads Summary)</p>
<p>Pink is for Boys Robb Pearlman, Eda Kaban (Illustrator)</p>	<p>Pre-K and up</p>	<p>An empowering and educational picture book that proves colors are for everyone, regardless of gender.</p> <p>Pink is for boys... and girls... and everyone! This timely and beautiful picture book rethinks and reframes the stereotypical blue/pink gender binary and empowers kids – and their grown-ups – to express themselves in every color of the rainbow. Featuring a diverse group of relatable characters, <i>Pink Is for Boys</i> invites and encourages girls and boys to enjoy what they love to do, whether it's racing cars and playing baseball, or loving unicorns and dressing up. Vibrant illustrations help children learn and identify the myriad colors that surround them every day, from the orange of a popsicle, to the green of a grassy field, all the way up to the wonder of a multicolored rainbow.</p> <p>Parents and kids will delight in Robb Pearlman's sweet, simple script, as well as its powerful message: life is not color-coded.</p>
<p>The Day You Begin Jacqueline Woodson Rafael López (Illustrator)</p>	<p>Pre- K and up</p>	<p>National Book Award winner Jacqueline Woodson and two-time Pura Belpre Illustrator Award winner Rafael Lopez have teamed up to create a poignant, yet heartening book about finding courage to connect, even when you feel scared and alone.</p> <p><i>There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you.</i></p> <p>There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody really knows you yet, but somehow you do it.</p> <p>Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael Lopez's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway.</p>

		Jacqueline Woodson is the 2018-2019 National Ambassador for Young People's Literature
All Are Welcome By Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman	Grades Pre-K - 3rd	Follow a group of children through a day in their school, where everyone is welcomed with open arms no matter their race, religion, or background. With vividly detailed illustrations and gently reassuring text, Alexdra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman celebrate kindness, inclusivity, and diversity in a joyous read-aloud that is a must for every child's bookshelf.
Alma and How She Got Her Name By Juana Martinez-Neal	Grades Pre-K - 3rd	If you ask her, Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela has way too many names: six! How did such a small person wind up with such a large name? Alma turns to Daddy for an answer and learns of Sofia, the grandmother who loved books and flowers; Esperanza, the great-grandmother who longed to travel; José, the grandfather who was an artist; and other namesakes, too. As she hears the story of her name, Alma starts to think it might be a perfect fit after all — and realizes that she will one day have her own story to tell. In her author-illustrator debut, Juana Martinez-Neal opens a treasure box of discovery for children who may be curious about their own origin stories or names. (Good Reads Summary)
The Most Magnificent Thing By Ashley Spires	Grades PK-3rd	Award-winning author and illustrator Ashley Spires has created a charming picture book about an unnamed girl and her very best friend, who happens to be a dog. The girl has a wonderful idea. She is going to make the most MAGNIFICENT thing! She knows just how it will look. She knows just how it will work. All she has to do is make it, and she makes things all the time. Easy-peasy!?! But making her magnificent thing is anything but easy, and the girl tries and fails, repeatedly. Eventually, the girl gets really, really mad. She is so mad, in fact, that she quits. But after her dog convinces her to take a walk, she comes back to her project with renewed enthusiasm and manages to get it just right. (Good Reads Summary)
Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation By Duncan Tonatiuh	Grades 1-4	Almost 10 years before Brown vs. Board of Education, Sylvia Mendez and her parents helped end school segregation in California. An American citizen of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage who spoke and wrote perfect English, Mendez was denied enrollment to a "Whites only" school. Her parents took action by organizing the Hispanic community and filing a lawsuit in federal district court. Their success eventually brought an end to the era of segregated education in California.
Esperanza Rising By Pam Muñoz Ryan	Grades 3-6	Esperanza thought she'd always live with her family on their ranch in Mexico--she'd always have fancy dresses, a beautiful home, and servants. But a sudden tragedy forces Esperanza and Mama to flee to California during the Great Depression, and to settle in a camp for Mexican farm workers. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard labor, financial struggles, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When their new life is threatened, Esperanza must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances--Mama's life, and her own, depend on it. (Good Reads Summary)

<p>Save Me a Seat by Sarah Weeks & Gita Varadarajan</p>	<p>Grades 3-7</p>	<p>Joe and Ravi might be from very different places, but they're both stuck in the same place: SCHOOL.</p> <p>Joe's lived in the same town all his life, and was doing just fine until his best friends moved away and left him on his own.</p> <p>Ravi's family just moved to America from India, and he's finding it pretty hard to figure out where he fits in.</p> <p>Joe and Ravi don't think they have anything in common -- but soon enough they have a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week.</p>
<p>New Kid by Jerry Craft</p> <p>Winner of the 2020 Newbery Medal</p> <p>Winner of the Coretta Scott King Author Award and Kirkus Prize for Young Readers' Literature</p> <p>On the 2021 Caudill Award Nominee List</p>	<p>Grades 3-7</p>	<p>Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade.</p> <p>As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?</p>
<p>Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison</p>	<p>Grades 3-7</p>	<p>An important book for all ages, Little Leaders educates and inspires as it relates true stories of forty trailblazing black women in American history. Illuminating text paired with irresistible illustrations bring to life both iconic and lesser-known female figures of Black history such as abolitionist Sojourner Truth, pilot Bessie Coleman, chemist Alice Ball, politician Shirley Chisholm, mathematician Katherine Johnson, poet Maya Angelou, and filmmaker Julie Dash.</p> <p>Among these biographies, readers will find heroes, role models, and everyday women who did extraordinary things - bold women whose actions and beliefs contributed to making the world better for generations of girls and women to come. Whether they were putting pen to paper, soaring through the air or speaking up for the rights of others, the women profiled in these pages</p>

		were all taking a stand against a world that didn't always accept them.
Front Desk By Kelly Yang On the 2021 Caudill Award Nominee List	Grades 4-7	When Mia Tang and her family come to the United States from China, they struggle to make ends meet and end up managing a hotel for an exploitative owner. Recognizing that other immigrants face similar difficulties, they offer them a secret safe space in the hotel. Set in the 1990s, this powerful, engaging tale of social justice explores the intersection of race, class, and immigration. (School Library Journal summary)
Black Women in Science by Kimberly Brown Pellum	Grades 4-7	Throughout history, black women have blazed trails across the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Black Women in Science brings something special to black history books for kids, celebrating incredible black women in STEM who have used their brains, bravery, and ambition to beat the odds. Black Women in Science stands out amongst other black history books for kids—featuring 15 powerful stories of fearless female scientists that advanced their STEM fields and fought to build a legacy. Through the triumphs of these amazing women, you'll find remarkable role models.
What Color Is My World?: The Lost History of African-American Inventors by Kareem Abdul Jabbar and Raymond Obstfeld	Grades 3-8	This picture book tells the story of a brother and sister who learn about about various African-American inventors throughout American history. As each inventor is mentioned in the story, profiles of the inventors appear on the pages as blurbs containing more in-depth information. For several of the inventors, longer profiles and accompanying comic book-style panels are included and embedded within the story.
Maybe He Just Likes You By Barbara Dee	Grades 4-8	For seventh grader Mila, it starts with an unwanted hug on the school blacktop. The next day, it's another hug. A smirk. Comments. It all feels...weird. According to her friend Zara, Mila is being immature, overreacting. Doesn't she know what flirting looks like? But it keeps happening, despite Mila's protests. On the bus, in the halls. Even during band practice—the one time Mila could always escape to her "blue-sky" feeling. It seems like the boys are EVERYWHERE. And it doesn't feel like flirting—so what is it? Mila starts to gain confidence when she enrolls in karate class. But her friends still don't understand why Mila is making such a big deal about the boys' attention. When Mila is finally pushed too far, she realizes she can't battle this on her own—and finds help in some unexpected places.

<p>Indian No More By Charlene Willing McManis with Traci Sorell</p>	<p>Grades 4-8</p>	<p>Regina Petit's family has always been Umpqua, and living on the Grand Ronde reservation is all ten-year-old Regina has ever known. Her biggest worry is that Sasquatch may actually exist out in the forest. But when the federal government signs a bill into law that says Regina's tribe no longer exists, Regina becomes "Indian no more" overnight--even though she was given a number by the Bureau of Indian Affairs that counted her as Indian, even though she lives with her tribe and practices tribal customs, and even though her ancestors were Indian for countless generations.</p> <p>With no good jobs available in Oregon, Regina's father signs the family up for the Indian Relocation program and moves them to Los Angeles. Regina finds a whole new world in her neighborhood on 58th Place. She's never met kids of other races, and they've never met a real Indian. For the first time in her life, Regina comes face to face with the viciousness of racism, personally and toward her new friends.</p> <p>Meanwhile, her father believes that if he works hard, their family will be treated just like white Americans. But it's not that easy. It's 1957 during the Civil Rights Era. The family struggles without their tribal community and land. At least Regina has her grandmother, Chich, and her stories. At least they are all together.</p>
<p>The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson</p>	<p>Grades 4-8</p>	<p>Clover's mom says it isn't safe to cross the fence that segregates their African-American side of town from the white side where Anna lives. But the two girls strike up a friendship, and get around the grown-ups' rules by sitting on top of the fence together.</p>
<p>From Night Owl to Dogfish By by Holly Goldberg Sloan and Meg Wolitzer</p>	<p>5th grade and up</p>	<p>Avery Bloom, who's bookish, intense, and afraid of many things, particularly deep water, lives in New York City. Bett Devlin, who's fearless, outgoing, and loves all animals as well as the ocean, lives in California. What they have in common is that they are both twelve years old, and are both being raised by single, gay dads.</p> <p>When their dads fall in love, Bett and Avery are sent, against their will, to the same sleepaway camp. Their dads hope that they will find common ground and become friends--and possibly, one day, even sisters.</p> <p>But things soon go off the rails for the girls (and for their dads too), and they find themselves on a summer adventure that neither of them could have predicted. Now that they can't imagine life without each other, will the two girls (who sometimes call themselves Night Owl and Dogfish) figure out a way to be a family? (Goodreads Summary)</p>
<p>My Family Divided by Diane Guerrero</p>	<p>Grades 5-8</p>	<p>Diane Guerrero, the star of Orange is the New Black and Jane the Virgin, presents her personal story in this middle-grade memoir about her parents' deportation and the nightmarish struggles of</p>

		<p>undocumented immigrants and their American children.</p> <p>Before landing a spot on the megahit Netflix show <i>Orange is the New Black</i>; before wow-ing audiences as Lina on <i>Jane the Virgin</i>; and before her incredible activism and work on immigration reform, Diane Guerrero was a young girl living in Boston. One day, while Guerrero was at school, her undocumented immigrant parents were taken from their home, detained, and deported. Guerrero's life, which had been full of the support of a loving family, was turned upside down.</p> <p>Reflective of the experiences of millions of undocumented immigrant families in the United States, Guerrero's story in <i>My Family Divided</i>, written with Erica Moroz, is at once heartbreaking and hopeful.</p>
<p>The House on Mango Street By Sandra Cisneros</p>	<p>Grade 6 - 8</p>	<p>Acclaimed by critics, beloved by readers of all ages, taught everywhere from inner-city grade schools to universities across the country, and translated all over the world, <i>The House on Mango Street</i> is the remarkable story of Esperanza Cordero.</p> <p>Told in a series of vignettes – sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous—it is the story of a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago, inventing for herself who and what she will become. Few other books in our time have touched so many readers. (Good Reads Summary)</p>
<p>March (graphic novel trilogy) by John Lewis (Author), Andrew Aydin (Author), Nate Powell (Illustrator)</p>	<p>Grades 6-8</p>	<p>March is a vivid first-hand account of John Lewis' lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation. Rooted in Lewis' personal story, it also reflects on the highs and lows of the broader civil rights movement.</p> <p>Book One spans John Lewis' youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall.</p> <p>Many years ago, John Lewis and other student activists drew inspiration from the 1950s comic book "Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story." Now, his own comics bring those days to life for a new audience, testifying to a movement whose echoes will be heard for generations</p>

[This Book is Anti Racist](#) by Tiffany Jewell

Grades 6-8

Who are you?
What is your identity?
What is racism?
How do you choose your own path?
How do you stand in solidarity?
How can you hold yourself accountable?

Learn about identities, true histories, and anti-racism work in 20 carefully laid out chapters. Written by anti-bias, anti-racist, educator and activist, Tiffany Jewell, and illustrated by French illustrator Aurélia Durand in kaleidoscopic vibrancy.

This book is written for the young person who doesn't know how to speak up to the racist adults in their life. For the 14 year old who sees injustice at school and isn't able to understand the role racism plays in separating them from their friends. For the kid who spends years trying to fit into the dominant culture and loses themselves for a little while. It's for all of the Black and Brown children who have been harmed (physically and emotionally) because no one stood up for them or they couldn't stand up for themselves; because the colour of their skin, the texture of their hair, their names made white folx feel scared and threatened.

It is written so children and young adults will feel empowered to stand up to the adults who continue to close doors in their faces. This book will give them the language and ability to understand racism and a drive to undo it. In short, it is for everyone.

<p>The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas</p>	<p>Grade 8+</p>	<p>Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed.</p> <p>Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.</p> <p>But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.</p> <p>Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, this is a powerful and gripping YA novel about one girl's struggle for justice.</p>
<p>All American Boys By Jason Reynolds & Brenden Kiely</p>	<p>Grade 8+</p>	<p>Rashad Butler is a quiet, artistic teen who hates ROTC but dutifully attends because father insists "there's no better opportunity for a black boy in this country than to join the army." He heads to Jerry's corner store on a Friday night to buy chips, and ends up the victim of unwarranted arrest and police brutality: an event his white schoolmate Quinn Collins witnesses in terrified disbelief. Quinn is even more shocked because the cop is Paul Galluzzo, older brother of his best friend and Quinn's mentor since his father died in Afghanistan.</p> <p>As events unfold, both boys are forced to confront the knowledge that racism in America has not disappeared and that change will not come unless they step forward. Reynolds and Kiely's collaborative effort deftly explores the aftermath of police brutality, addressing the fear, confusion, and anger that affects entire communities.</p> <p>Diverse perspectives are presented in a manner that feels organic to the narrative, further emphasizing the tension created when privilege and racism cannot be ignored. Timely and powerful, this novel promises to have an impact long after the pages stop turning. VERDICT Great for fostering discussions about current events among teenage audiences. A must-have for all collections. (School Library Journal)</p>

<p>Genesis Begins Again by Alicia D. Williams</p> <p>A Newbery Honor Book Winner of the Correta Scott King - John Steptoe for New Talent Author Award A Morris Award Finalist An NPR Favorite Book of 2019 <i>A School Library Journal</i> Best Middle Grade Book of 2019 <i>A Kirkus Reviews</i> Best Middle Grade Book of 2019</p>	<p>Grade 8+</p>	<p>This is the story of a thirteen-year-old girl who is filled with self-loathing and must overcome internalized racism and a verbally abusive family to finally learn to love herself.</p> <p>There are ninety-six things Genesis hates about herself. She knows the exact number because she keeps a list. Like #95: Because her skin is so dark, people call her charcoal and eggplant—even her own family. And #61: Because her family is always being put out of their house, belongings laid out on the sidewalk for the world to see. When Genesis reaches #100 on the list of things she hates about herself, will she continue on, or can she find the strength to begin again? (Goodreads Summary)</p>
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