

Teacher's Guide



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Genre: Juvenile Fiction / Poetry

Interest Level:
Ages 5-8
Grades K-3

Guided Reading: U

Themes:
Imagination & Play
Emotions & Feelings
Social Justice
Environment
Rhythm and Song

Imagine! Rhymes of Hope to Shout Together

By BRUNO TOGNOLINI
Illustrated by GIULIA ORECCHIA
Translated by DENISE MUIR
Published by Red Comet Press, 2022

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

From the unique voice of Bruno Tognolini, Italy's most-loved children's poet today, come these exuberant "rhymes of hope to shout together". Skillfully translated by Denise Muir, this musical rhythmic chant gives voice to the wishes and hopes of children for a better future. From grand dreams of peace, solidarity between nations, and protection of our environment, to the intimate, wishes for friendship, opportunity, and joyful birthday celebrations; all are heartfelt cries for a better life and future.

Accompanied by the vibrant collage art of Giulia Orecchia, this youthful anthem for change, in the tradition of social justice poetry, is a true manifesto of hope. If children hold the key to the future, this book unlocks their potential. Who can resist the drumbeat call to rise, take to the streets, and shout these lines to the skies? Imagine!

In this collection of four-line stanzas, each starting with "If only . . ." and ending with the one-word refrain, "Imagine!," a gathering of children muse about and proclaim their own singular wishes to make their worlds "change for the better." Moving from silly to serious, from socially conscious to kid-centric desires, these mini-poems in rhyme and near-rhyme mirror and celebrate children's varied thoughts and desires of things that entice, amuse, or concern them.

In this teacher's guide you'll find starter-dough-type ideas, discussion points, activities, projects, websites, links to videos, and songs, including a link to the beautiful song we created and recorded just for this book. Check the extensive, annotated booklists at the end of this guide to find other memorable picture books, both fiction and nonfiction, for tie-ins to each theme.

PRE-READING

Before showing the book to your children, bring out some sort of drum and two wooden spoons. Bang on the drum in your preferred rhythm to get everyone's attention. Say, "Today I am beating the drum for a book I'd like to share with you. Here's my question: What happened just now when I started beating on this drum?" (Answers will vary.)

Then say something like this: "Did I surprise you? Get your attention? Make you wonder why I was beating a drum? When you want someone to pay attention to what you think or if you start to talk up something you want to recommend to others, we say you are beating or banging the drum for that idea. So today I am banging the drum for a book called *Imagine!*: Rhymes of Hope to Shout Together by a well-known poet from Italy named Bruno Tognolini, with colorful illustrations by Giulia Orecchia." (Hold up the book.)



Discuss: What does it mean to hope for something? What do you hope for today?

Show the back cover which says, "Raise your voice to the beat of the drum." Ask, "What does it mean to raise your voice?" Then show the title page where a group of smiling kids, their arms outstretched, are looking back at us.

Share the first of the 24 poems:

*If only my wish could be for each day
To gather all wishes in twinkling array
And grant them to everyone, stranger or kin
All of us chanting
Imagine!*

Discuss: Do you ever make wishes? What kinds of different wishes have you made for yourself, your family, your town, and even the world? Have any of your wishes ever come true?

Write or type up a poster of their responses on chart paper, poster board, white board, or Smart Board.

Talk about all the ways we make wishes—on a star, on a heads-up penny found on the ground, on a stray eyelash on your cheek, on a clock at 12:34 p.m., or on a chicken or turkey wishbone. Your kids may have other interesting ways to wish that you've never heard before. Compile a list of them.

As you begin reading, ask your listeners to notice the different types of things the children in the story wish for. Also, encourage them to join in vigorously on the refrain at the end of each verse, "Imagine!"

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION POINTS

Here are questions to consider about each verse. Obviously, if you stop at the end of each verse to ask all of the following questions, you well know that several of your more impatient children will shout, “Could you just . . . READ . . . THE . . . STORY.” So be judicious about initiating too much discussion, then cut to the chase and keep reading! Also, check out the annotated booklist at the end of this guide with resplendent, carefully selected titles that cover all of these themes for follow-up read-alouds.

“If only rich uncles who knew how to fly . . .”

What would you do with that much money?

“If only the world outside could be taught . . .”

What could you learn from outside of your classroom? What have you learned from being outside?



Take your students over to the windows of your room. If you can, open the windows wide and have the children look out and list the many things they observe out there. If you can, take your group outside on a Five Senses Walk around the school and have them observe what they see, hear, smell, feel, and touch. Have them talk about/draw/write what they noticed.

“If only tomorrow could be better than today . . .”

What would make tomorrow better than today? On the other hand, what was great about today? We need to appreciate the small things as well as the big ones.

“If only my street or my whole neighborhood . . .”

What are the best things about your street and neighborhood? Is there anything you would like to change about your neighborhood? What would it be and why?

“If only what broke out in the Middle East . . .”

Why are there wars? If you ruled the world, what would you do about that?

While children would give anything to see war disappear and peace prevail, this may be too heavy a topic for your kids, so you may or may not want to glide over this verse. Talk about the peacemakers, including Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Malala Yousafzai.

Here are first-rate picture book biographies about them:

Grandfather Gandhi by Arun Gandhi and Bethany Hegedus. Atheneum, 2014. (Gr. 1-6)

Malala’s Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai, illustrated by Kerascoët. Little, Brown, 2017. (Gr. 2-6)

Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier. Hyperion, 2001.

Nelson Mandela by Kadir Nelson. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen Books, 2013 (Gr. 1-6)

"If only the pirates, the vampires, the knights . . ."

If you could have a meal with your favorite book or TV or movie characters, who would you choose and why? What would you eat? What questions would you want to ask them? (If you want to limit this discussion to book characters, have them find the book and talk about/write about/draw an illustration of the character(s) and then have each child show his or her book while talking about their meal together and why they invited that character.)

"If only I could wash right out of your head . . ."

How could you help a friend or family member who is sad to feel better? What cheers you up when you're feeling sad?

"If only me and my animal friends . . ."

If you could share playtime with animal friends, even wild ones, which ones would you choose to join you and why? What would you do together?

"If only my birthday would bring me this year . . ."

What is the best birthday present you ever got and why? What would you most like for your next birthday? What is the best birthday present you ever gave to someone else?

"If only you'd think of tomorrow today . . ."

What would you like to see happen to help heal the planet? What needs to be done to make Earth a better place?

"If only you'd tell me the reason you left . . ."

Who do you think left in this verse and why?

"If only this family nest I call home . . ."

What are the things you love best about your family?

"If only the borders in countries could end . . ."

Why do countries have borders? What does it mean to "have more compassion"? (This topic may be over your children's heads. Consider skipping over this page with younger children.)

"If only at lunchtime Grampy would bring . . ."

What would you love best for a perfect lunch with your family? What kinds of things do you like to do with your grandparents?



“If only me and my classmates, all equal at school . . .”

What do you hope to remember about yourself when you grow up? What does “No tolerating factions” mean? Do you consider yourself to be cool? What does that mean?

“If only Google would show me a map . . .”

Grownups have problems, too, just like kids do. How do you help cheer up your family members when they feel gloomy?

“If only one day that mean ugly creep . . .”

You’ll want to read this verse in a lighthearted tone as we’re not in the habit of calling people creeps, even if they’re bullying other kids or siblings. And yet, this is a wish fulfillment verse, with the donkey getting his just deserts after making the narrator’s life miserable. Use your judgment here on how you want to handle it. You could ask, *“Do you have any good advice on how to deal with someone who is mean to you or teases you?”*



“If only tomorrow at my school of dance . . .”

Have you ever been on a stage in front of an audience? What were you doing there? What did it feel like?

“If only tomorrow at the soccer game . . .”

What’s the best thing that ever happened to you while playing a sport? Which sports are the best, in your opinion, and why?

“If only together all girls and boys . . .”

OK, these questions could start a mini-war (or a lively discussion), but here goes: Are boys and girls equal? Can they do the same things? Can boys dance? Can girls play soccer?

“If only the officials who close our borders . . .”

This verse deals with immigration and the boatloads of immigrants who don’t make it to their hoped-for destination. It reflects what happens in Italy, but has certainly happened in America with refugees dying while attempting to come to the U.S. Is this verse appropriate for young children? Will they understand it? No. I’d skip this one, at least with younger kids. There’s no rule that says you need to address every sensitive subject in a children’s book.

“If only these things would change for the better . . .”

“If only a new wish could reach us each day . . .”

What else would you like to see “change for the better”?

POST-READING

When you finish reading the book, see how many of the wishes they can recall. Some of the general subjects and themes in the book include: family and family problems, friends, bullies, animals, standing out, sadness, food, injustice, peace, sports, dance, and music.

Specifically, the children in the story would love:

- Money from rich uncles
- Teachers who teach beyond the classroom walls
- A neighborhood with gardens, not traffic
- Peace instead of war
- Dinner with book and TV characters
- Helping a sad friend feel better
- Joining an animal band
- A wagon filled with birthday presents
- Healing the planet and halting decay
- Sadness when someone has left you
- Keeping your family together forever
- Ending the borders between countries and bringing all people together
- Takeout for lunch with Grampy
- Staying as cool and equal as grownups as they were as kids
- Helping a sad dad feel better
- Wanting a bully to get a taste of his own medicine
- Being a dancing star on stage and a soccer star on the field
- Making officials see the deadly consequences of closing a county's borders



Imagine if you could make one wish each day and see it come true.

Ask children what other concerns they have and how we could make their world a better place, from personal all the way to global. We can't fix every problem or overcome every tragedy, but we can maybe make our little corner of the world a better place.

Have each child create and illustrate his or her own wishing page, not necessarily rhyming, but beginning with the words, "If only," describing a fervent wish, and ending with the word, "Imagine." Make a Wishing Bulletin Board or wall display of their work.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

There are many deep issues raised in Imagine!, with children's wishes for solving problems at home, in school, and throughout the world. We're always looking for ways exemplify to our children the concepts of compassion, empathy, friendship, generosity, humanity, kindness, selflessness, and unselfishness.

Ask listeners to think of how someone or something made them happy and how they passed on that good feeling to others. Ask your students to recall large or small acts of kindness, compassion, generosity, or selflessness they have participated in or witnessed in their lives and how they have been affected or changed. Ask them, *"What are you thankful for in your life? What acts of kindness have you done lately?"*

Ask children what things they want to see "change for the better" in their lives and in the world. What needs fixing in the world today? What might they do to change a corner of their world for the better? Think global, act local. Simple acts of community service and civic engagement are often possible. Brainstorm ideas for a class project.

You might consider:

- Holding a food drive for a local shelter
- Setting up a little free library in front of your house, school, community center, or place of worship with donated books for others to take
- Making hand-decorated bookmarks for others to take at your school or public library
- Starting a flower and/or vegetable garden at your house, library, or school
- Having older children read aloud stories to younger ones—perhaps pairing them up as Book Buddies
- Talk about random acts of kindness with your students and ask them how they could pass along good will, kindness, and joy to people around them every day

The websites listed below will get you in the mode with additional practical suggestions even young children could try.

Really Good Stuff

The blog at ReallyGoodStuff.com contains a variety of free online lesson resources, including this sensible list of "12 Community Service Projects for Kids."

<https://blog.reallygoodstuff.com/12-community-service-projects-for-kids/>

KidActivities

A free resource for parents and teachers, KidActivities.net includes headings for: Game Ideas, Themes and Lesson Planning, Holiday Planning, Jokes & Riddles, Music & Song Ideas, and Kids Food. Their list of “37 Community Service Projects for Kids of All Ages” is practical and varied.

<https://kidactivities.net/community-service-ideas-for-kids-all-ages/>

Coffee Cups and Crayons

This website and blog, filled with creative activities for parents to do with their children, states: “Megan Sheakoski is the creator of Coffee Cups and Crayons, a blog full of simple fun and learning. She believes that kids’ activities don’t have to be complicated to be fun and that learning is better with play.” Her extensive and creative list of activities, “100 Acts of Kindness for Kids” is printable as an attractive one-page handout your students can take home to share and do.

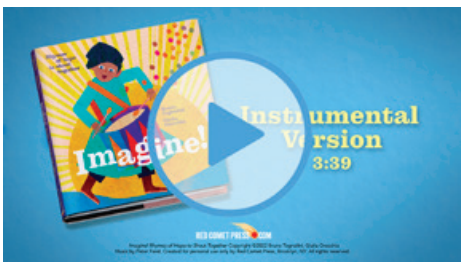
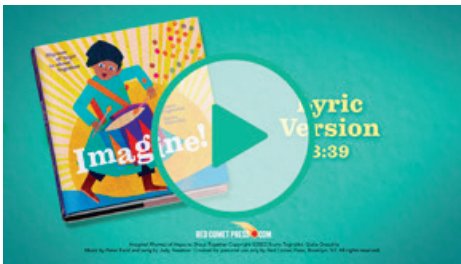
<https://www.coffeecupsandcrayons.com/100-acts-kindness-kids/>

MAKING MUSIC

Time to do some sing-alongs about making the world a better place. There’s no better way to build community than by singing together with gusto.

“IMAGINE”

Listen to the song version of the book, *Imagine!*, sung by Judy Freeman, with music composed and played by Peter Fand (www.peterfand.com). Peter’s gorgeous score and instrumentals—guitar, mandolin, bass, percussion, and even a saw—match the Italian flavor of Bruno Tognolini’s poetry. Show the illustrations of the book while listening and have your kids sing along the one-word chorus—“Imagine”—with the children on the soundtrack. We’ve selected half of the verses (12 of them) for the song, though they’re in book order so it’ll be easy to flip pages as you listen. Click image or go to: <https://youtu.be/-02II2cKSyo>



There’s also an instrumental track for a bit of karaoke so you and your students can both sing verses from the book, and then undertake to write new verses about what they’d like to do to make their lives more satisfying and to make the world a better place. After hearing all these wishes in *Imagine!*—some fun-loving, some silly, some serious—ask your listeners what else might they like to wish for. Make a list and see if you all can agree on one interesting new wish. With your help and their ideas, compose a new verse together and practice it together. When you are ready, play the instrumental soundtrack and sing it with the music. Record the kids and music on your phone so you can play the mini concert back for them to hear. With older children, chances are good that they’ll want to write additional new verses. Go for it! Click image or go to: <https://youtu.be/aWb9KPc-GNM>

“O-O-H CHILD”

In May 2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic was raging and everyone was yearning for a bit of positivity, Peter Fand, a musician and bandleader with Cirque du Soleil, had an idea. He pulled together a group of thirteen musicians from across the U.S. and abroad to record a collaborative video performance of the song, “O-o-h Child” which was originally composed by Stan Vincent in 1970, for the band The Five Stairsteps. The performers recorded their parts and shot their own videos, which Peter produced, arranged, and edited. The song speaks to adults and children alike with its hopeful and reassuring chorus, which your children can join in on:

*O-o-h child
Things are gonna get easier
O-o-h child
Things'll get brighter*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vqk5uDKepqY&list=RDVqk5uDKepqY>

“IF I HAD A HAMMER”

Speaking about justice, freedom, and love, then listen to Pete Seeger singing his classic 1949 song, “If I Had a Hammer” (also called “The Hammer Song”), included on the Ella Jenkins record, *Ella Jenkins and a Union of Friends Pulling Together* (Smithsonian Folkways, 1999):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Quqc1FH5FU>

To learn more about America’s famous folksinger, share this folksy picture book biography: *Listen: How Pete Seeger Got America Singing* by Leda Schubert, illustrated by Raúl Colón. Roaring Brook, 2017. (Gr. 2-4)

In 1962, Peter, Paul and Mary reworked the song which became a Top Ten hit. Here they are, performing the song in a video of their 25th anniversary concert in 1986:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDgfRlecTVE>

Trini Lopez also had a hit with his jazzy version of the song in 1963. See him singing it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp1z8EzZ5Hs>

Children will pick up the words to *The Hammer Song* in no time and sing along. It would be fun to hand out toy hammers and blocks of wood for children to hammer on as they sing.

“I’D LIKE TO TEACH THE WORLD TO SING”

This 1986 song by Bruce Gowers and Carol Rosenstein is included in a live performance video by Kidsongs and produced by View-Master Video/Warner Brothers Records/Together Again Productions. “I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing” was kinda hijacked by Coke way back when, but it’s still a great kids’ song of our never-ending hope for peace and harmony.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YBGUq5P9IY>

“WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD”

The first (and still the most moving and classic) version to be recorded of “What a Wonderful World,” back in 1967, was by the late Louis Armstrong (AKA Pops and Satchmo). Written by Bob Thiele and George David Weiss, the recording wasn’t a hit in the U.S. but has since become a standard. Armstrong’s original introduction to the song and his familiar gravelly voice make this optimistic anthem unforgettable.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nGKqH26xlg>

“WE’VE GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN OUR HANDS”

Rafael Lopez rewrote and illustrated a new child-centered version of the old spiritual, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” in his handsome book, *We’ve Got the Whole World in Our Hands* (Scholastic, 2018).

To view the whole book for singing along, watch this sweet Center School Bedtime Read Aloud, sung by Mrs. Drysdale Morrisey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53fhf7U5XYQ>



If only you had a fabulous list of other inspirational read-alouds about making the world a better place, to tie in with *Imagine!*...

HERE YOU GO!

Imagine touches on a plethora of themes. While you can't possibly go into depth after reading each stanza, you can always pick and choose which ones you'd like to zoom in on. Below is a list of stellar, often life-changing, read-aloud picture books to help you connect and dig deeper on many of the themes introduced in the poem.

"IF ONLY THE BORDERS IN COUNTRIES COULD END": CIRCLING THE GLOBE

All of Us by Kathryn Erskine, illustrated by Alexandra Boiger. Philomel, 2021. (Gr. PreK-2) In a spare, rhyming poem, a mere 111 words, see how a group of children set sail and traverse the world of "breathtaking sights" and "remarkable sounds" to see that, "Different, the same, we all belong."

Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth by Oliver Jeffers. Philomel, 2017. (Gr. PreK-6) Jeffers's dedication sets the stage: "To my son, Harland. This book was written in the first two months of your life as I tried to make sense of it all for you. These are the things I think you need to know." In describing the people, animals, and lands, he states, "It looks big, Earth. But there are lots of us on here (7,327,450,667 and counting) so be kind. There is enough for everyone."

How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World by Marjorie Priceman. Knopf, 1994. (Gr. K-3) Follow a globe-trotting girl as she gathers her pie ingredients from Italy (wheat), France (eggs), Sri Lanka (cinnamon), England (butter), Jamaica (sugar), and Vermont (apples). Also see the companion *How to Make a Cherry Pie and See the U.S.A.* (2008).

Nine O'Clock Lullaby by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Frané Lessac. HarperCollins, 1991. (Gr. PreK-3). Starting in Brooklyn, New York at 9 p.m. where a mother is reading her child a bedtime story, we travel eastward, one time zone at a time, to see what else is happening in other counties around the world.

One World, One Day by Barbara Kerley, illustrated with photos. National Geographic, 2009. (Gr. K-3) Through an array of color photographs, follow children from more than two dozen countries around the world, from morning till bedtime.

This Is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids from Around the World by Matt Lamothe. Chronicle, 2017. (Gr. K-4) Follow seven children from Italy, Japan, Uganda, Russia, Peru, India, and Iran through a typical day at home and school. While these kids are from all different countries, cultures, and races, with different languages, skin color, interests, and family situations, what you gain from perusing these pages is how universal childhood is.

"MY LOVED ONES AROUND ME": APPRECIATING FAMILY

Balloons for Papa by Elizabeth Gilbert Bedia, illustrated by Erika Meza. Harper, 2020. (Gr. PreK-3) Off to visit Mama in the hospital each day, Arthur asks his gloomy Papa to buy a colorful balloon,

hoping to bring back his smile. In this sensitive but hopeful story about a tough subject, the author's note explains that it "touches on children's emotional intelligence and their uncanny ability to feel deeply even at a young age."

A Chair for My Mother by Vera B. Williams. Greenwillow, 1982. (Gr. PreK-3) After a fire destroys their apartment, young Rosa, her waitress mother, and grandmother save change in a large glass jar until they have enough to buy a new chair. Follow up with *Something Special for Me* (1983), where Rosa is given money from the jar to spend for a perfect present, and *Music, Music for Everyone* (1984), where Rosa earns new coins for the jar by playing her new accordion at a neighborhood party.

Drawn Together by Minh Lê, illustrated by Dan Santat. Disney-Hyperion, 2018 (Gr. K-3) Dropped off at Grandpa's for the day, an Americanized Thai boy can't relate to his traditional white-haired Thai grandfather until the two find a deep connection that depends not on language but on drawing.

Grandpa Across the Ocean by Hyewon Yum. Abrams, 2021. (Gr. PreK-2) Visiting his Grandpa's house in Korea, a young boy thinks it is "the most boring place on earth" until he discovers how much they have in common.

Gracias/Thanks by Pat Mora, illustrated by John Parra. Lee & Low, 2009. (Gr. PreK-2) Written in both English and Spanish, a young boy navigates through his day giving thanks to the many people and things he sees and appreciates, including Abuelita, his grandmother, "who always winks and gives me a dollar when nobody's looking."

Saturday by Oge Mora. Little, Brown, 2019. (Gr. PreK-2) On Saturdays, Ava and her mother always do something special together, but today everything goes wrong.

Thunder Boy Jr. by Sherman Alexie, illustrated by Yuyi Morales. Little, Brown, 2016. (Gr. K-3) Thunder Boy Smith, Jr., the black-haired, brown-skinned, Native American boy narrator, was named after his larger-than-life father, Big Thunder. Speaking directly to us readers, he asks, "Can I tell you a secret? Come over here and I will whisper in your ear . . . I HATE MY NAME!" This joyous story about finding one's own uniqueness soars.

Tía Isa Wants a Car by Meg Medina, illustrated by Claudio Munoz. Candlewick, 2011. (Gr. K-4) Staying with her aunt while her Mami and Papi are back home caring for her sick Abuelo, a resourceful girl helps her aunt save up money to buy her dream car—a station wagon that's green like the ocean—to take them to the beach.

We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga by Traci Sorell, illustrated by Frané Lessac. Charlesbridge, 2018. (Gr. K-4) "Cherokee people say otsaliheliga (oh-jah-LEE-hay-lee-gah) to express gratitude. It is a reminder to celebrate our blessings and reflect on struggles—daily, throughout the year, and across the seasons." Follow a Cherokee family through each season and learn some interesting new words.

"NO TOLERATING FACTIONS": ADVENTURES AT SCHOOL

All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold, illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman. Knopf, 2018. (Gr. PreK-2) It's back to school for a friendly class of twenty-four multiracial/diverse kids in their melting pot of

a city school as they navigate a busy day. “No matter how you start your day. / What you wear when you play. / Or if you come from far away. / All are welcome here.”

Elizabeti’s School by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen, illustrated by Christy Hale. Lee & Low, 2002. (Gr. K-2) On her first day of school in her Tanzanian village, Elizabeti discovers that she loves learning her letters and numbers, playing games with friends, and working in the school’s garden.

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael López. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, 2018. (Gr. K-6) The second person narrative begins, “There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you. Maybe it will be your skin, your clothes, or the curl of your hair.” Four children are highlighted in a story that will help your listeners articulate and appreciate their own self-worth, deal with unkindness, look for people with whom they might make a connection, and appreciate their own talents and life experiences.

If I Built a School by Chris Van Dusen. Dial, 2019. (Gr. PreK-3) In rhyme, Jack explains to his teacher his spectacular vision of all he’d do if he could rebuild his school into the coolest place ever.

School’s First Day of School by Adam Rex, illustrated by Christian Robinson. Roaring Brook, 2016. (Gr. PreK-3) In an unusual and whimsical twist, a newly built school building, named Frederick Douglas Elementary, is apprehensive about all those children taking over its space.

This Is the Way We Go to School: A Book About Children Around the World by Edith Baer, illustrated by Steve Björkman. Scholastic, 1990. (Gr. PreK-1)

Jaunty rhyming couplets accompany watercolors of children worldwide as they travel to school by ferry, cable car, skis, train, and bikes.

“EVERYONE WELCOME”: MAKING AND BEING A FRIEND

Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Penguin, 2012. (Gr. 1-6) In Ms. Albert’s racially diverse classroom, narrator Chloe and her friends shun the new girl, Maya, who wears old and ragged clothes, calling her “Never New” behind her back. When Maya does not come to school one day, Ms. Albert drops a small stone into a bowl of water, explaining, “This is what kindness does. Each little thing we do goes out, like a ripple, into the world.” Truly, this is an almost shockingly quiet and introspective book about opportunities lost that will get kids thinking hard about the way they treat each other.

Neville by Norton Juster, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Schwartz & Wade, 2011. (Gr. PreK-3) It’s not easy to be the new kid, but a brown-haired boy finds an unusual way to make friends.

Saffron Ice Cream by Rashin Kheiriyeh. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine, 2018. (Gr. K-3) Award-winning Iranian author/illustrator Rashin casts herself as the young narrator and main character of this buoyant autobiographical picture book contrasting her first trip to an American beach to her past beach experiences in Iran with her family and her best friend.

Yo! Yes? by Chris Raschka. Orchard, 1993. (Gr. PreK-6) In a captivating dialogue of 34 exuberant words, two boys—one friendless, the other ready to befriend—connect. Act this one out in pairs.

“IF ONLY ONE DAY”: STANDING UP TO BULLIES

Bully by Laura Vaccaro Seeger. Roaring Brook, 2013. (Gr. PreK-2) Because a big gray bull says, “GO AWAY!” to a smaller brown bull, the smaller bull takes out his fury on his other animal friends. Never didactic or preachy, this simple picture book can be used with all ages to talk about how to deal with a bully, but also how one can apologize and make amends when we are the ones who are in the wrong.

I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness by Kerascoët. Schwartz & Wade, 2018. (Gr. PreK-3) After school on her first day, new kid Vanessa is confronted by a boy whose harsh words make her cry. This wordless picture book shows how one person, in this case, a girl who witnesses the encounter, can stand up to meanness or injustice and maybe change the world a wee bit.

One by Kathryn Otoshi. KO Kids Books, 2003. (Gr. PreK-1) No other color has the nerve to stand up to that bully Red, who won't stop picking on Blue, until the number One steps in and says, “If someone is mean and picks on me, I, for One, stand up and say, No.”

The Recess Queen by Alexis O’Neill, illustrated by Laura Huliska-Beith. Scholastic, 2002. (Gr. PreK-2) Mean Jean pushes and smooshes any kid who dares to cross her until a new kid, teeny tiny Katie Sue, dares to ask her to play.

“THEY GOT YOU A GIFT”: GETTING AND GIVING GIFTS

Because Amelia Smiled by David Ezra Stein. Candlewick, 2012. (Gr. PreK-2) “Because Amelia smiled, coming down the street... Mrs. Higgins smiled, too.” In a cause-and-effect story that takes us on a round-the-world jaunt, we see how one little girl’s delighted smile leads others to pass along their own happiness.

Clever Jack Takes the Cake by Candace Fleming, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Schwartz & Wade, 2010. (Gr. PreK-3) When Jack, a poor boy, receives an invitation from His Majesty the King to attend the princess’s tenth birthday party at the castle, he bakes her a cake.

Silver Packages: An Appalachian Christmas Story by Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. Orchard, 1997. (Gr. PreK-6) Frankie awaits the Christmas Train that comes through the Appalachian Mountains each December, pining for his most hoped-for gift—a doctor’s kit.

A Hat for Mrs. Goldman: A Story About Knitting and Love by Michelle Edwards, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Schwartz & Wade, 2016. (Gr. PreK-3) Sophia, a brown-skinned Hispanic child, helps her friend and neighbor, Mrs. Goldman, make pom-poms to adorn the hats the generous woman knits for everyone she knows. Now Sophia decides she will teach herself to knit and make “the most special hat in the world” to keep Mrs. Goldman’s keppie (head, in Yiddish) warm.

What Is Given from the Heart by Patricia C. McKissack, illustrated by April Harrison. Schwartz & Wade, 2019. (Gr. K-3) Since Daddy died, life is hard for young James Otis and his Mama, but when Reverend Davis at church tells of a family that has lost everything in a fire, Mama asks her son to find something he can give to seven-year-old Sarah for one of the “love boxes” the church gives to the needy.

“CHOOSE A KINDER PATH”: THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

Big Red Lollipop by Rukhsana Khan, illustrated by Sophie Blackwell. Viking, 2010. (Gr. K-4) Rubina is elated when she is invited to her first ever Canadian birthday party, for in Pakistan, where her family is from, children don't celebrate the day they are born. Unfortunately, her mother gives her no choice but to bring along her crying little sister, Sana.

Carmela Full of Wishes by Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson. Putnam, 2018. (Gr. PreK-2) On Carmela's birthday, the Mexican-American girl has already had her first wish granted: to tag along with her big brother and do errands in town. Now she is ready to make a wish on a dandelion, maybe for her mother to get to sleep “in one of those fancy hotel beds she spent all day making for fancy guests,” or “her dad getting his papers fixed so he could finally be home.” This is an insightful slice-of-life story about a child in a close-knit, loving, working class, immigrant family trying to make ends meet. At a time when immigrants are being demonized, children need to know that we all have birthdays, make wishes, and love our families. We are more alike than different, though some families have it so much harder than others.

A Different Pond by Bao Phi, illustrated by Thi Bui. Capstone, 2017. (Gr. 1-6) A young boy narrator recounts an early morning fishing trip with his father, a hard-working Vietnamese immigrant family trying to get by in America.

Dreamers by Yuyi Morales. Holiday House/Neal Porter, 2018. (Gr. K-6) “I dreamed of you, then you appeared. Together we became Amor—Love—Amor. Resplendent life, you and I. One day we bundled gifts in our backpack, and crossed a bridge, outstretched like the universe.” So begins Yuyi Morales's bewitchingly beautiful and heartfelt autobiographical free verse picture book about immigrating from Mexico to the U.S. with her baby son.

I'm New Here by Anne Sibley O'Brien. Charlesbridge, 2015. (Gr. K-4) Three non-English-speaking children are introduced to their new American classroom—Maria from Guatemala, Jin from Korea, and Fatima from Somalia—and navigate apprehension and disorientation until they settle in and begin to feel at home. The companion book, *Someone New* (2018), revisits the same story from the viewpoint of the three classmates who help the newcomers feel welcome.

One Green Apple by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Ted Lewin. Clarion, 2006. (Gr. K-4) On her second day in her new school in America, Farah, a Muslim girl wearing a white dupatta, a headscarf, joins the class on a hayride and a visit to an apple orchard. Compassionate full-page watercolors help readers empathize with this lonely new girl and see beyond the unfamiliar clothing to a person with whom they have much in common.

We Came to America by Faith Ringgold. Knopf, 2016. (Gr. K-6) “We came to America, / Every color, race, and religion, / From every country in the world.” The moving poem that comprises the text of this inspirational picture book pays tribute to the immigrants who made America great and celebrates their arrival to our shores. “In spite of where we came from, / Or how and why we came, / We are ALL Americans, / Just the same.”

“HAVE MORE COMPASSION”: WORKING TOWARD A BETTER WORLD

Be Strong by Pat Zietlow Miller, illustrated by Jen Hill. Roaring Brook, 2021. (Gr. K-3) Believing she is not strong enough to climb the school gym's rock wall, a girl asks her parents and Grandma how she can be strong and puts their advice—to show up, speak up, and not to give up—into practice.

The Breaking News by Sarah Lynne Reul. Roaring Brook, 2018. (Gr. PreK-3) The unnamed narrator, a wistful, brown-skinned girl says, “I remember when we heard the bad news,” on a day when Mom was glued to the TV and Dad kept checking his phone. Her teacher tells her unnerved class to “look for the helpers. Even when the news is bad, you can still find good people trying to make things better in big and small ways.”

The Cat Man of Aleppo by Irene Latham and Karim Shamsi-Basha, illustrated by Yuko Shamizu. Putnam, 2020. (Gr. 1-6) In 2012, when the civil war in Syria destroyed the city of Aleppo, Mohammad Alaa Aljaleel, an ambulance driver and paramedic, opened a sanctuary for the many stray cats left behind.

Change Sings: A Children's Anthem by Amanda Gorman, illustrated by Loren Long. Viking, 2021. (Gr. K-3) In her debut picture book, written in rhyming couplets by National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman, a young Black girl carries her guitar through town like a modern day pied piper, declaiming, “I can hear change humming / In its loudest, proudest song. / I don't fear change coming, / And so I sing along.” She attracts a bevy of children who help clean up trash, deliver food, and make music together.

Just Ask!: Be Different, Be Brave, Be You by Sonia Sotomayor, illustrated by Rafael Lopez. Philomel, 2019. (Gr. PreK-4) Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor, who took care of her own juvenile diabetes starting when she was seven, introduces twelve children (including herself as a child) who are planting a community garden together. Each child describes his or her challenges, including asthma, blindness, deafness, dyslexia, autism, stuttering, and Down syndrome. She encourages readers to ask questions when they are curious about other people's differences.

Just Help!: How to Build a Better World by Sonia Sotomayor, illustrated by Angela Dominguez. Philomel, 2022. (Gr. K-4) Young Sonia and her friends come up with ways to help others, sending care packages to soldiers overseas, starting a recycling program, and cleaning up a local park. As Sotomayor says in her introduction, “Every day, you can make a difference helping someone. Each time you do, you become part of something bigger than yourself.”

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson. Putnam, 2015. (Gr. K-2) In this winner of the 2016 Newbery Medal, young CJ and his grandmother leave church and take a bus filled with interesting passengers to go the soup kitchen in a rundown neighborhood.

The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Putnam, 2001. (Gr. 1-6) Though Mama tells her not to play on the other side of the fence that stretches through their town, a young Black girl would like to be friends with the white girl over there, and no one ever told them they couldn't sit atop the fence together. As an allegory of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., this simple picture book can be used at all grade levels to discuss the effects of racial segregation and to explore how one courageous person can bring about change, using such examples as Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges.

This Is the Dream by Diane ZuHone Shore, illustrated by James Ransome. HarperCollins/Amistad, 2006. (Gr. 1-6) Written as a deceptively simple nursery rhyme and illustrated with somber, uplifting paintings, this picture book describes the segregation of Black Americans and the response by peaceful protesters and marchers who defined the 20th century Civil Rights Movement.

The Water Princess by Susan Verde, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds. Putnam, 2016. (Gr. PreK-6) Somewhere in Africa, Gie Gie and her mother must walk miles every day to fill their pots with fresh water for drinking, washing, and cooking.

“HEALING THE PLANET”: CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest by Lynne Cherry. Harcourt, 1990. (Gr. PreK-4) The animals of the rain forest plead with a woodcutter to spare their tree.

Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney. Viking, 1982. (All ages) When she was a girl, her grandfather told her, “Alice, you must do something to make the world more beautiful.” As an old woman, she does just that, walking the coast of Maine while sowing lupine flower seeds.

The Night Gardener by the Fan Brothers, Terry Fan and Eric Fan. Simon & Schuster, 2016. (Gr. PreK-3) Residents of Grimloch Lane are solitary and unfriendly until a mustachioed elderly man comes to town and sculpts trees into beautiful animal topiaries with the assistance of William, a boy from the local orphanage.

One Little Bag: An Amazing Journey by Henry Cole. Scholastic, 2020. (Gr. PreK-6) A young boy uses and reuses one small brown paper bag, first to hold his sandwich for lunch at school, but then throughout his young adulthood, marriage, and fatherhood. This charmer of a wordless picture book was inspired by the author’s own reuse of a paper bag about 700 times over the course of three years when he was a teen.

Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai by Claire A. Nivola. Farrar, 2008. (Gr. 1-4) After five years in America studying biology in college, Wangari Maathai returned home to central Kenya to find the once lush landscape denuded. In response, she taught the women of her village to plant trees. Since she founded the Green Belt Movement in 1977, more than fifty million trees have been planted in Kenya. In the Author’s Note is this inspirational quote from Wangari Maathai: “I always felt that our work was not simply about planting trees. It was about inspiring people to take charge of their environment, the system that governed them, their lives and their future.”

We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade. Roaring Brook, 2020. (Gr. K-6) A Native American girl explains the importance of water to her people and worries about the black snake (the oil pipeline) that “. . . burns the land. / Courses through the water, / Making it unfit to drink.” She helps to rally people to stand together as one to fight against it to save the earth. Winner of the 2021 Caldecott Medal.

Wonder Walkers by Micha Archer. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, 2021. (Gr. PreK-3) On a “wonder walk” outside, a girl and her brother ponder and ask perceptive questions what they see: “Is the sun the world’s light bulb?” “Is fog the river’s blanket?” “Is dirt the world’s skin?” Kids can add their own wonders (as well as their wishes).

"IF ONLY ME AND MY ANIMAL FRIENDS": APPRECIATING ANIMALS

The Bug Girl (A True Story) by Sophia Spencer, illustrated by Kerascoët. Schwartz & Wade, 2020. (Gr. K-3) Author Sophia Spencer's engaging autobiographical account of her childhood love of bugs begins at age two when a butterfly perched on her shoulder at a butterfly conservatory.

Can We Save the Tiger? by Martin Jenkins, illustrated by Vicky White. Candlewick, 2011. (Gr. K-4) In his gentle, conversational, but passionate monologue, with oversized, realistic paintings, Jenkins introduces readers to a fascinating array of more than two dozen endangered, extinct, and rescued animals.

Crane Boy by Diana Cohn, illustrated by Youme. Cinco Puntos, 2015. (Gr. 1-4) Kinga, a young boy from a small village in Bhutan, wants to be the first to see the black-necked cranes return for the winter. When fewer cranes than ever return, Kinga gets an idea for helping the cranes: to hold a Crane Festival to perform both traditional and new crane dances for visitors.

Frank and Lucky Get Schooled by Lynne Rae Perkins. HarperCollins, 2016. (Gr. K-3) "One day when Frank could not win for losing, he got Lucky. And one day when Lucky was lost and found, he got Frank." So begins the story of two new friends, a red-haired boy and his black dog who together learn all about the world around them.

How to Heal a Broken Wing by Bob Graham. Candlewick, 2008. (Gr. PreK-2) Amid the adult city-goers rushing by, only one little boy, Will, sees the pigeon fall and land, wounded on the sidewalk and, with his mother's help, brings it home to heal. On the flap, Bob Graham says, "In troubled times, when many of us are losing contact with the natural world, I wanted to show that there is still hope in a coming generation of children who have curiosity and empathy with the world around them, and that care and attention can sometimes fix broken wings."

"ME LEADING THE PAGEANT": IN PERFORMANCE: MUSIC AND DANCE

Ada's Violin: The Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay by Susan Hood, illustrated by Sally Wern Comport. Simon & Schuster, 2016. (Gr. 2-5) In Cateura, Paraguay, the slum where Ada Ríos lived, fifteen hundred tons of garbage were dumped every day and teens often turned to gangs. Her Grandma signed up Ada and her little sister for music lessons at church. The teacher, Favio Chávez, only had three guitars and two violins so he began to construct instruments out of trash, turning oil drums into cellos, water pipes into flutes, and packing crates into guitars. Ada's violin was constructed out of a paint can, an aluminum baking tray, a fork, and pieces of wooden crates. Chávez's group of forty child musicians began performing locally and then internationally, as related in this life-affirming story. This book is a testament to the notion that one dedicated person can institute change in the world. Ask your children what they would like to do to save the world.

All Eyes on Ozzy! By K-Fai Steele. Balzer + Bray, 2021. (Gr. K-2) Ozzy loves being the center of attention, especially being noticed by her favorite teacher, Ms. Bomba, the music teacher who has everyone pick an instrument to play for the school recital. Ozzy picks the most attention-grabbing one: the drums.

The Bat Boy and His Violin by Gavin Curtis, illustrated by E. B. Lewis. Simon & Schuster, 1998. (Gr. 1-4) Disapproving of his son's violin-playing, Reginald's father, manager of the worst team in the Negro League in 1948, brings him to the baseball field as a bat boy.

Because by Mo Willems, illustrated by Amber Ren. Disney-Hyperion, 2019. (Gr. PreK-3) In a string of cause-and-effect events, a group of people inspired by Franz Schubert's music form an orchestra, rehearse, and hold a concert in a grand concert hall. Because a girl's uncle has to stay home with a cold, her aunt brings her to the concert instead. "She heard the beautiful music written by the man named Franz—and it changed her."

Boys Dance! by John Robert Allman, illustrated by Luciano Lozano. Doubleday, 2020. (Gr. PreK-3) Through rhyming couplets, follow the training of a diverse group of seven boys at the American Ballet Theatre school.

Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music by Margarita Engle, illustrated by Rafael Lopez. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015. (Gr. PreK-2) A young girl in Cuba dreams of playing the drums, but everyone on the "island of music" believes that only boys should do that. Inspired by a true story, aside from the inspirational girls-can-do-anything message, this this will make kids itch to do one real thing: play the drums.

Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin by Chieri Uegaki, illustrated by Qin Leng. Kids Can, 2014. (Gr. PreK-3) Though she's only taken three lessons, young Hana signs up to play her violin for the school talent show. She imagines Ojiichan, her violinist grandfather who lives in Japan, saying, "Gambarunoyo, Hana-chan (Do your best)," and she does.

I Will Dance by Nancy Bo Flood, illustrated by Julianna Swaney. Atheneum, 2020. (Gr. PreK-3) Eva, now ten, who has been in a wheelchair all her life, has one wish: even though she can only move her head, arms, and fingers, she wants to dance. At the studio for Young Dance, a place for all abilities and ages, she gets to do just that.

"CHEERS FOR ME FLOOD IN": SPORTSMANSHIP

The Day Roy Riegels Ran the Wrong Way by Dan Gutman, illustrated by Kerry Talbott. Bloomsbury, 2011. (Gr. 1-6) Grandpa tells his grandson the true story of the 1928 Rose Bowl when the center for the University of California ran with the ball towards the Georgia Tech's goal, costing his team the game and earning the lifelong moniker, "Wrong-Way Riegels." And yet, he went back in and played the second half. Grandpa imparts this life lesson: "It just goes to show that mistakes are not the end of the world. It's what you do after the mistake that counts."

Don't Throw It to Mo by David A. Adler, illustrated by Sam Ricks. Penguin, 2015. (Gr. PreK-1) Who would ever believe that Mo Jackson, the smallest, youngest kid on his football team, the Robins, could help beat the opposing team, the Jays? In this peppy easy reader series, Mo has similar crazy luck playing baseball in *Get a Hit Mo* (2016), soccer in *Kick It, Mo* (2018), and basketball in *Pass the Ball, Mo* (2018).

Girl Running: Bobbi Gibb and the Boston Marathon by Annette Bay Pimentel, illustrated by Micha Archer. Penguin/Nancy Paulsen, 2018. (Gr. 1-4) This eye-opening picture book biography is about a rulebreaker who dared to do something forbidden in 1966: she became the first woman to run the 26.2-mile Boston Marathon. While the book focuses on her running to the exclusion of any

other information about her life, it will be an inspiration for children to see that some rules need breaking, and this was one of them. One, you can discuss other barrier-breakers through history, and two, you'll want to take the kids outside for a nice little run.

Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by Kathleen Krull, illustrated by David Diaz. Harcourt, 1996. (Gr. K-6) The first American woman to win three gold medals (at the 1960 Rome Olympics), Wilma Rudolph (1940-1994), youngest of 20 siblings, contracted polio at age five and was told she'd never walk again.

The Quickest Kid in Clarksville by Pat Zeitlow Miller, illustrated by Frank Morrison. Chronicle, 2016. (Gr. K-3) The town of Clarksville, Tennessee is planning a big parade to honor Wilma Rudolph, arriving home after winning three gold medals at the 1960 Rome Olympics. Awaiting the parade, Alta, the young African American girl narrator of this sports and history-minded story, claims to be the fastest kid runner in her town of Clarksville, until she meets new girl, Charmaine, who sure can run in her expensive new sneakers. An Author's Note at the back contains facts about Wilma's medals and about her childhood in Clarksville. The most impressive fact is that Wilma said she would not attend Clarksville's parade and banquet in her honor unless they were open to everyone, which became the first integrated event ever held in Clarksville.

"IF ONLY THE PIRATES, THE VAMPIRES, THE KNIGHTS": USING YOUR IMAGINATION

Imagine! by Raúl Colón. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman, 2018. (Gr. PreK-4) In this exuberant wordless picture book, a brown-skinned, black-haired boy leaves his brownstone and heads out via skateboard over the Brooklyn Bridge and into Manhattan to the Museum of Modern Art where three paintings come to life. Take a trip to Africa to see the wild animals in Colón's similarly-themed *Draw* (2014).

Meanwhile by Jules Feiffer. HarperCollins, 1997. (Gr. K-3) After writing the word "Meanwhile" on his wall, Raymond finds himself on a pirate ship, on horseback running from a posse in the Old West, and on a rocket ship dodging Martians.

Niño Wrestles the World by Yuyi Morales. Roaring Brook, 2013. (Gr. PreK-1) A little boy dons his Lucha Libre mask and pretends he's wrestling and defeating the Guanajuato Mummy, the Olmec Head, the Weeping Woman, and more.

The Patchwork Bike by Maxine Beneba Clarke, illustrated by Van Thanh Rudd. Candlewick, 2018. (Gr. 1-3) The family's youngest child introduces her rambunctious brothers who leap and shriek through their African village on their homemade bike, assembled from bashed tin-can handles, branches for handlebars, a dented car seat, and wood-cut wheels.

Robinson by Peter Sís. Scholastic, 2017. (Gr. K-3) After Peter dresses as Robinson Crusoe for the school costume party and his friends laugh and tease him, he dreams that he is shipwrecked on a desert island where he survives and befriends the animals there.

Roxaboxen by Alice McLerran, illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Lothrop, 1991. (Gr. PreK-2) Out of rocks, wooden boxes, bottles, and other scraps, Marian and her playmates build a play "town" in Yuma, Arizona. Based on the memories of the author's mother, this is a fine tribute to the

inventiveness and ingenuity of children working and playing together.

Tiger in My Soup by Kashmira Sheth, illustrated by Jeffrey Ebbeler. Peachtree, 2013. (Gr. PreK-2) A tiger arises from a boy's alphabet soup and chases him through the kitchen.

"IF ONLY AT LUNCHTIME": SHARING FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao by Kat Zhang, illustrated by Charlene Chua. Aladdin, 2019. (Gr. PreK-3) Amy's parents and grandma make perfect baos, delicious pork and shrimp-filled steamed Chinese dumplings, but hers always turn out too empty, fat, or leaky until she figures out a better way to make them.

Bilal Cooks Daal by Aisha Saeed, illustrated by Anoosha Syed. Simon & Schuster/Salaam Reads, 2019. (Gr. PreK-3) Bilal invites his friends inside to help him and Abu, his dad, make his very favorite dish—daal (cooked lentils)—but then worries they won't like it. (They do!) The recipe's at the back.

Bring Me Some Apples and I'll Make You a Pie: A Story About Edna Lewis by Robbin Gourley. Clarion, 2009. (Gr. 1-4) As the seasons roll by, young Edna and her sisters pick strawberries, cherries, beans, peaches, tomatoes, and corn. The close-knit African American farm family appreciates the bounty as they prepare for winter. (Edna Lewis grew up to become a renowned chef and cookbook author.)

Everybody Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley, illustrated by Peter J. Thornton. Carolrhoda, 1991. (Gr. K-4) Sent to fetch her younger brother Anthony for dinner, Carrie trails him from house to house, sampling her neighbors' delicious rice recipes, each from a different culture. All nine recipes are appended.

Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story by Kevin Noble Maillard, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal. Roaring Brook, 2019. (Gr. PreK-3) "Fry bread is food / Flour, salt, water / Cornmeal, baking powder / Perhaps milk, maybe sugar / All mixed together in a big bowl." Nana and six children mix the dough together, fry it up, and share their bread, an enduring heritage.

Salsa: Un Poema Para Cocinar/A Cooking Poem by Jorge Argueta, illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh. Groundwood, 2015. (Gr. 1-5) Here's the recipe you need, written in free verse, in English and in Spanish, as a young Mexican boy narrates the history of and procedure for making red or green salsa, just as his ancestors did. "Ummmm, it's so delicious / this salsa, / red salsa. / It tastes like love." Continue the deliciousness with Argueta's Guacamole (2016).

Thank You, Omu! by Oge Mora. Little, Brown, 2018. (Gr. PreK-2) In her city apartment, Omu, a plump, brown-skinned, white-haired older woman is cooking "a thick red stew in a big fat pot for a nice evening meal." The "scrumptious scent" wafts down the hall and out the window so she ends up sharing it with, first, a little boy, and then a string of neighborhood professionals and community helpers, until there's nothing left for her. This endearing story of sharing and caring will go over big with the story hour crowd.

Watercress by Andrea Wang, illustrated by Jason Chin. Holiday House/Neal Porter, 2021. (Gr. PreK-6) On a ride through the Ohio countryside with their parents in their old red Pontiac, a girl and

her brother are none too thrilled when Mom spots watercress growing in a muddy ditch that they must help gather. The girl refuses to try it at dinner that night until her mother tells her the story of growing up during the great famine in China. Winner of the 2022 Caldecott Medal.

20 MEMORABLE PICTURE BOOK BIOGRAPHIES ABOUT CHILDREN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD

A Boy, a Mouse, and a Spider: The Story of E. B. White by Barbara Herkert, illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Henry Holt, 2017. (Gr. K-5) One day in the early 1900s, young Elwyn White, sick in bed, befriended a house mouse. The two explored the horse stable, where, in a bit of foreshadowing, we see him observing “a spider’s masterpiece” between the beams. No surprise that, as an adult, he had a dream about a little mouse dressed in human clothing and told his eighteen nieces and nephews ongoing stories about the mouse he named Stuart Little.

A Boy and a Jaguar by Alan Rabinowitz, illustrated by Cátia Chien. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014. (Gr. 1-5) In this moving and poignant autobiographical picture book, the late Alan Rabinowitz, zoologist and conservationist, described how his stuttering defined his young life. Learning in college how to be a “fluent stutterer,” he then became the first person to study jaguars in Belize and used his newfound voice to advocate for the world’s first and only jaguar preserve to save the endangered cats from hunters. Discussion point: Saving big cats became Alan’s passion in life. What might yours be?

Dragon Bones: The Fantastic Fossil Discoveries of Mary Anning by Sarah Glenn Marsh, illustrated by Maris Wicks. Roaring Brook, 2022. (Gr. PreK-3) As a child growing up in Lyme Regis, England, Mary Anning (1799-1847) and her brother hunted for treasures in the limestone cliffs, digging out fossilized shells and bones that her father sold to tourists. She was the first to unearth a massive fossil that was then named an ichthyosaur (fish lizard) and made many other major discoveries.

Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos by Monica Brown, illustrated by John Parra. NorthSouth, 2017. (Gr. 1-3) This much-simplified picture book biography of the life and work of Mexican painter, Frida Kahlo, she of the famed unibrow, is an affectionate and kid-appropriate look at one of the great artists of the twentieth century, with a focus on the many pets she had as a child and beyond.

Game Changers: The Story of Venus and Serena Williams by Lesa Cline-Ransome, illustrated by James Ransome. Simon & Schuster, 2018. (Gr. 2-5) Follow the careers of the tenacious Williams sisters from their childhood in Los Angeles, training on trash-strewn public tennis courts with their father, to their early twenties when they became the first sisters in tennis history to be ranked number one and two at the 2002 French Open.

Gus & Me: The Story of My Granddad and My First Guitar by Keith Richards, with Barnaby Harris and Bill Shapiro, illustrated by Theodora Richards. Little, Brown, 2014. (Gr. 1-5) Coveting the guitar that sat on top of his music-loving grandfather Gus’s upright piano, young Keith’s life was changed the day Gus handed it to him, saying, “All yours.” The boy taught himself to play “Malagueña, and the rest has been music history—which is why Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones is one of the best guitarists in the world today.

Helen’s Big World: The Life of Helen Keller by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Matt Tavares. Disney-Hyperion, 2012. (Gr. 1-4) This elegant, oversized, and inspiring quote-filled overview of

Helen Keller's extraordinary life begins with her illness at age nineteen months (after which, Helen reflected as an adult, "Gradually, I got used to the silence and darkness that surrounded me.") and her breakthrough by the water pump with her teacher, Annie Sullivan.

How to Build a Hug: Temple Grandin and Her Amazing Squeeze Machine by Amy Guglielmo, and Jacqueline Tourville, illustrated by Giselle Potter. Simon & Schuster, 2018. (Gr. K-6) This accessible account of Temple Grandin's childhood, her differences from other children, and her inventions makes the subject of autism approachable and understandable for kids of all ages.

Keith Haring: The Boy Who Just Kept Drawing by Kay Haring, illustrated by Robert Neubecker. Dial, 2017. (Gr. K-4) Here's an affectionate picture book biography that will make you simultaneously joyful and heartbroken, because its subject, indefatigable street artist, Keith Haring, died of AIDS at age 31 in 1990, a premature end to a brilliant career. Author Kay Haring, Keith's younger sister, portrays him as she remembers him—the amiable, geeky kid who never stopped drawing, something to which many children can relate.

Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai, illustrated by Kerascoët. Little, Brown, 2017. (Gr. 2-6) Nobel prize winner and education activist, Malala Yousafzai recalls a favorite TV show she watched as a child in Pakistan, about a boy with a magic pencil who could draw himself out of danger. "How I wanted a magic pencil, too!" she states, wishing she could use it to erase war, poverty, and hunger and then draw a better world where girls and boys were equals. One illustration shows her addressing an applauding audience at the U.N., with a quote from her speech inscribed in gold: "One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world." She states, "I hope that my story inspires you to find the magic in your own life and to always speak up for what you believe in."

Me . . . Jane by Patrick McDonnell. Little, Brown, 2011. (Gr. PreK-3) A winning picture book account of the childhood of primatologist Jane Goodall shows her as a young girl making observations about the wildlife around her and dreaming of a life in Africa living with the animals.

Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat by Javaka Steptoe. Little, Brown, 2016. (Gr. 1-5) This Caldecott-winning picture book biography of the New York City graffiti artist has as elemental a text as can be, told in present tense, and yet it captures the energy and personality of the young Jean-Michel Basquiat who dreamed of being a famous artist. (In case you didn't know, one of the late artist's paintings sold in 2021 for a mere \$93 million.)

Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille by Jen Bryant, illustrated by Boris Kulikov. Knopf, 2016. (Gr. 1-4) Born in 1809, an accident left Louis Braille blind at age five. At age ten, he was admitted to the Royal School for the Blind in Paris where he learned to read oversized books by tracing each raised letter with his fingers. Simplifying a French army captain's code for sending secret messages, the then fifteen-year-old Louis changed the lives of blind people forever.

Spring After Spring: How Rachel Carson Inspired the Environmental Movement by Stephanie Roth Sisson. Roaring Brook, 2018. (Gr. K-3) At a time when an enormous number of Americans resist the notion that climate change is real, that the environment needs protecting, and that we risk our future in not paying attention to science, it is a breath of fresh air to showcase the life of a girl whose love of nature led to a life as a scientist and whose book, *The Silent Spring*, sparked change.

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles, illustrated by George Ford. Scholastic, 1995. In 1960, six-

year-old Ruby Bridges became the first Black child to integrate a school in the South, specifically William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans, sparking angry demonstrations from white parents, all of whom withdrew their children from school that year. For older children in grades 3-6, Bridges' photo-filled autobiography, *Through My Eyes* (Scholastic, 1999), is riveting.

Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions by Chris Barton, illustrated by Don Tate. Charlesbridge, 2016. (Gr. 2-5) The African American inventor, engineer, and NASA rocket scientist, Lonnie Johnson, was a science-obsessed kid who made and launched his own rockets and, in college, created his own award-winning robot he called Linex. His "Super Soaker" is still one of the top twenty toys of all time.

Trombone Shorty by Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews, illustrated by Bryan Collier. Abrams, 2015. (Gr. K-5); *The 5 O'Clock Band* by Troy Andrews and Bill Taylor, illustrated by Bryan Collier. Abrams, 2018. (Gr. K-5) Whereas the first book was narrated by New Orleans-based musician Troy Andrews himself, explaining how he got his nickname as a little boy who taught himself to play the trombone, the companion book is told by an omniscient narrator about the time Shorty forgot to meet his 5 O'Clock Band members at their regular time. How could he ever be a bandleader if he couldn't even be on time? Each adult he met along the way gave him useful words on what it would take for him to be successful. Read these two books as a set.

Turning Pages: My Life Story by Sonia Sotomayor, illustrated by Lulu Delacre. Philomel, 2018. (Gr. 2-6) Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic and the third woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, was born on June 25, 1954, in New York City. Her family was from Puerto Rico; she spoke Spanish at home and struggled to learn English. In this straightforward picture book autobiography, she correlates the most significant events in her childhood to books and reading. "Reading was like lighting candles, each book a flame that lit up the world around me."

The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist by Cynthia Levinson, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. Atheneum, 2017. (Gr. 2-5) Nine-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks was the youngest of the more than 3,000 children who were arrested and jailed for a week in Birmingham, Alabama during the children's protest marches for equality in May 1963. Though we have come a long way in America on issues of equal rights and race relations, it is certainly not close to perfect yet. A true story like this gives us renewed hope for ongoing progress.

Ben Franklin's Big Splash: The Mostly True Story of His First Invention by Barb Rosenstock, illustrated by S. D. Schindler. Calkins Creek, 2014. (Gr. 1-5) Jumping into Boston's Charles River, eleven-year-old Ben Franklin thinks, "Why can't I swim like a fish?" and invents wooden swim fins that actually work. The author speculates that this day in 1717 was what led Ben Franklin to become a scientist.

