



## Considering All Children

A New Ideal in Evaluating and Engaging  
around Books for Youth

*2018 Charlemae Rollins President's Program*

# 2018 ALSC Charlemae Rollins President's Program Resource Guide

Monday, June 25, 2018

Awards, best-of-the-year lists and reviews focus on "quality" and "excellence" in literature for youth, but what do "quality" and "excellence" really mean in the canon of American literature for children? Who is deciding which books stand out? How are some critics and some children privileged in our field's thinking? How are some dismissed or made invisible? What does "American literature for children" even mean? What are common assumptions and current discourse, and what it would look like if we truly considered *all* children as we evaluate books and single out titles for distinction both within and beyond ALSC?

For this resource guide, the program panelists and moderator were each asked to share suggested critical readings and 5 to 7 must-have books for libraries. We hope you find these resources helpful.

### Panelists

#### **Margarita Engle, Author <http://www.margaritaengle.com/>**

Margarita Engle is the 2017-2019 national Young People's Poet Laureate, and a USBBY 2019 Astrid Lindgren Award nominee. She is the Cuban-American author of many verse novels, including *The Surrender Tree*, a Newbery Honor winner, and *The Lightning Dreamer*, a PEN USA Award recipient. Her verse memoir, *Enchanted Air*, received the Pura Belpré Award, Golden Kite Award, Walter Dean Myers Honor, Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award, and Arnold Adoff Poetry Award, among others. *Drum Dream Girl* received the Charlotte Zolotow Award for best picture book text. Her newest books are *The Flying Girl*, *How Aída de Acosta learned to Soar*, and *Jazz Owls, a Novel of the Zoot Suit Riots*. Pending publication in September is a picture book titled *A Dog Named Haku, A Holiday Story From Nepal*, co-authored with Amish and Nicole Karanjit. Margarita was born in Los Angeles, but developed a deep attachment to her mother's homeland during childhood summers with relatives. She studied agronomy and botany along with creative writing. She lives in central California with her husband and his search and rescue dogs.

**Debbie Reese, Critic/Librarian/Scholar/Activist**

<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

Debbie Reese is tribally enrolled at Nambé Pueblo, a sovereign nation in what is currently northern New Mexico. Her book chapters, research, and professional articles on depictions of Indigenous peoples in children's and young adult literature are taught in Education, Library Science, and English courses in the United States and Canada. A former schoolteacher and assistant professor, she has a master's and PhD in Education from the University of Illinois, and an MLIS from San Jose State University. She is a founder of the Native American House and the American Indian Studies programs at the University of Illinois, and a founding member of See What We See. She was selected to deliver the 2019 Arbuthnot Lecture.

**Jason Reynolds, Author** <http://www.jasonwritesbooks.com/>

Jason Reynolds is a *New York Times* bestselling author, a Newbery Award Honoree, a Printz Award Honoree, National Book Award Honoree, a *Kirkus* Award winner, a two time Walter Dean Myers Award winner, an NAACP Image Award Winner, and the recipient of multiple Coretta Scott King honors. Reynolds was the American Booksellers Association's 2017 spokesperson for Indies First, and served as the national spokesperson for the 2018 celebration of School Library Month in April 2018, sponsored by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). Jason's many works of fiction include *When I Was the Greatest*, *Boy in the Black Suit*, *All American Boys* (co-written with Brendan Kiely), *As Brave As You*, *For Every One*, *Miles Morales: Spider-Man*, the Track series (*Ghost*, *Patina*, *Sunny*, and *Lu*), and *Long Way Down*, which received both a Newbery Honor and a Printz Honor. He is on faculty at Lesley University, for the Writing for Young People MFA Program and lives in Washington, DC.

**Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, Professor/Critic/Scholar/Activist**

**Graduate School of Education, Penn State University**

<http://scholar.gse.upenn.edu/thomas>

Ebony Elizabeth Thomas is an assistant professor in the Literacy, Culture, and International Education Division at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. A former Detroit Public Schools teacher, Dr. Thomas's program of research is most keenly focused on children's and adolescent literature, the teaching of African American literature, and the role of race in English language arts classroom discourse and interaction. A past National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow and recipient of the AERA Language and Social Processes SIG Emerging Scholar Award, her forthcoming book is *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination in Youth Literature, Media, and Culture* (New York University Press). Along with Debbie Reese and K.T. Horning, she is the 2018 recipient of the Children's Literature Association Honor Article Award.

**Moderator: Edith Campbell, Critic/Librarian/Activist** <https://campbele.wordpress.com/>

Edith Campbell is an assistant Education Librarian in the Cunningham Memorial Library at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, IN. She researches the visibility of Black girls in young adult literature. Edith is a founding member of the We The People Summer Reading List, and See What We See. She serves on the Advisory Board for the *Research on Diversity in Youth Literature* journal. She was a member of the 2018 Michael L. Printz Award Committee. In 2016, Edith served as a Faculty Fellow to the ISU Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence's Multicultural Curriculum Learning Community. She is a past member of the WNDB Walter Award Committee, YALSA's Best Fiction for Young Adults selection committee and the CYBILS Nonfiction Awards committee. She blogs at CrazyquitEdi. Edith received her B.A. in Economics from the University of Cincinnati and MLS from Indiana University.

## Resources

### Critical Readings:

Adichie, C. N. (2009, July). *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The danger of a single story*.  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)

Bishop, R. S. (1982). *Shadow and substance: Afro-American experience in contemporary children's fiction*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Bishop, R. S. (2007). *Free within ourselves: The development of African American children's literature*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Botelho, M. J., & Rudman, M. K. (2009). *Critical multicultural analysis of children's literature: Mirrors, windows, and doors*. London, England: Routledge.

Elliott, Z. (2010, March 2). The writer's page: decolonizing the imagination. *The Horn Book*.  
<https://www.hbook.com/2010/03/authors-illustrators/decolonizing-imagination/#>

Fox, D. L., & Short, K. G. (2003). *Stories matter: The complexity of cultural authenticity in children's literature*. Urbana-Champaign, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Jiménez-García, M. (2014). Pura Belpré lights the storyteller's candle: Reframing the legacy of a legend and what it means for the fields of Latino/a studies and children's literature. *Centro Journal*, 26(1), 110-147.

Johnson, L. (2016). Students don't need diverse literature just because it's diverse. *Literacy & NCTE: The official blog of the National Council of Teachers of English*.  
<http://blogs.ncte.org/index.php/2016/04/students-dont-need-diverse-literature-just-diverse/>

Justice, D. H. (2018). *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter*. Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Leland, C., Lewison, M., & Harste, J. (2012). *Teaching children's literature: it's critical!*. Routledge.

MacCann, D. (2013). *White supremacy in children's literature: Characterizations of African Americans, 1830-1900*. Routledge.

Martin, M. (2004). *Brown gold: Milestones of African American children's picture books, 1845-2002*. London: Routledge.

### Critical Readings, continued

May, J. P. (1996). *Children's literature and critical theory: reading and writing for understanding*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McGillis, R. (1999), *Voices of the other: Children's literature and the postcolonial context*. London: Routledge.

Myers, C. (2014, March 15). The apartheid of children's literature. *The New York Times*.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/the-apartheid-of-childrens-literature.html>

Myers, W.D. (2014). Where are the people of color in children's books? *The New York Times*.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/opinion/sunday/where-are-the-people-of-color-in-childrens-books.html>.

Naidoo, J. C., & Dahlen, S. P. (Eds.). (2013). *Diversity in youth literature: Opening doors through reading*. American Library Association.

NCTE Resolution on the Need for Diverse Children's and Young Adult Books. (2015).  
<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/diverse-books>.

Older, D.J. (2014). Diversity is not enough: Race, power, publishing. *Buzzfeed*.  
<http://www.buzzfeed.com/danieljoseolder/diversity-is-not-enough#.ib6nxyB93>.

Older, D. J. (2015, November 6). Do black children's lives matter if nobody writes about them? *The Guardian*.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/06/do-black-childrens-lives-matter-if-nobody-writes-about-them>

Parker, R. D. (2014). *How to interpret literature: critical theory for literary and cultural studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reese, D. *Are We "People of Color"?*  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/p/we-are-not-people-of-color.html>

Schoenberg, N. (2016). Slavery in children's books: What works? *Chicago Tribune*.  
<http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/books/ct-prj-slavery-in-childrens-books-20160227-story.html#nt=oufit>.

Thomas, E. E. (2016). Stories still matter: Rethinking the role of diverse children's literature today. *Language Arts*, 94(2), 112.

### **Blogs and Book review sites:**

American Indians in Children's Literature  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

Anansesem: The Caribbean Children's Literature Magazine <http://www.anansesem.com/>

Booktoss <https://booktoss.blog/>

CrazyQuiltEdi <https://campbele.wordpress.com/>

Cuatrogatos Foundation <https://www.cuatrogatos.org/?lang=en>

Latinxs in Kid Lit <https://latinosinkidlit.com/>

Lee & Low Books <https://www.leeandlow.com/>

Reading While White <http://readingwhilewhite.blogspot.com/>

See What We See, Social Justice Books <https://socialjusticebooks.org/about/see-what-we-see/>

Teaching for Change <http://www.teachingforchange.org/>

Vamos a Leer: Teaching Latin America Through Literacy  
<https://teachinglatinamericathroughliterature.wordpress.com/>

We Need Diverse Books <https://diversebooks.org/>

### **Must-have books for every library (selected by our panelists):**

- ***Binti*** by Nnedi Okorafor
- ***Burn Baby Burn*** by Meg Medina
- ***Calling the Doves/Canto por las palomas*** by Juan Felipe Herrera; illustrated by Elly Simmons
- ***Crazy Horse's Girlfriend*** by Erika Wurth
- ***The Crossover*** by Kwame Alexander
- ***Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut*** by Derrick D. Barnes; illustrated by Gordon C. James
- ***Dizzy in Your Eyes: Poems About Love*** by Pat Mora
- ***Each Kindness*** by Jacqueline Woodson
- ***George*** by Alex Gino
- ***The House on Mango Street*** by Sandra Cisneros
- ***If I Ever Get Out of Here*** by Eric Gansworth

### **Must-have books for every library, continued**

- ***The Inexplicable Logic of My Life*** by Benjamin Alire Sáenz
- ***It Ain't So Awful, Falafel*** by Firoozeh Dumas

- ***Jingle Dancer*** by Cynthia Leitich Smith; illustrated by Ying-Hwa Hu and Cornelius Van Wright
- ***Kira-kira*** by Cynthia Kadohata
- ***The Marrow Thieves*** by Cherie Dimaline
- ***Martí's Song for Freedom/Martí y sus versos por la libertad*** by Emma Otheguy; illustrated by Beatriz Vidal
- ***Monster*** by Walter Dean Myers
- ***Murder on the Red River*** by Marcie Rendon
- ***Out of My Mind*** by Sharon M. Draper
- ***Outrun the Moon*** by Stacey Lee
- ***The People Shall Continue*** by Simon J. Ortiz; illustrated by Sharol Graves
- ***Piecing Me Together*** by Renée Watson
- ***Poems to Dream Together/Poemas para soñar juntos*** by Francisco X. Alarcón; illustrated by Paula Barragán
- ***The Poet X*** by Elizabeth Acevedo
- ***Saltypie*** by Tim Tingle; illustrated by Karen Clarkson
- ***Salvage the Bones*** by Jesmyn Ward
- ***Shadowshaper*** by Daniel José Older
- ***Somos como las nubes/We Are Like Clouds*** by Jorge Argueta; illustrated by Alfonso Ruano
- ***Tales of the Mighty Code Talkers*** edited by Arigon Starr
- ***The Hate U Give*** by Angie Thomas
- ***Trail of Lightning*** by Rebecca Roanhorse
- ***Under the Mesquite*** by Guadalupe Garcia McCall
- ***Water in May*** by Ismée Amiel Williams
- ***When We Play Our Drums, They Sing/Lucy & Lola*** by Richard Van Camp and Monique Gray Smith
- ***When We Were Alone*** by David A. Robertson; illustrated by Julie Flett
- ***You Bring the Distant Near*** by Mitali Perkins

### **And Don't Forget Books BY Our Author Panelists!**

#### **By Margarita Engle:**

\*Also available in Spanish language edition

- *All the Way to Havana*. Illustrated by Mike Curato
- *\*Bravo! Poems about Amazing Hispanics*. Illustrated by Rafael López
- *A Dog Named Haku: A Holiday Story from Nepal* by Margarita Engle, Amish Karanjit, and Nicole Karanjit. Illustrated by Ruth Jeyaveeran. (Forthcoming: September 2018)
- *\*Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music*. Illustrated by Rafael López
- *\*Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings: A Memoir*
- *The Firefly Letters: A Suffragette's Journey to Cuba*

- *The Flying Girl: How Aida de Acosta Learned to Soar*. Illustrated by Sara Palacios
- *Forest World*
- *Hurricane Dancers: The First Caribbean Pirate Shipwreck*
- *Jazz Owls: A Novel of the Zoot Suit Riots*. Illustrated by Rudy Gutierrez
- *The Lightning Dreamer: Cuba's Greatest Abolitionist*
- *Lion Island: Cuba's Warrior of Words*
- *\*Miguel's Brave Knight: Young Cervantes and His Dream of Don Quixote*. Illustrated by Raúl Colón
- *\*Morning Star Horse*. Decorations by Josiah Muster
- *Mountain Dog*. Illustrated by
- *Orangutanka: A Story in Poems*. Illustrated by Renée Kurilla
- *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano*
- *Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal*
- *The Sky Painter: Louis Fuertes, Bird Artist*. Illustrated by Aliona Bereghici
- *Summer Birds: The Butterflies of Maria Merian*
- *\*The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom* (bilingual edition available)
- *Tiny Rabbit's Big Wish*. Illustrated by David Walker
- *Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba*
- *When You Wander: A Search-and-Rescue Dog Story*. Illustrated by Mary Morgan
- *The Wild Book*

#### **By Jason Reynolds:**

- *All American Boys* (with Brendan Kiely)
- *As Brave as You*
- *The Boy in the Black Suit*
- *For Every One*
- *Ghost* (Book #1 of Track)
- *Long Way Down*
- *Lu* (Book #4 of Track) (Forthcoming: October 2018)
- *My Name Is Jason (Mine, Too)* by Jason Reynolds and Jason Griffin. Illustrated by Jason Griffin
- *Miles Morales: Spider-Man*
- *Patina* (Book #2 of Track)
- *Sunny* (Book #3 of Track)
- *When I Was the Greatest*