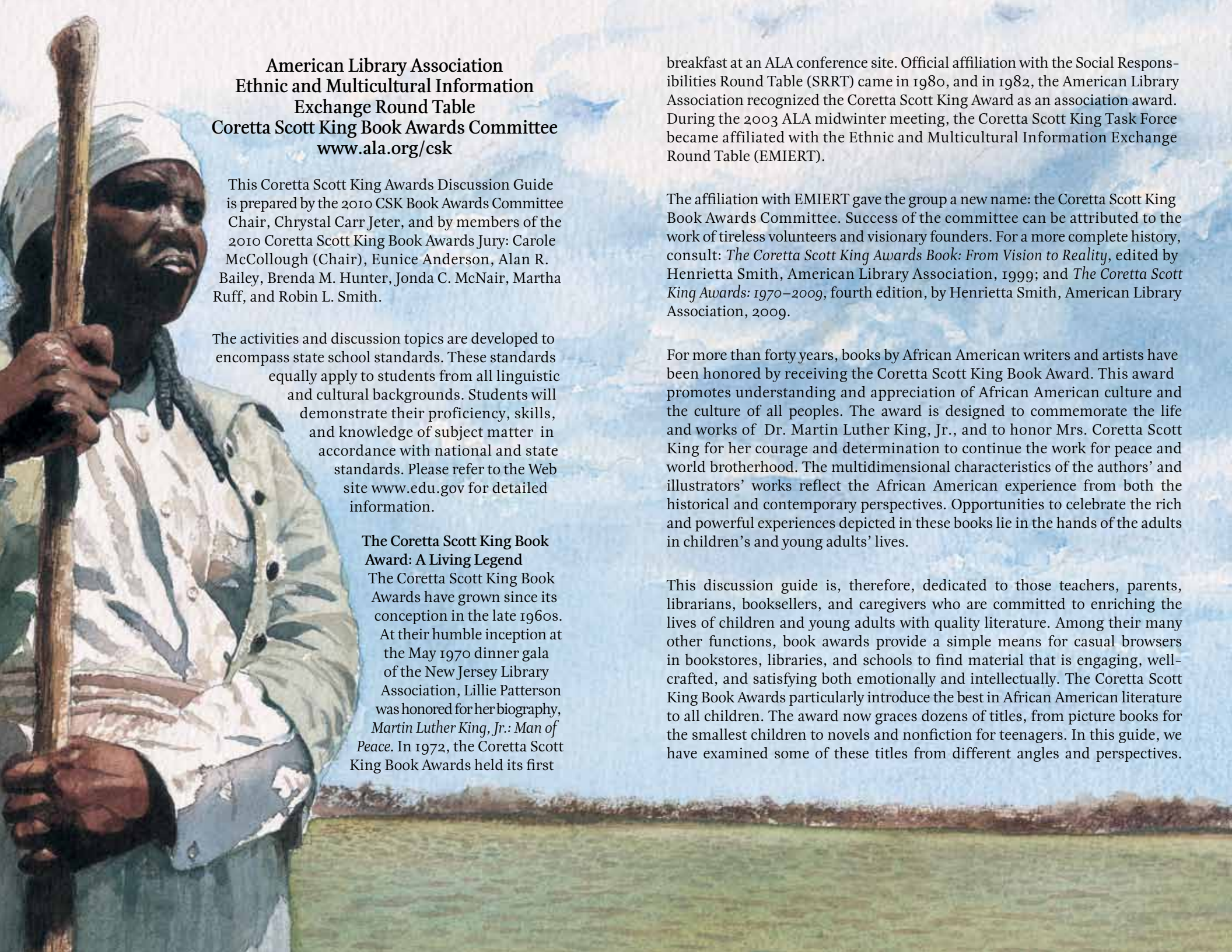




*Coretta Scott King*  
*Book Awards*  
2010 Discussion Guide

American Library Association  
Ethnic and Multicultural  
Information Exchange Round Table  
Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee



**American Library Association  
Ethnic and Multicultural Information  
Exchange Round Table  
Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee  
[www.ala.org/csk](http://www.ala.org/csk)**

This Coretta Scott King Awards Discussion Guide is prepared by the 2010 CSK Book Awards Committee Chair, Chrystal Carr Jeter, and by members of the 2010 Coretta Scott King Book Awards Jury: Carole McCollough (Chair), Eunice Anderson, Alan R. Bailey, Brenda M. Hunter, Jonda C. McNair, Martha Ruff, and Robin L. Smith.

The activities and discussion topics are developed to encompass state school standards. These standards equally apply to students from all linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Students will demonstrate their proficiency, skills, and knowledge of subject matter in accordance with national and state standards. Please refer to the Web site [www.edu.gov](http://www.edu.gov) for detailed information.

**The Coretta Scott King Book Award: A Living Legend**

The Coretta Scott King Book Awards have grown since its conception in the late 1960s. At their humble inception at the May 1970 dinner gala of the New Jersey Library Association, Lillie Patterson was honored for her biography, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Man of Peace*. In 1972, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards held its first

breakfast at an ALA conference site. Official affiliation with the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) came in 1980, and in 1982, the American Library Association recognized the Coretta Scott King Award as an association award. During the 2003 ALA midwinter meeting, the Coretta Scott King Task Force became affiliated with the Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT).

The affiliation with EMIERT gave the group a new name: the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee. Success of the committee can be attributed to the work of tireless volunteers and visionary founders. For a more complete history, consult: *The Coretta Scott King Awards Book: From Vision to Reality*, edited by Henrietta Smith, American Library Association, 1999; and *The Coretta Scott King Awards: 1970–2009*, fourth edition, by Henrietta Smith, American Library Association, 2009.

For more than forty years, books by African American writers and artists have been honored by receiving the Coretta Scott King Book Award. This award promotes understanding and appreciation of African American culture and the culture of all peoples. The award is designed to commemorate the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to honor Mrs. Coretta Scott King for her courage and determination to continue the work for peace and world brotherhood. The multidimensional characteristics of the authors' and illustrators' works reflect the African American experience from both the historical and contemporary perspectives. Opportunities to celebrate the rich and powerful experiences depicted in these books lie in the hands of the adults in children's and young adults' lives.

This discussion guide is, therefore, dedicated to those teachers, parents, librarians, booksellers, and caregivers who are committed to enriching the lives of children and young adults with quality literature. Among their many other functions, book awards provide a simple means for casual browsers in bookstores, libraries, and schools to find material that is engaging, well-crafted, and satisfying both emotionally and intellectually. The Coretta Scott King Book Awards particularly introduce the best in African American literature to all children. The award now graces dozens of titles, from picture books for the smallest children to novels and nonfiction for teenagers. In this guide, we have examined some of these titles from different angles and perspectives.

# Award Winner and Honor Books

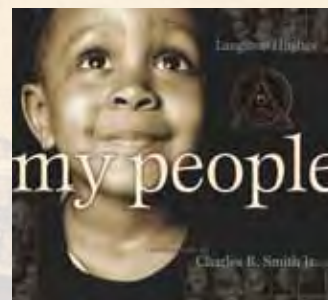


Coretta Scott King Book Award  
**Author Award**

**Bad News for Outlaws:  
The Remarkable Life of Bass  
Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal**

Written by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson  
Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Published by Carolrhoda Books  
A division of Lerner Publishing Group, Inc.



Coretta Scott King Book Award  
**Illustrator Award**

**My People**

Written by Langston Hughes  
Photographs by Charles R. Smith, Jr.

Published by Ginee Seo Books/Atheneum  
An imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

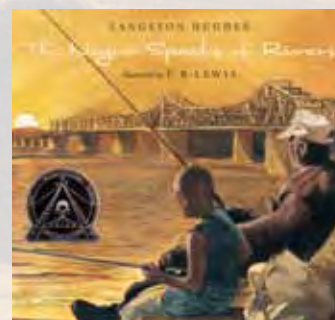


Coretta Scott King Book Award  
**Author Honor Award**

**Mare's War**

Written by Tanita S. Davis

Published by Alfred A. Knopf  
An imprint of Random House Children's Books  
A division of Random House, Inc.



Coretta Scott King Book Award  
**Illustrator Honor Award**

**The Negro Speaks of Rivers**

Written by Langston Hughes  
Illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Published by Disney • Jump at the Sun Books  
An imprint of Disney Book Group



Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe  
**New Talent Award**

**The Rock and the River**

Written by Kekla Magoon

Published by Aladdin  
An imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's  
Publishing Division

## Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U.S. Marshal

By Vaunda Micheaux Nelson

Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Carolrhoda Books, a division of  
Lerner Publishing Group, Inc.

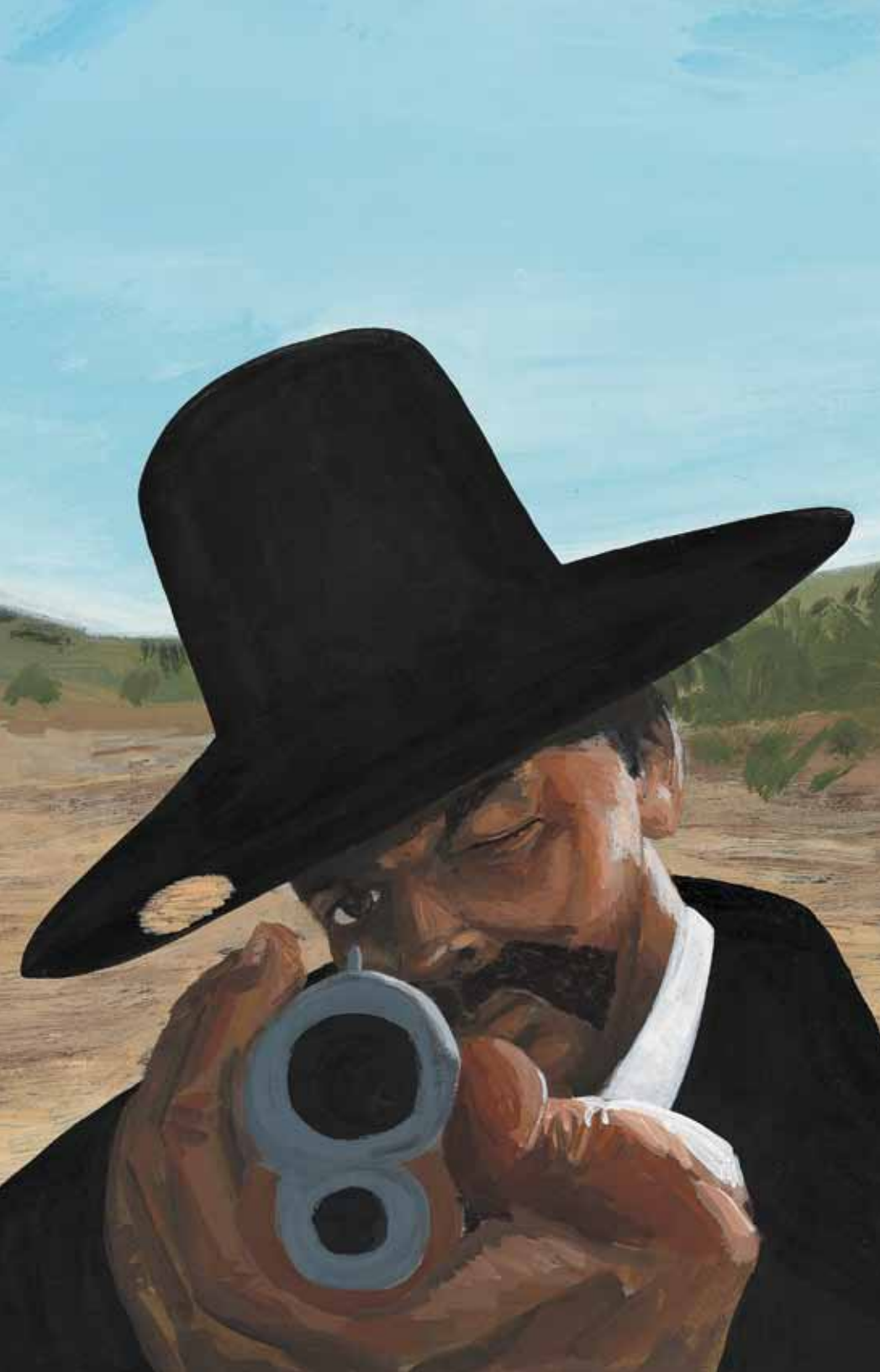


Bass Reeves, fearless lawman of the American west, is bigger than life in this well-researched, rip-roaring biography. Employing colorful terms and short, powerful sentences, this narrative introduces young readers to the fearless, dependable straight-shooter who kept the peace in Indian Territory for thirty-two years. His deep intelligence, excellent marksmanship and high character will captivate readers of all ages and the rich endnotes will give the reader places to learn about outlaws and lawmen alike.

- Vaunda Nelson uses specific language to add to the tall-tale aspect of the story. List words you can find in the text that make the story feel historical rather than current. For example, on the acknowledgement page, Nelson uses “obliged, beholden, end of the trail and thank you kindly.” Why did the author add a glossary of “Western words” at the end?
- Judge Parker is a central figure in the life of Bass Reeves. Imagine the argument he made to hire a former slave for such an important job.
- One of the most surprising details about Bass Reeves is that he arrested his own son, Benjamin. Imagine you are Benjamin and write a letter to your mother from jail.
- Nelson writes, “But the biggest thing about Bass Reeves was his character.” Use examples from the book to prove this sentence to be true.
- Research the lives of two of the famous folks Bass Reeves arrested, Belle Star and Jim Webb.
- What is a U.S. marshal? Create a scavenger hunt of the Web site [www.usmarshals.gov/usmsforkids/history.htm](http://www.usmarshals.gov/usmsforkids/history.htm) to learn more.
- U.S. marshals provided protection for Ruby Bridges and James Meredith when they integrated their respective schools. How were the marshals assigned that job and what was their importance?
- Reeves used many disguises to catch the criminals he sought. Find examples in the book of times that Reeves used disguises to do his job. What tricks did he employ to fool outlaws?
- Where was Indian Territory? Which states were located within Indian Territory? Find out how and when Indian Territory became part of the United States. Map it.

### Related CSK Titles

- *I Have Heard of a Land*, Joyce Carol Thomas, Joanna Cotler Books, an imprint of HarperCollins
- *Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World*, Mildred Pitts Walter, Lothrop



## My People

By Langston Hughes

Photographs by Charles R. Smith, Jr.

Ginee Seo Books/Atheneum, an imprint of  
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing



Langston Hughes's beloved poem and Charles Smith, Jr.'s stunning sepia-toned photography weave together perfectly in this celebration of black beauty and life. Each spread, comprised of the jubilant, loving expressions of black people of all hues and ages, suggests both the wisdom of experience and the exuberance of the next generation. Small photographs, suggestive of old-time filmstrips, repeat the images in miniature on the sides. The rich, black background and gentle lighting make for a warm celebration.

- Experiment with a digital camera to photograph smiles, eyes, hands, and faces to create a unique portrait or aspect of people.
- Write a haiku about your family, friends, or classmates.
- Team up with a group of classmates to make a scrapbook called "My People."
- Read and discuss other poems of Langston Hughes. A good place to start is *Dreamkeeper* by Langston Hughes, illustrated by Brian Pinkney.
- Write a short story, song, or poem about one of the photographs in *My People*.
- Ask a librarian for old filmstrips to use for making your own collage.
- Poetry is an art that is often performed. Memorize this short poem and perform it. Find Ashley Bryan's spoken word version of it online and compare your interpretation of it. Then find the audio (available online) of Langston Hughes reading it.

### Related CSK Titles

- *The Blacker the Berry*, Joyce Carol Thomas, Joanna Cotler Books, an imprint of HarperCollins
- *Brown Honey in Broomwheat Tea*, Joyce Carol Thomas, HarperCollins
- *Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes*, David Roessel and Arnold Rampersad, Sterling
- *Twelve Rounds to Glory: The Story of Muhammad Ali*, Charles R. Smith, Candlewick Press



## Mare's War

Written by Tanita S. Davis

Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House  
Children's Books, a division of Random House, Inc.



Parallel stories of modern sisters and their spirited, opinionated grandmother Mare make for one memorable car trip. There is a lot more to Mare than Octavia and Tali know. As the miles slowly unfold, Mare's story of her harrowing younger days and her adventures with the Women's Army Corps in World War II come to life. Though the girls start out as unwilling passengers, their view of the world changes as they fall under the spell of their grandmother's storytelling. Rich details of the lives of African American service women add to the richness of this road trip.

- Create an online map of the trip from Los Angeles to Louisiana on a Google map. Place pins at each stop.
- How did the sisters change as the story unfolds? List adjectives describing the girls at the beginning and the end of the story.
- Grandparents can play an important role in raising their grandchildren. How does Mare compare to your image of a grandmother?
- Have you ever taken a road trip with a grandmother? Share your experiences.
- The Women's Army Corps gave women a role to play to support the American war effort. Research the jobs that women were allowed to do in World War II and the jobs they are allowed to do now.
- Military uniforms have changed over the years. Find photographs of the WAC uniforms and compare them to current U.S. Army uniforms.
- Mare and her WAC friends loved fashion, but many materials were in short supply because of the war. How did women cope and compensate during these times?
- Octavia and Tali send postcards home to their friends. Design a postcard highlighting some feature of your hometown; write a note and send it to a relative who lives far away.
- Mare talks about having a reunion at the end of the trip. Does it ever happen? Explain.

### Related CSK Titles

- *Her Stories*, Virginia Hamilton, Blue Sky Press, an imprint of Scholastic
- *Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters*, Andrea Davis Pinkney, Gulliver Books, an imprint of Harcourt
- *Talkin' About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman*, Nikki Grimes, Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic
- *Toning the Sweep*, Angela Johnson, Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, Christopher Paul Curtis, Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books





## The Negro Speaks of Rivers

By Langston Hughes

Illustrated by E. B. Lewis

Disney·Jump at the Sun Books, an imprint of  
Disney Book Group



Lewis's radiant watercolors on expansive double-page spreads, is a visual response to the power of the familiar ten-line poem. Water, from the Euphrates and the Congo to the Mississippi, gives life, strength, and repose for generations. Dramatic paintings of a man in prayer, a close-up of hands working, and an especially stunning depiction of an elderly women's eyes, rich and sparkling with experience, will allow a new generation to appreciate Langston Hughes's timeless poem.

- River, lake, sea, ocean. What are the differences between these bodies of water? Discuss why Langston Hughes chose to write about rivers.
- Name three to five great rivers. Where are they located? Find a blank world map and add the rivers and the countries where they are located.
- Find five songs that are about rivers.
- If you lived on one of the rivers Hughes mentions, what would you expect to see on the shore?
- Look at the picture of Abe Lincoln. How is he feeling? How does E. B. Lewis show Lincoln's emotions through the illustrations?
- Hughes tells us that Lincoln "went down to New Orleans." Explore the reason for this trip. What did he see?
- If you live near a river, paint a watercolor image of the landscape. If you do not live near a river, find a photo of a river scene and make a watercolor version of the photo.
- Hughes uses the phrase "I've known rivers" twice in the poem. Find the accompanying illustrations. Compare one to the other. Talk about what you see, feel, and think when you explore the illustrations.

### Related CSK Titles

- *Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes*, David Roessel and Arnold Rampersad, Sterling
- *My People*, Langston Hughes, Ginee Seo Books/Atheneum, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing

## The Rock and the River

By Kekla Magoon

Aladdin, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.



Newcomer Magoon breaks new ground in her heartbreaking story of brothers Sam and Stick, sons of a civil rights minister. While Stick is drawn to the social agenda of the Black Panther Party, Sam is torn between the nonviolent message his father preaches and the increasing militancy he sees in his brother. A complicated story with nuanced, realistic characters, this offering adds much to this little-examined part of American history.

- Stick and Sam hail from a famous family of civil rights activists. How has that experience shaped the boys differently?
- The words “Black Panther Party” mean different things to different people. Interview family members who lived in the 1960s. Ask them what they remember about the party. How do their impressions of the Black Panthers differ from the way the social agenda is described in Magoon’s book?
- The Ten Point Plan is listed on page 76. Think about the community where you live. Have any of the points been accomplished? Write a Ten Point Plan for the challenges faced by your community right now.
- Compare the current Ten Point Plan, found at [blackpanther.org](http://blackpanther.org), with the historic plan. Discuss how it is the same and how it is different.
- Explain the significance of the title to the whole story.
- Discuss the role of the police in the story.

### Related CSK Titles

- *Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Freedom Movement*, Lillie Patterson, Facts on File
- *Now Is Your Time: The African American Struggle for Freedom*, Walter Dean Myers, HarperCollins
- *The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Coretta Scott King, Newmarket Press



# The Negro Speaks of Rivers

I've known rivers:

I've known rivers as ancient as the world and older than the flow of  
human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.  
I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.

I looked upon the Nile and raised pyramids above it.  
I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln  
went down to New Orleans,  
and I've seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I've known rivers:  
Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

—*Langston Hughes*



The **Coretta Scott King Book Awards Seal** was designed by internationally known artist Lev Mills in 1974. The symbolism used in designing the seal centers around Dr. King's teachings and doctrines, the purpose for which the Award was founded.

The basic circle represents continuity in movement, resolving from one idea to another. Within the circle is the image of a black child reading a book. The five main religious symbols below the image of the child represent nonsectarianism. The superimposed pyramid symbolizes both strength and Atlanta University, where the Award was headquartered at the time the seal was designed. At the apex of the pyramid is the dove, symbol of peace, one of Dr. King's doctrines. The rays shine toward peace and brotherhood.

The Coretta Scott King Book Awards seal image and award name are solely and exclusively owned by the American Library Association.

Featured art © 2009 by E. B. Lewis from *The Negro Speaks of Rivers*