

Red Clover Book Award



2019 - 2020

EDUCATOR'S RESOURCE GUIDE



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Table of Contents

About This Guide	1
History & Mission of the Red Clover Book Award	2
Red Clover Book Award Committee & Selection of Nominees	3
How to Participate in the Red Clover Book Award Program	4
Promoting the Red Clover Book Award Program in Schools	5
The Public Library and the Red Clover Award	6
Integrating Technology into Your Program	7
2019-2020 Red Clover Book Award Program	8
The Wall in the Middle of the Book	9
Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13	11
Misunderstood Shark	13
Friends and Foes: Poems about Us All	15
Hawk Rising	17
Potato Pants!	19
Drawn Together	21
Julián is a Mermaid	23
Girl Running: Bobbi Gibb and the Boston Marathon	25
The Day You Begin	27
General Picture Book Resources	30
Exploring Picture Books	31
Text	33
Illustration	34
Book Design	35
APPENDIX	36
Glossary of Terms	37
Sample Red Clover Press Release	40
Sample Red Clover Article for School or Library Newsletter	41

About This Guide

Welcome to the 2019-2020 Red Clover Book Award Program! The Red Clover Book Award is a statewide children's choice picture book award under the auspices of the Vermont Department of Libraries.

The award is named after Vermont's state flower and is given annually to one of ten committee-nominated picture books that receives the most votes from Vermont children in grades K-4.

This guide is meant to be a road map as you navigate the Red Clover Book Award Program in your library or classroom. It was compiled by the 2018-2019 & 2019-2020 Red Clover Book Award committee members. You can find a digital version of this guide, as well as other resources we weren't able to include here, on the Vermont Department of Libraries website: <https://bit.ly/2u0RZ3p>

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**Denotes current Red Clover Book Award committee member.*

The committee would also like to thank former Vermont Department of Libraries Youth Services Consultant Cass Mabbott for her contributions to this guide.

History of the Red Clover Book Award

The Red Clover Book Award Program was created in 1995 by Windham County Reads, a non-profit literacy organization dedicated to bringing families and books together. Conceived by Eileen Christelow and named by Jessie Haas, this children's choice award was designed to help young children experience the unique genius of the picture book and develop a lasting appreciation for excellence in writing and illustration.

Program guidelines and materials were originally developed by Ruth Allard of Windham County Reads and Eileen Christelow, with encouragement from Grace Greene of the Vermont Department of Libraries and the help of many Windham County librarians, teachers and children's book authors and illustrators. The program was launched from the Windham County Reads Reading Room at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, accompanied by an exhibit which introduced children and adults to visual thinking strategies and provided educators with a model for discussing books with children.

The Eyes of Gray Wolf, written by Jonathan London and illustrated by Jon Van Zyle, was the award winner during an enthusiastically received initial year in Windham County, and the program quickly went statewide. Under the leadership of Mother Goose Programs™/Vermont Center for the Book for over twenty years, the Red Clover Book Award Program became a keystone in elementary literacy programming in schools and libraries. The award is currently under the auspices of the Vermont Department of Libraries, and the department is committed to upholding the award's reputation as a brilliant celebration of picture books and the wisdom of children to select the very best.

Mission

The Red Clover Award Program is a children's choice picture book award designed to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the picture book. The award encourages readers to enjoy, explore and discuss the pictorial, narrative and design elements of the picture book in order to: sharpen critical thinking and communication skills; heighten appreciation of literature and the visual arts; and nurture enthusiasm for reading and promote lifelong learning.

The Red Clover Book Award Committee

The Red Clover Book Award Committee is comprised of Vermont literacy experts such as public librarians, school librarians, teachers, and authors, and ranges from eight to ten members. The committee is managed by the youth services consultant at the Vermont Department of Libraries, with additional consulting from the Vermont Center for the Book.

Occasionally, there will be an opening on the committee for new members. Those interested in joining will submit a cover letter, resume, and two book reviews (one positive and one negative) of picture books published within the last few years. The committee and youth services consultant will review applications and score them according to the committee rubric and select members that are the best fit.

Responsibilities of Red Clover Committee members:

- Three years' service, with one three-year renewal (term begins in August)
- Ongoing reading of the year's new picture books
- Selection of the year's nominees
- Developing activities for nominated books
- Writing, reviewing and presenting activities at meetings

Selection of the Red Clover Book Award Nominees

Basic eligibility requirements:

1. The book must have been published in the prior year.
2. The award is for an entire book—text and illustrations.
3. Both the author and illustrator must be living at the time of the selection.
4. Only one title by the same combination of author and illustrator may be chosen in a given year.
5. The books must be appropriate, in the aggregate, for a range of children in grades K-4.
6. Both fiction and non-fiction books are eligible.

How to Participate in the Red Clover Book Award Program

Schools with students in Kindergarten through fourth grade, public libraries, and students who are homeschooled may all participate in the Red Clover Book Award Program. There is no need to register. The public or school librarian, or a designated teacher, may conduct the program for an entire community or school; or, a teacher may do the program for his or her classroom only if the rest of the school is not participating.

Materials

We strongly encourage schools and libraries to purchase the ten nominated titles, which were all published in 2018.

Voting

Children in Kindergarten through fourth grade are eligible to vote if they have read or heard read aloud at least five of the books from the list of nominees. Children may not vote for books they have not read or heard. Participating teachers, librarians and homeschooling parents will encourage children to keep track of the books read or heard and then vote for their favorite using the simple student record-keeping sheet we provide*. Children may vote for one book only. You may want to hold a voting party—have a snack, then vote and discuss what was voted for and why.

Adults will submit votes for all of their students using the webform on the Vermont Department of Libraries website. This form will be available in the spring of 2020.

**This sheet is available on the Vermont Department of Libraries website.*

Promoting the Program in Schools

New books, new year

- Include a half hour about the Red Clover Book Award during in-service before school begins.
- There are always new staff members who might not be familiar with the program. It's a good idea to start fresh every year.
- Give a mini-workshop for teachers and model book discussions with teachers and children.
- Make sure that your Open House features a Red Clover display.

Across the curriculum

- The Red Clover Book Award program can help students achieve standards all across the curriculum. Work with teachers and use the guide and books to make connections.
- Use specific Red Clover books to kick off classroom themes.
- Display author/illustrator pictures and biographical information. Use Red Clover books as launching points into library and classroom collections.
- Make sure you provide time for students to read Red Clover books from past years as well. Provide plenty of time for discussion of ideas and issues.
- Encourage all staff (include cafeteria staff, bus drivers) to choose favorite books, read aloud to students, and plan book-related events together.

Throughout the school year

- Ask older students to share their favorite Red Clover books (past or present) with younger students. Do reading buddies.
- Create a traveling book bag that goes home with children.
- Have older children prepare book talks for younger children about their favorites.
- Include a Red Clover program description and book list (student designed?) with student report cards.
- Prepare a handout for parents and highlight books and activities in school newsletters.
- Create bookbags for homeschoolers with companion titles.
- Create bulletin board displays with children's art and writing about the books.

In the community

- Invite local bookstores to host a special Red Clover event.
- Have Red Clover luncheons with small groups of students and special guests from the community to discuss the books.
- Publicize program anecdotes and success stories as widely as possible.

Voting

- Prepare, with children, a program for the school board on the eve of voting.
- Have a Red Clover Book Award sleep-over at voting time to develop more enthusiasm.
- Celebrate voting with a school-wide Red Clover Day.

The Public Library and the Red Clover Award

Many public librarians see the Red Clover Award as a program that's done exclusively in schools. This is not so! Each year more and more libraries participate to support homeschoolers or supplement afterschool programming. Here are some ideas:

- Purchase a complete set of the ten Red Clover nominees every year and download the Educator's Resource Guide.
- Booktalk the nominees to groups, both at the public library and in the schools. A good time to do this is when you go to the schools in the spring to talk up the summer reading program. Also, many homeschooled students get involved in the program through their local public libraries.
- Spread the word about the Red Clover Book Award. Put articles in the local newspaper, and in your library's newsletter*. Put the books in a special display, and don't forget to get silver medal stickers for the winning book each year from the Vermont Department of Libraries!
- Get yourself invited to a faculty meeting at your local school. Let the teachers, librarians and administration know how you can help with the Red Clover program.
- Work with the school librarian and teachers to coordinate your efforts. One possibility is for the public librarians to concentrate on one book and invite classes to the library for a program of activities around that title.
- Hold a series of 10 or more weekly meetings for children in grades K-4 to cover all of the titles. This could be done specifically for homeschoolers in the morning, or open it up to everyone by having it after school or on the weekend.
- The voting takes place in the spring. Be sure to get children together to vote, and then submit their votes for them on the online webform before the deadline. Every vote counts!

**There is a sample press release and newsletter article in the appendix of this guide.*

Integrating Technology into Your Program

The integration of technology into your Red Clover program can promote active engagement with the books, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Here are some general ideas for use of technology with the 2019-2020 Red Clover books. To find specific ideas for each of the books check out their individual curriculum connections pages in this guide.

Active engagement using a tablet or computer

Create artwork or slide shows using Doodle Buddy (or other drawing apps) to draw pictures of a story sequence, then save the pictures to photo album, and in the album create a slideshow. On the PC, KidPix is a great option.

Create book reviews using Funny Movie Maker where students use a photo they have taken or a picture they have drawn, put a mouth on the picture, and then have the photo or picture “talk” to review the book. ChatterPix Kids (iPad) also does this. Educreations (iPad or PC), Show Me, and Biblionasium are other apps or websites that can be used for book reviews.

Create ebooks using Creative Book Builder or StoryKit, or create an animated story with Toontastic. You can also make simple ebooks in Google Slides by saving it as a PDF. If you want it to be printable, set the page size to 8.5 x 11 or 11 x 8.5 so it will print easily!

Create story webs or information webs using Popplet (iPad or PC) or Kidspiration. Kidspiration offers many graphic organizers and is easy to adapt to different books or needs. (It’s not free, however.)

Actively review the Red Clover books by using or creating a Jeopardy game at www.superteachertools.com. Kahoot.com or Quizziz.com games are usually created and then publicized on the VSLA listserv so you can copy a game and then tweak it to make your own version.

Connections to real-world experts

All websites should be previewed before they are shared with children. Author/illustrator websites are noted within each book section on the following pages. Many authors will Skype with classrooms for a minimal charge. In addition, Kate Messner has compiled a list of authors who Skype for free at <http://www.katemessner.com/authors-who-skype-with-classes-book-clubs-for-free/>. Some of the information may not be current due to the original post’s date.

2019-2020 RED CLOVER BOOK AWARD NOMINEES
VERMONT'S PICTURE BOOK AWARD
FOR CHILDREN IN GRADES K-4

Agee, Jon. *The Wall in the Middle of the Book*. Dial, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0525555452)

Becker, Helaine. *Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13*. Illustrated by Dow Phumiruk. Henry Holt and Co., 2018. (ISBN: 978-1250137524)

Dyckman, Ame. *Misunderstood Shark*. Illustrated by Scott Magoon. Orchard Books, 2018. (ISBN: 978-1338112474)

Florian, Douglas. *Friends and Foes: Poems about Us All*. Beach Lane Books, 2018. (ISBN 978-1442487956)

Gianferrari, Maria. *Hawk Rising*. Illustrated by Brian Floca. Roaring Brook Press, 2018. (ISBN: 978-1626720961)

Keller, Laurie. *Potato Pants!* Henry Holt and Co., 2018. (ISBN: 978-1250107237)

Lê, Minh. *Drawn Together*. Disney-Hyperion, 2018. Illustrated by Dan Santat. (ISBN: 978-1484767603)

Love, Jessica. *Julián is a Mermaid*. Candlewick, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0763690458)

Pimentel, Annette Bay. *Girl Running: Bobbi Gibb and the Boston Marathon*. Illustrated by Micha Archer. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. (ISBN: 978-1101996683)

Woodson, Jacqueline. *The Day You Begin*. Illustrated by Rafael López. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0399246531)

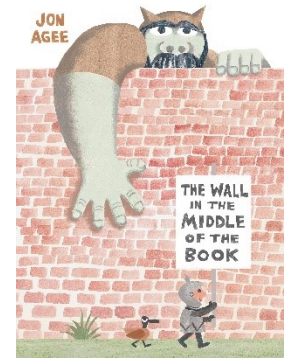
THE WALL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BOOK

Jon Agee

Dial Books for Young Readers, 2018.

ISBN: 978-052555452

\$17.99



What if the gutter of the book became a wall? However apt it may be as a political metaphor, the origin of *The Wall in The Middle of the Book* can be found in Mr. Agee’s assertion on his website that a book’s gutter is the “biggest headache about doing pictures for a picture book.” A young knight in armor is so busy repairing the brick wall in the middle of the book, and breaking the fourth wall to explain why, that he fails to notice that not only is the other side of the book not as dangerous as he believes, but that his own side is becoming more dangerous with each turning page. When the dreaded ogre from the other side actually rescues him, the knight has to quickly reconsider everything he thought he knew. With a minimum of text and a muted but evocative watercolor palette, the text and illustrations integrate perfectly to tell a story of expectations upturned and new realities arising.

This is Jon Agee’s third appearance on the Red Clover list (*Milo’s Hat Trick*, 2002; *Terrific*, 2006) and students will probably be familiar with his other titles.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings:

- Building walls to keep out those who are assumed to be enemies may not be a good defensive strategy.

Overarching Question(s):

- How might a wall fail as a safety tactic?
- What are the consequences of making assumptions about people based on their appearance?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Why did Mr. Agee include the mouse character on the far side of the wall? How about the duck on the other side? How does he use them on the cover of the book?
- How does the ogre use his club, and how does that add to the story?
- Why do you think the mouse is running ahead of everyone else on the last page?
- What do you think will happen to the biggest green fish?

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts:

- Challenge students to write and illustrate a story that incorporates the gutter of the book as a wall, line, river, rope, road, or other divisor. Two or three sheets of copy paper folded in half and stapled would provide a nice intrusive gutter to deal with.
- Practice breaking the fourth wall. Write and/or illustrate a story in which one or more characters addresses the reader directly.

- The illustrations are too well integrated for the book to make good readers theater, but you could photocopy the characters (and the water!), make stick puppets (directions here: <https://bit.ly/32ZqXI1>), and stage it as a puppet show.

STEAM:

- Ask teams of students to design walls, then swap their designs with other teams to see if they can figure out a way to get through the walls.

Social Studies:

- With older students, research and discuss border walls between countries, either as current events or historically. Why have border walls been built?

Social/Emotional Awareness:

- In the story, the knight learns that he was wrong about the ogre. Do a “crossing the line” activity with your class to show that they have more in common than they may think. Draw a long line across your classroom floor with yarn or tape. Have students stand silently on one side of the line. Each time you read a statement, tell them to silently cross the line if it is true for them, then look around. Have them step back before the next statement. Here are some sample statements:
 - I’ve only ever lived in Vermont.
 - I have a pet.
 - I am an only child.
 - I like chocolate.
 - I have played video games.

Author/Illustrator Information:

- jonagee.com--The answers to the “20 Questions” from the “About Jon” menu are sufficiently short, amusing, and illustrated to share with third and fourth grade students.
- View the **book trailer** on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_zeRNiEot8

Companion Books:

- Jenkins, Emily. *The Little Bit Scary People*. Illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. Hyperion, 2008.
- Reynolds, Aaron. *Creepy Carrots*. Illustrated by Peter Brown. Simon & Schuster, 2012.
- Rosen, Michael. *This Is Our House*. Illustrated by Bob Graham. Candlewick, 2005.
- Russo, Marisabina. *The Big Brown Box*. Greenwillow, 2000.
- Sís, Peter. *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.

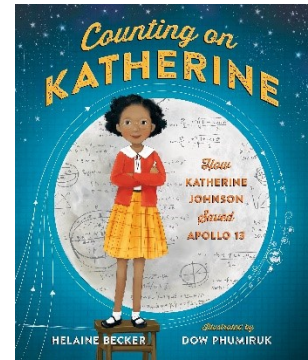
COUNTING ON KATHERINE: HOW KATHERINE JOHNSON SAVED APOLLO 13

Helaine Becker, illustrated by Dow Phumiruk

Henry Holt and Company, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1250137524

\$17.99



Katherine loved math from a very young age and proved to be an astute student who graduated college at 18. She worked for NASA in a career that spanned many missions in which astronauts counted on her to keep them safe.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings:

- Katherine Johnson used her math skills to save the lives of the astronauts on the Apollo 13 mission.

Overarching Question(s):

- What was Katherine Johnson like as a child, and how did that help her become a famous “computer”?
- How did Katherine Johnson save the Apollo 13 mission?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- What things did Katherine count when she was a child?
- Why did Katherine’s family move before she started high school?
- Katherine was called a “computer.” Is this the same as the computers we use today?
- Why did astronauts trust her with their lives?

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies:

- Apollo 13’s mission was very scary to many people - not just those inside the spacecraft that suffered an explosion at about 9 p.m. on April 13th. There were many challenges (power, water, food, heat, flight path, and more) that had to be solved by the astronauts and many people on the ground. People rejoiced everywhere when the craft and astronauts made it safely back splashing into the Pacific Ocean on April 17, 1970 at 1:08 p.m. Find someone that was alive then, possibly grandparents, to ask them to share their memories of the time. For even more details of the mission, see: <https://go.nasa.gov/1EmGKSA>
- Katherine worked for NACA/NASA from 1953 - 1986. (NASA website: retired in 1986). Her work environment changed as the agency’s name changed: it was no longer segregated. She witnessed so much change in her career. Research what types of other changes she was a part of (Presidents, World Series winners, Olympic moments, cost of living, Newbery winners, etc.).

English/Language Arts:

- Apollo 13 was originally supposed to land on the moon. They had to cancel that after the explosion. But NASA still called the mission a "successful failure" since they learned so much in the process of solving all the problems and getting the crew safely home. Think about a time you experienced a "successful failure". Describe it and how using a *growth mindset* helped you learn from it.

STEAM:

- Watch four-minute biographical video about Katherine Johnson from NASA. As of April 2019, Ms. Johnson was still living and 101 years old: <https://go.nasa.gov/2AFSrY7>
Calculate exactly how old she is/would be today. Katherine's birthday is part of the endpapers' chalkboard illustration (b. August 26, 1918).
- Make a straw rocket or air powered rocket. Launch them from the moon and have Earth as the finish line. Simple lesson with template at Nasa JPL site. Keep trying till you get it home safely! <https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/learn/project/make-a-straw-rocket/>
<https://buggyandbuddy.com/straw-rockets-with-free-rocket-template/> Air powered rocket: <https://pbskids.org/designsquad/build/launch-it/>
- The book mentions many missions Katherine was a part of. Research more about them.
- Create fun photos or videos of kids on the moon or hitchhiking Apollo 13 or meeting Katherine Johnson using Green Screen Technology. Use NASA's free to use and search image bank at: <https://images.nasa.gov/>
- Illustrate a powerful saying or advice. In an interview, Katherine said: "Do your best all the time." On iPads you can use the free version of Typorama to change the fonts either uploading a photo for the background or use their stock images. Or, print it with no background and then draw your illustration with your choice of media.

Author's Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see <http://www.helainebecker.com>
- Author biography: <http://www.helainebecker.com/abouttheauthor.html>
- Author name pronunciation <https://www.teachingbooks.net/pronounce.cgi?aid=6497>

Illustrator's Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see <http://artbydow.blogspot.com>
- Illustrator biography: <https://bit.ly/2Ma1w0D>
- Illustrator name pronunciation <https://www.teachingbooks.net/pronounce.cgi?aid=30058>
- Interview with author and illustrator about the creation of Counting on Katherine – for adults, but includes lots of good information and a labeled photo of the illustrator's work space: <https://bit.ly/2ImwAt3>

Companion Books:

- Ahmed, Roda. *Mae Among the Stars*. Illustrated by Stasia Burrington. HarperCollins, 2018.
- Shetterly, Margot Lee. *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race*. Illustrated by Laura Freeman. HarperCollins, 2018.
- Slade, Suzanne. *A Computer Called Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Helped Put America on the Moon*. Illustrated by Veronica Miller Jamison. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2019.

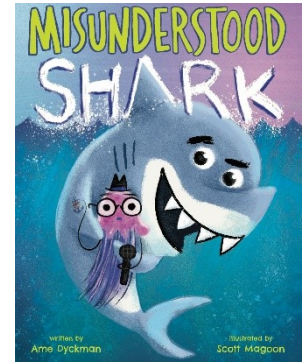
MISUNDERSTOOD SHARK

Ame Dyckman, illustrated by Scott Magoon

Orchard Books, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1338112474

\$17.99



During a live broadcast of “Underwater World with Bob,” a series of incidents with Shark create some hilarious misunderstandings and uncertainty. Is Shark truly as innocent as he claims? Scott Magoon’s illustrations are a perfect match for this laugh-out-loud picture book.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- People misunderstand and mistrust sharks.

Overarching Question(s):

- Why do people not trust sharks?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Is there any evidence Bob had planned to interview Shark? What evidence shows it was a surprise for some of the crew members? Was Bob surprised? On the page where Shark dangles the goldfish before his open mouth, Bob’s facial expressions and voice give the impression this part of the show was planned.
- Compare what Shark says and the expression on his face. Which is the truth?
- Mother Seal agrees with Baby Seal that Mr. Shark is her favorite. Does Father Seal feel the same way?
- Does the camera crew believe Shark is innocent? Prove it by finding evidence in the book of what they say.
- Do you believe Shark is misunderstood?
- Make sure to notice the endpapers, front and back. What do those pages add to the story? Where does the story actually begin?

Curriculum connections:

English/Language Arts:

- Watch the book trailer: <https://youtu.be/1UvNSZzMxUc>
- Print these bookmarks: [All About Sharks! from Capstone.](#)
- Check out [Scholastic’s activity pages for Misunderstood Shark](#)
- Notice how Shark tries to convince the audience he is safe. Choose a topic that you want to convince or persuade readers about. Use at least 3 details to support your argument. Try it out on a partner. Did it work?
- Cabrillo Aquarium, has lots of shark activities, like shark bingo: <http://cabrillomarineaquarium.org/publications/LessonPlan-SharkBingo-JAWsome-Activities.pdf>

STEAM:

- Research sharks (or other ocean animals). Some resources are Sharks4Kids website: <https://www.sharks4kids.com> and DK's Let's Find Out about sharks: <https://www.dkfindout.com/us/animals-and-nature/fish/sharks/>. Also try the Vermont Online Library's Kids Infobits.
- Discuss the food web that sharks are a part of. What is their favorite food according to the book? Are humans part of their food web?
- Name the different types of equipment the TV crew uses and what each is used for.
- What is it about sharks that makes them classified as fish, yet dolphins are mammals? Compare their traits.
- Use Creative Commons or Royalty free photos of sharks and have kids make fun poses using Photoshop and/or a Green Screen - swimming away from them, being scared, etc.
- Create a shark foldable. [Shark cootie catcher origami](#).

Music and PE:

- Act out the dramatic moments of the story with movement and music.
- Play the JAWS movie theme music or Vermont musician Rockin' Ron the Friendly Pirate's *Shark in the Dark* - just audio: <https://youtu.be/iY8yRrG6wAc>.

Author's Website:

- For more information about the book and author, see: <http://www.amedyckman.com/>

Illustrator's Website:

- For more information about the book and illustrator, see: <http://scottmagoon.com/>

Companion Books:

- Dyckman, Ame. *Misunderstood Shark: Friends Don't Eat Friends*. Illustrated by Scott Magoon. Orchard, 2019.
- Keating, Jess. *Shark Lady: The True Story of How Eugenie Clark Became the Ocean's Most Fearless Scientist*. Illustrated by Marta Álvarez Miguéns. Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2017.
- Manley, Curtis. *Shawn Loves Sharks*. Illustrated by Tracy Subisak. Roaring Brook Press, 2017.
- Reynolds, Aaron. *Dude!* Illustrated by Dan Santat. Roaring Brook Press, 2018.
- Sauer, Tammi. *Nugget and Fang*. Illustrated by Michael Slack. Harcourt, 2013.

FRIENDS AND FOES: POEMS ABOUT US ALL

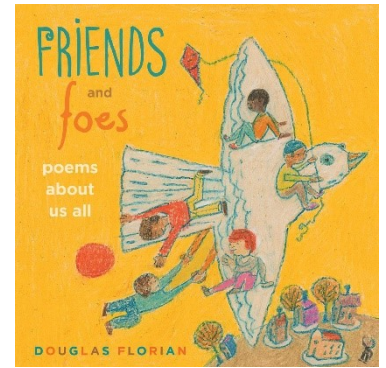
Douglas Florian

Beach Lane Books, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1442487956

\$17.99

A collection of 25 original poems on the many emotions of friendship, good and bad. Simple, colorful illustrations in crayon and colored pencil accompany the text.



Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- Friendship is complex and not always easy.

Overarching Questions:

- What makes a good friend?
- What are some of the challenges and some of the joys of friendship?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- In the poem, "I Hate Your Hair" (p.29), how does the author play with our understanding of the word hate?
- In the poem, "Jealous" (p.34), why does the narrator say that they "used to be jealous" ---what changed for them?
- In the poem, "Friendship is a Flower" (p.47), the author compares friendship to a flower. What are some of the ways that friendship and flowers are similar in the poem? Can you think of any other ways they are similar or different?

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts:

- Perform the poems from the collection that are written for two voices: "Old Friends", "I'm Better", "Opposites"
- Discuss figurative language and metaphor in "We used to be friends" and "Friendship is a Flower"
- "Imaginary Friend" - Discuss vocabulary words like neglected, abandoned, ignored, confusion, imaginary. "My smartest friend" - Discuss vocabulary words like sophisticated, educated, massive, calculate, pliable. "Billy the Bully" - Discuss vocabulary words like atrocious, spiteful, ferocious, havoc. Discover the meanings and parts of speech.

Social/Emotional Awareness:

- Sort the poems into categories as a class---which show us how to be a good friend? Which poems talk about the challenges of friendship? Do any of these poems show us bad examples of friendship?

- “Not talking” - Act out feelings/emotions with postures and/or faces. Play charades with feelings by guessing which feeling a student acts out. Some ideas: surprise, happiness, anger, fear, sadness, jealousy, etc.
- Compare and contrast “I like you” with “Hey! You!” - what is different about these two approaches to friendship?
- Read “Billy the Bully” without showing the illustration - What happens with Clarisse when the poem ends? How could Clarisse help this bully?
- “You lied to me” - Talk about trust, lying, and brainstorm how you could earn someone’s friendship back

Social Studies:

- “Strangers” - Research California and Hong Kong. Where are they located on a map? What language is spoken there? What foods are eaten? What religions are practiced?
- “How Do You Say ‘Friend?’” - Choose one of the languages in the poem: Spanish, Danish, Italian, Afrikaans, Maltese, French, Irish or Swahili. Look up where these languages are spoken. Learn some words in this different language, like Friend, Hello, My name is....

PE:

- “The Fabulous Five” - Play a game of basketball
- “I’m Better” - Play tug of war

Author Website:

- While his personal website shows only his fine art work, more information about Douglas Florian can be found at: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/douglas-florian>

Companion Books:

- Carlson, Nancy. *How to Lose All Your Friends*. Puffin Books, 1997.
- Rohmann, Eric. *My Friend Rabbit*. Roaring Brook Press, 2002.
- Yoon, Salina. *Be a Friend*. Bloomsbury USA Children’s, 2016.
- Zietlow Miller, Pat. *Be Kind*. Illustrated by Jen Hill. Roaring Brook Press, 2018.

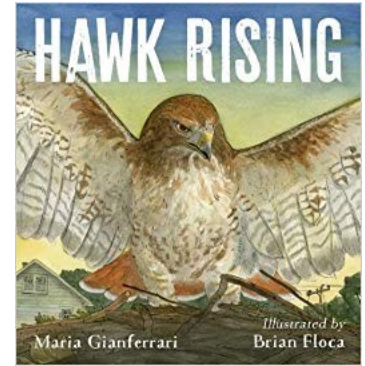
HAWK RISING

Maria Gianferrari, illustrated by Brian Floca

Roaring Brook Press, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1626720961

\$18.99



This insider's view of a hawk's life follows a red-tailed hawk as it hunts in a suburban neighborhood while two sisters observe from below. This lyrical nonfiction picture book provides insights into predator-prey relationships and also gives readers new perspectives toward avian species.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- Hawks have to use their senses and determination to find food for their offspring.
- Being a part of a food chain means that some animals die to sustain the life of others.

Overarching Questions:

- What do some animals and humans have in common in the way they care for their babies/children?
- Why does a hawk spend all day searching for food?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Who is the “you” the text refers to in the story? Are there any clues who these two human characters are? Sisters? Mother and daughter? Who do you think they are?
- Throughout the book, what words tell us that hawks are predators?
- There is a lot of waiting in this book. What is everyone waiting for?
- Why do the crows chase away the father hawk?
- Compare the emotions of the father hawk and the people on the page where the hawk is flying home with the squirrel. Does the text give us any clues? Does the body language of the girls give us any clues?
- There are several “you” statements throughout the text. Pull them out and put them together to see what they describe. (You stretch your arms... You watch... You noticing... You watching... You wondering... You fading... You yawning... You...sleep.)
- What noises do the chicks make to encourage their parents to take care of them?
- How do the hawks use their external parts to help them survive, grow, and meet their needs? Study the text for the answers.

Curriculum Connections:

STEAM:

- Use “Spot the Hawk” Activity (<https://bit.ly/2AHVAXf>) from Curious City DPW. The “Red-Tailed Hawk Glider” on the same site allows you to fold and adapt a glider to mimic hawk flight.

- Visit Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s All About Birds page for Red-Tailed Hawks (<https://bit.ly/1I0XTp6>) and National Geographic Kids (<https://bit.ly/2ACiwr4>).
- Research and draw a food web for hawks or other birds.
- Use the Vermont Fish and Wildlife site, *Wildlife: Vermont Critters* section: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com> to learn more about red-tailed hawks. Eggs usually hatch in late April or May. *The Wildlife: Watch Wildlife* sections lets you know when and what months to view different species of wildlife.
- The book mentions Mars rising “red in the sky” several times. Discuss what Mars looks like from Earth and where it can be seen from. Also discuss how the sky changes color depending on the time of day.

English/Language Arts:

- While the verse is not poetry, there are poetic moments. Search the text and pick out those moments. Make a list. Discuss. What poetic elements are used (e.g. rhyme and alliteration)? Read them aloud to each other.
- Find the similes and metaphors in the text.
- Compare how hawk parents care for their young vs humans.
- Research hawks (or other birds). Some resources are: Hawk Cam Captures the Hunt video on YouTube (<https://bit.ly/2VbglUI>) and Red-Tailed Hawk Animal Fact Files video on YouTube (<https://bit.ly/2Mcm20t>).

Art:

- Explore the book for visual perspective. How does the illustrator use perspective for the most suspenseful/intense moments?

Music/PE:

- Find music that matches the intense moments of the hunt. Have children make up their own dances to enact the story.
- Act out the different parts of the story, trying to move like the hawks.

Author Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see: <https://mariagianferrari.com>

Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the illustrator, see: <http://brianfloc.com>

Companion Books:

- Arnosky, Jim. *Thunder Birds: Nature’s Flying Predators*. Sterling, 2011.
- Hagedorn, Kara. *Hawk Mother: The Story of a Red-tailed Hawk Who Hatched Chickens*. Web of Life Children's Books, 2017.
- Schulman, Janet. *Pale Male: Citizen Hawk of New York City*. Illustrated by Meilo So. Knopf, 2008.
- Stemple, Heidi E. Y. *Counting Birds: The Idea that Helped Save Our Feathered Friends*. Illustrated by Clover Robin. Seagrass Press, 2018.

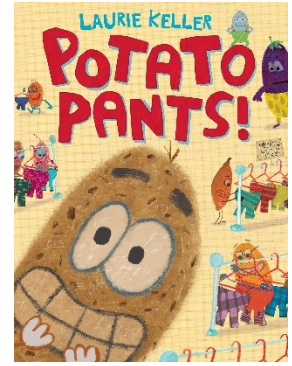
POTATO PANTS!

Laurie Keller

Henry Holt & Company, 2018

ISBN: 978-1250107237

\$17.99



Potato is thrilled that potato pants are on sale at Lance Vance's Fancy Pants Store. But our vegetable hero is afraid to go shopping because Eggplant, who pushed him into a trashcan yesterday, is in the store. Eventually, his desperate desire for a pair of stripy potato pants (with stripy suspenders for added stripy-ness) overcomes his fear. He confronts Eggplant, and things look a bit grim, until it turns out that Eggplant has been looking for a chance to apologize.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding

- It is important not to assume you know what other people are thinking.
- Sincere apologies can dramatically improve social interactions.
- It is fun to say things like "Lance Vance's Fancy Pants!"

Overarching Questions:

- How can misunderstandings happen if you don't know why people behave the way they do?
- Why are apologies important?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- How could Potato have handled being pushed by Eggplant differently?
- How can you tell that Eggplant was truly sorry for what he had done?
- Why do you think there are both regular humans and vegetables acting like humans in this story?
- How might the story have ended if Eggplant really was a mean bully?

Curriculum Connections:

STEAM:

- Share an image search for heirloom potatoes so that readers can see their amazing variety of colors and shapes. Print them out or have them draw an anthropomorphized Molokai Purple, Pinto Gold, or Russian Banana as a friend for Potato.
- Did you know potatoes and eggplants are cousins? They are both in the nightshade family. We call them both vegetables (edible portions of plants), but botanically speaking, eggplants are fruit due to the seeds they contain! Conduct research to identify other vegetables that are really fruit.
- Use specific language to program a partner to do some robot dance moves! Write them as steps and make a loop (to have them repeat). You've just coded!
- Draw, paint, or make collages of more fancy pants for potatoes, sea stars, dogs, centipedes, or the species of your choice. Use paper, fabric, or wallpaper for the pants and suspenders. Cricut owners - cut out pants! Stock your own 'store' of pants for a younger class to make their own

characters.

Music/Dance:

- Listen to Jonathan Coulton’s song, “[Mr. Fancy Pants](#)” on YouTube. (The version with the game-style illustrations is fun, but *not* recommended for elementary!)
- View an instructional video and then dance the Mashed Potato. This one is 3 minutes:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUubAkI0GF4&feature=youtu.be>

Author/Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the book and author/illustrator, see: <https://www.lauriekeller.com>
- Name Pronunciation: <https://www.teachingbooks.net/pronounce.cgi?aid=488>
- Book trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ren8Kb_wKP8
- Teacher’s Guide to the book: <https://images.macmillan.com/folio-assets/teachers-guides/9781250107237TG.pdf>

Companion Books:

- Chapman, Jared. *Vegetables in Underwear*. Harry N. Abrams, 2015.
- de Paola, Tomie. *Jamie O’Rourke and the Big Potato*. Puffin Books, 1997.
- Dyckman, Ame. *Horrible Bear!* Illustrated by Zachariah OHora. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2016.
- Niemann, Christoph. *The Potato King*. Owl Kids, 2015.
- Shannon, David. *David Gets in Trouble*. Blue Sky Press, 2002.
- Van Leeuwen, Jean. *Sorry*. Illustrated by Brad Sneed. Dial, 2001.

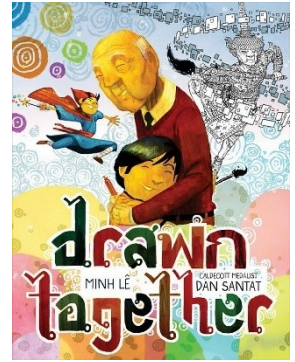
DRAWN TOGETHER

Minh Lê, illustrated by Dan Santat

Disney-Hyperion, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1484767603

\$17.99



A grandpa and his grandson find a way to bridge their culture and language gap through the discovery of a shared love of storytelling and drawing.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- Art is another way that people can find common ground even when they don't share the same language or background.

Overarching Questions:

- What were their differences? What did they find out they had in common?
- How did Grandpa and his grandson find a way to “talk” to each other even though they don't share the same language or customs?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- How did both the grandpa and grandson feel before they could “speak” to each other?
- What brought them together?
- How did they feel at the end of their day?

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts:

- On the copyright page it explains what the words in Thai mean. Thai language has its own alphabet. It is read left to right. Consider a short video like this: <https://youtu.be/gDTwD4YwGQQ>. It shows animals in Thai and English.
- Have students create their own language, using different symbols. Write a word or sentence in this language. Create a code breaker and have a partner figure out what it says.
- Try calligraphy, pen & ink writing, or painting words in black & white.
- Discuss how part of this book uses panels like the ones in graphic novels. Try drawing your own comic or cartoon about your family using a panel template.
- Compare the Eastern style dragon in this book to the Western style dragon in other children's books.

Social Studies:

- Talk about different foods people eat. Have students bring in an ethnic food from their home. Put pins on a map where the foods are from. Have an International Food Day.
- Get a copy of a menu for a Thai and/or Vietnamese Restaurant. Most have both the native language and English translations. Some even have photos of the food. Make sure to point out the spicy ratings, if they exist.

- The author’s grandparents were Vietnamese, the illustrator’s grandmother is Thai. Locate Thailand and Vietnam on a map. It is estimated that about 50 million people speak Thai (counting those in Thailand, Vietnam, and part of China). Why do you suppose many Vietnamese speak Thai?
- Learn more about Thailand and Vietnam. Consider population size, languages spoken, native animals, and area. Relate them to similar sized states in the U.S.

Physical Education:

- Invite students, staff, or community members to demonstrate martial arts they practice. Provide information for local classes.

STEAM:

- The wizard and warrior learn to build a bridge to connect them. Challenge your students to design and build a bridge to connect two characters. Provide figurines, action heroes, dolls, or stuffies for students to build bridges for. Provide a set distance and a gap for the bridge to span. Use popsicle sticks, Legos, or other building materials you have access to.
- Find some Creative Commons images of Thailand showcasing natural and cultural beauty. Use them as a backdrop and Photoshop or Green Screen your students into them.

Social/Emotional Awareness:

- Imagine trying to communicate with a friend, a neighbor, student, or family member with very few or no words in common. Play charades or Pictionary to see how you can communicate without language. Consider asking an ELL teacher to join the conversation or provide suggestions.

Author Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see: <http://minhlebooks.com/>
- Interview on NPR with Minh Lê about the book: <https://www.npr.org/2018/06/15/620428253/struggling-for-words-a-boy-and-his-grandfather-are-drawn-together-at-last>
- Author name pronunciation: <https://www.teachingbooks.net/pronounce.cgi?aid=28122>
- Activities from book website: https://books.disney.com/content/uploads/2018/07/Drawn-Together-DG_v%C2%A6%C3%86.pdf

Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the illustrator, see: <https://www.dantat.com/>

Companion Books:

- Medina, Meg. *Mango, Abuela, and Me*. Illustrated by Angela Dominguez. Candlewick Press, 2015.
- Morales, Yuyi. *Dreamers*. Neal Porter Books, 2018.
- Phi, Bao. *A Different Pond*. Illustrated by Thi Bui. Picture Window Books, 2017.
- Reynolds, Peter. *Say Something*. Orchard Books, 2019.

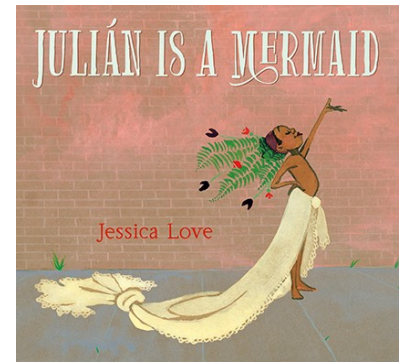
JULIÁN IS A MERMAID

Jessica Love

Candlewick Press, 2018.

ISBN: 978-0763690458

\$16.99



Julián is a young boy who deeply loves all things mermaid. He's not quite sure how his *abuela* will react when he shares his identity in his homemade mermaid costume. It's a relief when Julián finds he fits in at a Mermaid Parade (there's a real one on Coney Island.) This is a beautiful story of acceptance.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- Be yourself.
- Everyone belongs: every shape, size, color, and gender.
- There is no one correct way to be human.

Overarching Question(s):

- Do you have secret dreams?
- How do you express yourself best?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Imagine someone made fun of you for how you looked or dressed. How would you feel? What would you do and say?
- What is unconditional love?
- Julián and his *abuela* were doing their regular Saturday routine of swimming and were on their way back on the subway. Something was different about this Saturday. What inspires Julián?
- Why do you think Julián's grandmother was frowning at Julián?
- What does it mean to "walk in someone else's shoes?"

Curriculum Connections:

Music/PE:

- What type of dressing-up music would Julián like to hear as he wears his mermaid outfit? How might he dance in his costume?
- How many students are comfortable in the water? Can do basic strokes or keep afloat? Provide information about local pools and swimming areas, as well as swim lessons. There are actual mermaid swim classes! Invite a lifeguard or swim instructor to speak to your readers.

STEAM:

- The Mermaid Parade happens every June in Coney Island (part of Brooklyn) to celebrate summer. The art parade's neighborhood includes Mermaid and Neptune Streets. It includes mermaids, mermen, pirates, antique cars, and marching bands. View snippets* of the 2018 Mermaid Parade at Coney Island <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiaNFbkjkGU> *Preview video first. Some nudity/inappropriate scenes are present, but there is great footage, too.

- Use green screen photography and/or props to morph your students into mermaids, mermen, and pirates or a variety of mythological creatures. Alternatively, have a parade celebrating summer with summer clothes, swim gear, and beach props.
- Draw yourself as a merperson or other mythological creature. Use pastels and watercolors.
- Make a collaborative mural with each child responsible for a scale in a mermaid's tale. Shimmering colors or iridescent materials would make it extra special.
- How do the patterns on the human characters' clothes connect to the patterns on the fish and mermaids' bodies? (check endpapers as well as pages)
- What color is the background on the pages? What color is the background in most picture books? (you could also ask why the author/illustrator might have chosen brown paper instead of white paper)
- Are mermaids real? <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/mermaids.html>
Some people think they've seen a mermaid. What are some possible explanations for what they saw?
- What real-life ocean animals are depicted in this book? Design a costume so you could dress as your favorite ocean animal.

English/Language Arts:

- This book is one that starts the story right on the end flaps and endpapers. Closely examine them before reading the story or on a second reading, make sure to include them. How is the story different or enhanced by reading them? Also, the dust jacket and book cover are different; the cover is the same as two of the pages inside.
- *Julián is a Mermaid* online and printable word searches from RIF – Reading is Fundamental at <https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/material/julian-mermaid-word-search-easy>
- Several *Julián* activities and writing prompts from NEA/Read Across America at <https://www.readacrossamerica.org/julian-is-a-mermaid/>
- There are a few Spanish words/names: Julián (hoo·lee·an), *abuela* (grandmother), *vamos* (let's go), and *mijo* (son).

Author/Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the book and author/illustrator, see: <https://jesslove.format.com/about>

Companion Books:

- Brown, Monica. *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match*. Illustrated by Sara Palacios. Children's Book Press, 2011.
- Hall, Michael. *Red: A Crayon's Story*. Greenwillow Books, 2015.
- Parr, Todd. *It's Okay to be Different*. Little, Brown, 2001.
- Scotto, Thomas. *Jerome By Heart*. Illustrated by Olivier Tallec. Enchanted Lion, 2018.
- Thorn, Theresa. *It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book about Gender Identity*. Illustrated by Noah Grigni. Henry Holt, 2019.
- Walton, Jessica. *Introducing Teddy: A Gentle Story about Gender and Friendship*. Illustrated by Dougal MacPherson. Bloomsbury, 2016.

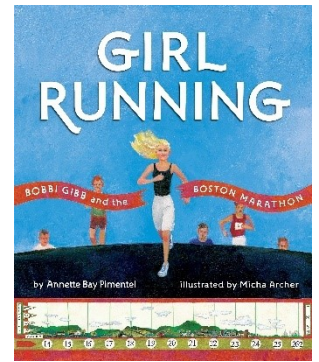
GIRL RUNNING: BOBBI GIBB AND THE BOSTON MARATHON

Annette Bay Pimentel, illustrated by Micha Archer

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018.

ISBN: 978-1101996683

\$17.99



Bobbi Gibb was refused entrance to the 1966 Boston Marathon because she was a woman. Bobbi stealthily entered the race and made history as the first woman to complete the marathon.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- With determination, dedication, preparation, and confidence you can meet difficult goals.
- Strong and determined women can overcome prejudice and change the world.
- Unfair rules are meant to be broken or changed.

Overarching Questions:

- What qualities do you need to overcome adversity?
- How do you prepare for a marathon?
- How did Bobbi Gibb inspire others?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Why does Bobbi like to run?
- Where are some of the places Bobbi runs?
- How does Bobbi prepare for the Boston Marathon?
- What reason do they give for not letting Bobbi run the marathon?
- What adversity and challenges does Bobbi face before and during the marathon?
- How do other racers and spectators react once they realize Bobbi is a woman?
- How does Bobbi inspire others?

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies/History:

- For a connection to geography, find the different states in which Bobbi Gibbs runs on a United States map, and go over the Boston Marathon course and the towns she races through on a Massachusetts or Boston area map.
- For history, study how laws and rules about women in sports have changed over time, including how women were officially allowed to compete in the Boston Marathon in 1972.

STEAM:

- In relation to science, discuss how elevation affects runners, like it did with Bobbi on Heartbreak Hill. Discuss how runners are affected by the weather (traction, cold) and how they dress to prepare for different running conditions.
- After going over the Boston Marathon course map (<https://www.baa.org/races/boston-marathon/watch/course>) find the equivalent of 26.2 miles from your school or public library on

a digital map. What towns would you run through if you started a marathon at your school or library?

- As a math activity, discuss the length of a marathon, and half marathon. They can map Bobbi's course with marker miles and elevation.
- In art, discuss how Bobbi Gibb is helping sculpt a statue of the first female runner on the Boston Marathon race course (<https://www.metrowestdailynews.com/news/20190103/bobbi-gibb-sculpture-to-commemorate-womens-running-history>). Examine other artwork by Bobbi Gibb. Look at other sculptures and artwork depicting athletes.

PE:

- In gym or PE, have students run a mile. Discuss how Bobbi Gibb prepared for the Boston Marathon and how this compares to how they should prepare. Discuss the clothing and shoes that Bobbi wore for her race and what they should wear to run or walk their mile.
- Discuss other famous runners in gym class, like Usain Bolt, Steve Prefontaine, and Florence Griffith Joyner. Discuss other races like the New York City Marathon, the Vermont City Marathon and the Olympic track and marathon events.

English/Language Arts:

- For writing, have students complete an opinion piece on why girls and women should be allowed to compete in the same races and the same events as boys and men. They could also write an informative piece about how to prepare for a big race, including recommended clothing, shoes, and methods of training.

Author Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see <http://www.annettebaypimental.com/>.
- Interview compilation video by Annette Bay Pimental about young girls running: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wC2tFB-2uI>

Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the book and illustrator, see <https://www.michaarcher.com/>.

Companion Books:

- Chaffee, Kim. *Her Fearless Run: Katherine Switzer's Historic Boston Marathon*. Illustrated by Ellen Rooney. Page Street Kids, 2019.
- McGillivray, Dave and Nancy Feehrer. *Dream Big: A True Story of Courage and Determination*. Illustrated by Ron Himler. Nomad Press, 2018.
- Yee, Kristina and Frances Poletti. *The Girl Who Ran: Bobbi Gibb, the First Woman to Run the Boston Marathon*. Illustrated by Susanna Chapman. Compendium Inc., 2017.

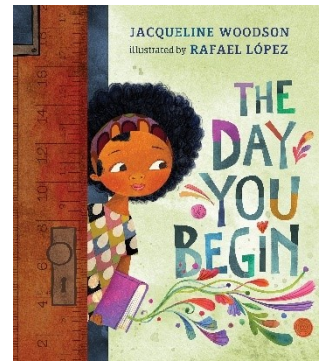
THE DAY YOU BEGIN

Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael López

Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018

ISBN: 978-0399246531

\$18.99



In *The Day You Begin*, four students struggle as they feel like outsiders at the beginning of the school year. Through sharing their stories, they begin to connect and embrace their differences.

Big Ideas and Enduring Understanding:

- Sharing your stories and experiences will open the world for you and others.
- We all feel lonely and different sometimes.
- Celebrate uniqueness and diversity.
- Books and stories let you travel further than any ship, car, or plane.
- “The world needs unique perspectives.” - Rafael López

Overarching Questions:

- What is something that makes you unique?
- What is diversity and how can we embrace and celebrate it?
- How can we welcome others and encourage them to share their stories?
- What makes you feel brave in a new situation?

Sample Text-Dependent Questions:

- Where are rulers used in the illustrations? Why do you think they are used as part of the scenery throughout the book?
- Why are there so many birds throughout the book? What do you think they symbolize?
- What are some of the reasons the characters in the book feel different? How do their classmates contribute to making some of the characters in the book feel different and unwelcome?
- What are some times you felt uncomfortable or like an outsider in a new situation or setting?
- How is family important to the characters in the book, and how does it emphasize their differences from their classmates?
- What makes you feel brave in a new situation or when you are feeling unwelcome? How can your classmates help you feel that way?

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts:

- Leaves and birds are important artistic and symbolic themes throughout the book. Create your own painted leaves and birds with patterns and designs and write about what they mean to you.

- Have students discuss a favorite place, real or imaginary, that they have visited in books. Show pictures of Hogwarts, a map of Oz, an illustration of Max visiting where the Wild Things are as examples.
- Have students write about a time where they felt uncomfortable or unwelcome in a new situation. What made them feel different from their peers? How did their classmates affect how they were feeling? What made them feel brave and want to share their story or join the group?

Social Studies:

- Use a world map to go over the countries mentioned in the book: Venezuela, France, India, Spain. Use a United States map to find these states: Maine, South Carolina. Discuss states that some of the students have visited or lived in. Discuss books they have read with characters from other countries (e.g. *Malala's Magic Pencil*) or that lived in far-away states.

Art & Music:

- Try clapping out the syllables of different students' names. Try singing them or saying them in different ways, like the teacher does with Rigoberto's name in the book.
- As an art project, have students each decorate a wooden ruler with paints or markers. Have them design the ruler to reflect their own unique personality and story.
- After looking at the illustrator's process and some of the mixed media he used in this blog post: <http://blaine.org/sevenimpossiblethings/?p=4726>, have students create their own mixed media artwork. Emphasize the different backgrounds of print and nature (birds, flowers, bushes) used in the book and try to have students incorporate something similar into their art. Have students create mixed media art of where they would like to travel in books or stories.

Social/Emotional Awareness:

- If it is the beginning of the year, have students create a name tag where they uniquely design and fill in the letter of their name to reflect their personality and experiences, using the design of the title of the book as inspiration.
- For further activity ideas for this book and others by Jacqueline Woodson, see this teacher's guide: http://images.randomhouse.com/teachers_guides/9780399246531.pdf

Author Information:

- For more information about the book and author, see <https://www.jacquelinewoodson.com/>.
- Teacher's Guide for Jacqueline Woodson's work, including *The Day You Begin*: <https://bit.ly/2oex2m2>

Illustrator Information:

- For more information about the book and illustrator, see <https://rafaellopez.com/>.
- Process interview with illustrator Rafael López: <http://blaine.org/sevenimpossiblethings/?p=4726>

Companion Books:

- Berger, Samantha. *What If...* Illustrated by Mike Curato. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2018.
- Hong, Jess. *Lovely*. Creston Books, 2017.
- Lovell, Patty. *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon*. Illustrated by David Catrow. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2001.
- Woodson, Jacqueline. *Each Kindness*. Illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2012.

General Picture Book Resources



Exploring Picture Books

A picture book is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and foremost, an experience for a child.

As an art form, it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of turning the page. On its own terms its possibilities are limitless.

—Barbara Bader,

from *American Picturebooks from Noah's Ark to the Beast Within*, 1976

The picture book is a highly developed, often sophisticated, widely available art form for children and families. Since its appearance in the 18th century, it has evolved from a medium of saccharine entertainment and moralistic instruction to a complex interactive art with its own requirements and structure.

The picture book is like a poem. The text must convey mood, emotion and setting with a few carefully considered words. Non-fiction picture books convey facts and information about a topic. The fiction version tells a story and invites the reader to enter the world it creates.

The illustrator is an interpreter, creating a sequence of pictures that build on one another to illuminate and expand the text. It is this sequential imagery working in concert with the written word that involves the child's imagination and brings the story and information to life.

What makes a picture book “work”?

In a successful picture book, text and illustration work together to make an interactive whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

A picture book begins with an idea. Sometimes this idea is in words and sometimes it's in pictures. What do authors and illustrators do to turn an idea into a book? Do Red Clover readers think the process is easier if the same person writes and illustrates a book? Why or why not? Which books on the list are written and illustrated by one person? Which ones are created by two or more people?

Authors usually do not have a chance to tell illustrators how they would like to have their books illustrated. Why do you think this happens this way? If you were the author, would you like to tell the illustrator what you wanted? If you were the illustrator, would you want the author telling you how to do the illustrations? Why or why not?

Who works behind the scenes?

- An **agent** helps the author find an editor and publisher and sometimes offers guidance on the story.
- An **editor** helps the author by suggesting ways to shape and pace the story and improve the text.

- A **book designer** (or an art director) decides how the book will look by choosing its size and shape (format), the color and type of paper and the type styles or fonts for the text. The designer also designs the cover and the layout of the pages.
- A **publisher** decides which books should be published by the publishing company.

Further resources:

- Bang, Molly Garrett. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. SeaStar Books, 2000.
- Christelow, Eileen. *What Do Authors Do?* Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
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- Lambert, Megan Dowd. *Reading Picture Books with Children: How to Shake Up Storytime and Get Kids Talking About What They See*. Charlesbridge, 2015.
- Lester, Helen. *Author: A True Story*. Houghton Mifflin, 1997.
- Marcus, Leonard. *Side by Side: Five Favorite Picture-Book Teams Go to Work*. Walker, 2006.
- Shulevitz, Uri. *Writing with Pictures: How to Write and Illustrate Children's Books*. Watson, 1997.
- Stevens, Janet. *From Pictures to Words: A Book About Making a Book*. Holiday House, 1995.

Text

Suggestions for discussion about any picture book:

- Why do you think most picture books have a text? How can you tell a story by just using pictures without any text? What can text add to a picture book?
- What is the *genre* of this book? Mystery? Adventure? Contemporary Fiction? Folktale? Myth? Poetry? Comedy? Biography? Is it fiction or non-fiction? How do you know? What can you find in the text and/or pictures to support your conclusion?
- What is the *setting* of this book? Where does the story take place? Is there more than one setting? What words can you use to describe the place/places? When does the story happen? Past? Present? Future? Does the story happen in a short period of time? A week? A year? What support can you find for your conclusion?
- Who is the *narrator* of this story? Why do you think the author decided that this person should tell the story? Is the narrator also a character in the book? If the author chose a different person to be the narrator, how would the point-of-view of the story change?
- Who are the *characters* in this story? Who is the main character? How can you tell? Does the story have any secondary characters? How do these characters support the story? How might the story change if one of the secondary characters were taken out of the story? What do the characters in this story look like (physical description)? How do the characters in this story act (personality description)?
- What is the *plot* of this story? What's the problem (tension) in the story? How is it solved? Does the solution to the problem arrive at the beginning, middle or end of the story?
- What do you notice about the *type or typeface* of the story? Is the *font* the same throughout or does it change? If it changes, why do you think is this important? Where is the text placed in the story? Is there a pattern? Are there words in the story that are unfamiliar to you? What strategies can you use to help you figure out what these words mean?
- Is there a *message* in this story? What does the text make you think about? What questions does it raise for you? What connections can you make between this story and other stories you have heard? Does this story remind you of things you've experienced? Can you make any connections between this story and something that happened somewhere in the world?

Illustration

Illustrators use a variety of tools and techniques to interpret and amplify a picture book. They often start by making a series of rough sketches and then make decisions about what materials are best for the final illustrations.

What do you notice first about the illustrations in this year's books? Do the words and pictures always tell the same story?

Lines can be thick, thin, or varied; they can run around the edge of a shape or work with other lines to convey character, texture, energy, volume or movement. Go on a line hunt. How many different kinds of lines can you find?

What *colors* did the illustrator choose to include in the pictures? How are those choices connected to the content of the story? Are they bright? Exciting? Quiet? Mysterious? What language can your Red Clover readers use to describe the palette? In some cases, picture books are illustrated in black and white. Why do you think an illustrator choose to do this?

What are the basic shapes in the illustrations? How has the illustrator combined shapes in the picture? Take a shape walk, seeing which shapes you recognize.

What *media* (materials) were used to make the illustrations? Is the choice of medium connected in some way to the subject of the book?

Texture gives the viewer information about the way things look and feel. Sometimes the medium itself has a texture, such as handmade paper. Many illustrators use drawing and painting techniques like shading, cross-hatching, and variations in color to create texture. Others use a variety of materials as they make mixed media illustrations and collages. How do this year's Red Clover illustrators show texture?

In a process called *composition*, illustrators combine distinct elements into a unified whole. Choose one or more illustrations to explore. Is the mood peaceful or is there a sense of excitement or tension? How does the placement of characters and objects convey this? Do some elements seem closer than others because of their relative size or placement? Is the viewer's eye drawn to one object or area? Why? How does the direction characters are facing or an implied line created by objects lead the reader further into the book?

How would you describe the illustrator's *style* in each of this year's Red Clover books? Is it realistic? Impressionistic? Cartoon-like? Geometric? How is the illustrator's choice of style connected to the content of each book?

Book Design

A book designer is responsible for the unity, continuity and pacing of a picture book. Sometimes authors and illustrators are also book designers; sometimes book designers, art directors and illustrators work together. Often book designers make decisions about the book's appearance and overall effectiveness on their own.

There are many elements to consider: the shape and size of the book; the style, size, and color of the type; the weight, finish and color of the paper; the arrangement of text and illustrations; the use of details such as decorations and borders. Once readers become familiar with these components, asking what they notice may be the only prompt they need.

Here are some questions to help children begin to explore book design:

Does the shape and size of this book have a relationship with the contents? Explain. Look at the cover and title page—what can you predict about this story? Help readers identify the design elements that were used to set the stage.

Look at the book jacket, jacket flaps and endpapers. Can you find shared design elements? Do they appear in other parts of the book as well?

Look at the endpapers. If they are illustrated, how do they add detail or meaning to the story, if at all? If they are a solid color, why do you think that color was selected? Are they the same color and finish as the rest of the book? If not, why do you think they're different?

Talk about the typeface(s) the designer chose for the text. Can you find words to describe it? Does its style, size or color enhance the story in any way? How? What about the paper?

Look at the page layout—the arrangement of text, illustration and white space, if any, on the page. Is there a pattern to the layout, or is it varied? Even in books with varied layouts, there is often one page that invites you to pause. What is different about the layout on that page? Can you find other examples in which the layout helps pace the story? What are some additional design elements that weave the story and illustrations together, such as borders, decorations or spot art?

Designers may also decide to include internal organizers such as front matter and back matter, maps, or a glossary. What kinds of internal organizers can you find in the books on this year's list? How do they help you enjoy these books?

Appendix



Glossary of Terms

Acrylics

Plastic-like paints that stick to almost any surface, dry fast, and then aren't affected by water. Light colors can be painted over dried, dark colors.

Airbrush

A small spray gun that blows out colored ink in a smooth, continuous tone as a spray paint can does, but the area covered can be controlled.

Background

The part of an illustration that appears far away.

Back matter

The information between the last page of the book and the back endpapers, such as a glossary or endnote. Sometimes this information is in the front of the book, after the title page.

Bleed

When artwork extends to the edge of the page. In a full bleed illustration, the artwork extends to all four edges of the page.

Book block (or text block)

The total of the signatures constituting the body of a book.

Borders

Frames used to enclose text or illustrations which can be simple lines or elaborate and detailed artwork that provides additional information about the story.

Caricature

A cartoon drawing of a person that usually exaggerates some special feature that a character has, such as bushy eyebrows or big ears.

Collage

An artistic composition made by gluing different materials, such as paper, photographs, cloth, and so on onto a surface.

Cross-hatching

A drawing technique that uses lots of little lines crossing back and forth to color in an area.

Die

A device used for cutting out, forming or stamping material.

Double-page spread

Two pages facing one another in which the illustration extends across both pages.

Endpapers

Sheets at the front and back of the book that attach the pages of the book to its cover. They hide the binding and may be decorated or plain.

Flap copy

The information printed on the flaps of the book jacket.

Foreground

The part of an illustration that seems closest to the viewer.

Front matter

The information between the front endpapers and the first page of text, such as the title page, copyright page and dedication.

Gatefold

A foldout, especially one that opens to double the page size. A double gatefold is one in which two facing pages open outward.

Gouache

Watercolor with white added (except for black gouache). It dries lighter than it looks when wet and can dry in a very even, flat color.

Gutter

Portion of the paper taken up by the center binding of a book.

Medium

The kind of art material that is used in any picture. Plural: media.

Mixed Media

An artistic composition made by using more than one medium.

Page layout

The arrangement of text, illustration and white space, if any, on the page.

Palette

The colors used by a particular artist or for a particular painting.

Perspective

Refers to the point of view of a story's narrator as well as the vantage point of the viewer of an illustration; with regard to this second meaning, it is the art of picturing objects with reference to relative distance and depth.

Renaissance

The humanistic revival of classical art, architecture, literature, and learning that originated in Italy in the 14th century and later spread throughout Europe. It marked the transition from medieval to modern times.

Serif

A fine line projecting from a main stroke of a letter in common styles of type. Sans serif typefaces lack these fine lines.

Signature

Group of pages that are printed on the same press sheet, folded, cut, and sewn together to form a book. A standard picture book has two sixteen-page signatures.

Spot art

Small illustrations integrated into double-page illustrations or isolated and balanced against text. Also called vignettes.

Wash

A watercolor term for a flat layer of very diluted color lay across the paper. It can either be an even layer of color or a graded layer that gets lighter.

Adapt for local newspapers:

Red Clover Book Award Picture Books Coming to _____ School or Library

[NAME OF YOUR TOWN]—Children at the [name of your school or library] will soon be having a great time arguing about the merits of their favorite Red Clover Book Award nominees while making important connections to the Common Core State Standards.

As participants in the Red Clover Book Award Program, K-4 students will debate the pros and cons of the ten books selected by the Red Clover Book Award Committee, which is comprised of Vermont children’s literature experts. Using the Red Clover Book Award Educator’s Resource Guide and ideas developed by local teachers and librarians, the students will compare stories and artistic styles, do research, learn new vocabulary, and possibly build or craft a thing or two!

And what a range of books there is this year! Readers will love *The Wall in the Middle of the Book*, *Counting on Katherine*, *Misunderstood Shark*, *Friends and Foes*, *Hawk Rising*, *Potato Pants!*, *Drawn Together*, *Julian is a Mermaid*, *Girl Running* and *The Day You Begin*. The books, all of which were published in 2018, were selected for the quality of their stories, design and artwork.

In the spring of 2020, each student will vote for their favorite book from the list. Every year for the past several years, thousands of young Vermonters from schools all over the state have participated in this program, which is under the auspices of the Vermont Department of Libraries.

To learn more about the Red Clover Book Award, call [school or library contact] at [school or library phone number], and visit the award home page at: <https://bit.ly/2u0RZ3p>

Adapt for your school newsletter:

Join the Fun with the Red Clover Book Award Program!

Beginning [date], students in grades ____ will be reading, discussing and voting for their favorite Red Clover picture book! The ten Red Clover nominees were selected by a group of children's literature experts from all around Vermont, and include books such as *Misunderstood Shark*, *Julián is a Mermaid*, *The Day You Begin*, *Drawn Together* and *Hawk Rising*, along with five other exemplary picture books published in 2018. Students will make important connections to the Common Core State Standards as they learn about how books are made, the relationship between artwork and text, and other ways of studying literature using activities from the Red Clover Educator's Resource Guide as well as ideas developed by teachers and librarians here at school. You can get a list of the books and ideas for things to talk about from [contact person].

Last year, thousands of K-4 students from all over Vermont participated in this program. The Red Clover Book Award is under the auspices of the Vermont Department of Libraries, and can be found on their website here: <https://bit.ly/2u0RZ3p>