RISE A CHILDREN'S LITERACY JOURNAL

READING INSPIRES SUCCESS IN EDUCATION

WINTER 2022

FEATURED ARTICLE:

Books that Bustle Life in the City in Children's Literature

By Becca Worthington

Plus Many More Articles and Reviews!

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Welcome to RISE: A Children's Literacy Journal

We take great pleasure in bringing you the Winter 2022 issue of R*ISE: A Children's Literacy Journal*. *RISE* is intended for parents, teachers, librarians and all others who share our belief that reading inspires success in education. All of us involved in the production of this journal believe that literacy and literature go hand in hand, and this belief is reflected in our celebration of excellent children's literature. In the pages of *RISE,* you will find articles and reviews about excellent children's books.

This issue focuses on children's books that take place in cities. In the cover story, Becca Worthington writes about "Books that Bustle: Life in the City in Children's Literature." She also includes an annotated bibliography of children's books that relate to this topic. Other contributors provide articles about particular children's books and young adult books set in cities. Also included in this issue are reviews several excellent new children's books. We invite you to peruse our journal and share it with your friends. We hope that the articles and book reviews will introduce new books to you and the children in your life.

Mark I. West, Editor

Gary Odom, Publisher

RISE *A CHILDREN'S LITERACY JOURNAL*
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Books that Bustle Life in the City in Children's Literature

By Becca Worthington

If someone asks you to close your eyes and picture a city, what do you imagine? Tall buildings, honking horns, and bustling crowds almost certainly spring to mind with little prompting. Even those who have never lived in a city have seen them in movies and television shows. We know a city is full of angry traffic, restaurants with white linen napkins, boutique shopping with impossibly attractive salespeople, and strangers being jostled wearily on public transit past a skyline after a long, overcaffeinated day.

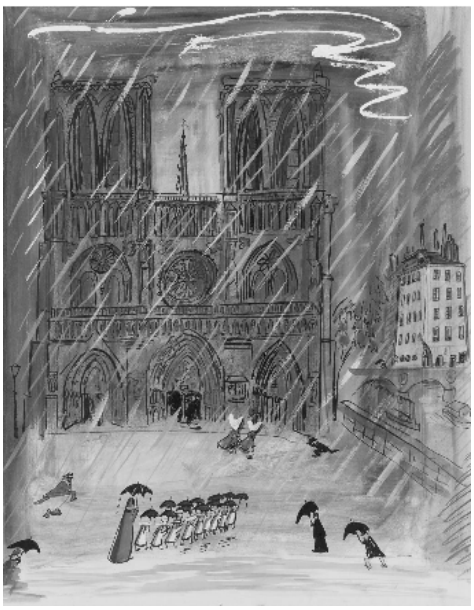
But if you have lived in a city—any city—the concept becomes more personal, and the word suddenly takes on the shape and sounds of the specific city you know.

After college, I moved to Los Angeles to work in the film industry, for example. I was a lowly assistant to a top agent at the largest Hollywood agency in the world. So when someone says "L.A." I think not just of red carpet events and drives on the Pacific Coast Highway in perfect weather, but of buying birthday presents that were more than my annual salary for clients at Ermenegildo Zegna on Rodeo Drive, and the startling way you would continuously find yourself pumping gas next to Sandra Bullock or waiting in line at a Starbucks behind Pierce Brosnan, or how the nearest beach to Beverly Hills was actually a two hour drive away because of traffic, and how much I stared at green palm trees and missed the sight of changing leaves every fall.

Before moving to Charlotte, I lived in New York for six years, working a day job in book publishing and moonlighting as Literary Manager of an off-Broadway theatre company. So when someone says "New York City," I think not just of the Statue of Liberty and the Empire State Building and ice skating at Rockefeller Center—or any of the other things which certainly hold the charm that makes them worthy of their fame—but of taking sketch drawing classes at the Society of Illustrators on Thursday nights and discovering that the man at the easel next to me was Caldecott-winner Chris Raschka, or the time-travel-worthy experience of rounding the corner of Fifth Avenue and accidentally walking into a film set where all the cars and outfits and hairdos are from the 1930s, and the sound of hip hop blasting from iPhone speakers while young men did gravity-defying flips on the subway poles to Brooklyn. In New York, the snow turned grey with dirt immediately upon falling, and there is a place in Chinatown with no sign that serves twenty-five-cent dumplings to die for.

When you've experienced a city, it becomes yours. It becomes personal.

According to data from the 2007 American Community Survey, a person in the United States is expect to move 11.7 times in their lifetime (Census, 2021), which is significantly more than their European counterparts, who only move an average of four times during their entire life (Chandler, 2016). However, most of that moving occurs in adulthoods, as Americans only move an average of 2.5 times before the age of 18 (Census). This means that most youth—whether urban or rural or suburban—only know a slight sliver of the possible available living opportunities. Thank heavens, then, that there are books, wonderful books, set in all sorts of cities, ready to reveal their secrets to the children who open them.



One cannot write about the importance of cities portrayed in children's literature without immediately thinking of the classics: *Stuart Little* (1945) by E.B. White is a fantastical adventure about a tiny mouse born to a human family navigating New York City (which is where White lived in his adulthood before retiring to rural Maine). *Madeline* (1939) by Ludwig Bemelmans (who lived in Austria and Germany as a child before relocating to New York City as an adult) is a series about a girls' boarding school in Paris, and its illustrations feature

landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, and Avenue des Champs-Elysees. *Corduroy* (1968) by Don Freeman (born in San Diego, but studied and lived in New York; in fact, The City of New York recognized him in 1976 for his body of work portraying the city) is a heartwarming friendship story about a toy bear in a New York department store being befriended and purchased by a young girl. *The Eloise* series (1983) by Kay Thompson is about a precocious girl who lives on the top floor of the NYC Plaza Hotel with her nanny (which Thompson did herself as a child, before moving to Los Angeles in adulthood) who travels to other major cities such as Paris and Moscow.

But beyond the classics, there is a bouquet of beautiful picture books and chapter books for youth set in a variety of cities and speaking to a much wider life experience for children of various backgrounds and ethnicities. Most people who work with youth are familiar with the primary concept in the 1990 article "Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors" by Rudine Sims Bishop, about how literature reflects the larger human experience back to its reader, becoming a type of self-affirmation. "When there are enough books available that can act as both mirrors and windows for all our children," she says, "they will see that we can celebrate both our differences and our similarities, because together they are what make us all human."

When I think of city-set children's picture books that are humanizing, I think immediately of *Last Stop on Market Street* by Brooklyn author Matt de la Pena and illustrated by San Franciscan Christian Robinson (winner of the 2016 Newbury Award, Caldecott Honor, and Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor). While it doesn't explicitly name its location, the story is about boy named CJ and his Nana taking a city bus after church to volunteer with the homeless across town. Although the majority of the book takes place on the bus ride, alongside busking guitar-players, a blind man with a seeing-eye dog, an elderly woman with butterflies in a jar, the book ends when they disembark at the last stop. "CJ looked around as he stepped off the bus. Crumbling sidewalks and broken-down doors, graffiti-tagged windows and boarded-up stores. He reached for his Nana's hand. 'How come it's always so dirty here?' She smiled and pointed to the sky. 'Sometimes when you're surrounded by dirt, CJ, you're a better witness for what's beautiful.'" (22-23). She is pointing at a rainbow, arching its way proudly over the soup kitchen. It's a perfect story of finding kindness and beauty within the poverty and struggles of a major city.

Another book set in a nameless metropolis, *Good Morning, City* (2016), is written by Brooklyn news anchor Pat Kiernan, illustrated by Los Angelean Pascal Campion, and it's a love letter to big city workers who rise before dawn, from the bakers mixing and kneading and the thump of a newspaper on a brownstone step, to the rumbling of a delivery truck and diner waitresses clinging bells for breakfast orders, to garbagemen loading trucks and the whacking and banging of a construction crew hard at work. The soundscaping of the entire book is so city-specific and yet so detailed and easy to visualize for anyone, whether they have known that reality personally or not.

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood (2016) by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell, is illustrated by the person who inspired the story, Rafael Lopez, who transformed San Diego, California's East Village area into a place of beauty

through vibrant, community-painted murals. The book starts with a girl named Mira who loves to paint living in the heart of a grey city. One day, she comes upon a man with a pocketful of paintbrushes—a muralist—whose loud, bold colors light up the walls like sunshine. Eventually, the whole town, from teachers to policemen, joins together to add color, pop, and pizazz to the streets. "Wherever Mira and the man went, art followed like the string of a kite. After they colored the walls, they painted utility boxes and benches. They decorated sidewalks with poetry and shine. And everyone danced" (24). Such a celebration of mural work and artistic graffiti is very specific to the lived urban experience.

At the same time, city life isn't just graffiti and traffic. Although farming is usually associated with rural areas, *Michelle's Garden: How the First Lady Planted Seeds of Change* by Jersey City author-illustrator Sharee Miller focuses on the urban gardening initiative piloted at the White House in Washington, D.C. under First Lady Michelle Obama, inspired by her Chicago childhood.

And we are just touching the surface of the significance of location in children's literature. *Home* (2015), by Portland author-illustrator Carson Ellis, begins with the concept that home may be a house in the country or an apartment in the city, or a boat, a wigwam, a tree hollow, a wasp's nest, or a musical tour bus. She depicts the home of a Slovakian duchess, a Kenyan blacksmith, a Norse god, a babushka, and most importantly, presents elaborately imaginative spreads and then asks the reader about a stone cottage on a cliffside, "But whose home is this?" and about a teacup-sized house under a mushroom, "And what about this?" (20-21). So, while not exclusively focusing on city life, *Home* is an exquisite and thought-provoking portrayal of how personal a residence is to the individual or family inside of it.

When New Mexico author-illustrator Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw traveled to Nepal and India, she learned the saying "same, same but different" that natives use when comparing cultures, and she turned it into a book about an art exchange between two young boys in cities across the world. They both live in large places, but for one, "A great river flows through my village. Peacocks dance under trees shaped like umbrellas. The sun is giant and especially hot here," and for the other, "In my city, the sun hides behind buildings as tall as the sky. Taxis, buses, and cars fill the streets" (14-17). They both ride a bus to school, but one is large and yellow and the other is a red rickshaw. They both have pets, but one has goats, cows, and chickens and the other has a dachshund and a fish. *Same, Same but Different* (2011) is a beautiful cross-cultural comparison book about cities around the globe and the universality of friendship.

Speaking of books that travel the world, *Pocket Full of Colors* (Guglielmo, 2017) is the true story of Mary Blair, the Disney animator and legend responsible for designing the "It's a Small World" ride in Disneyland. Although she herself was based in the city of Los Angeles, she collected colors on her trip around the world with Walt Disney through Brazil, Argentina, and Peru and used them to feature places from China, Morocco, and Kathmandu and make the global ride a sensation.

Certainly "city" is often synonymous with the sound of building, things constantly under construction, and I can't think of a more creative and elaborate introduction to architecture for young children than *Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building* (Hale, 2012). Each spread pairs a concrete poem and an example of young children at play next to a famous piece of architecture in a similar style in some of the biggest cities and architects of the world:

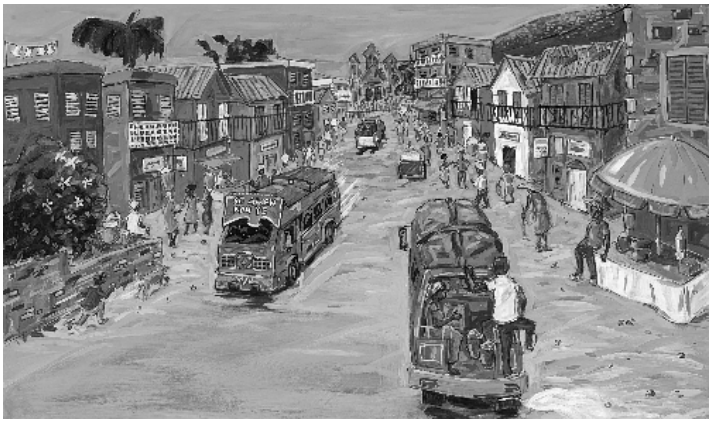
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, NY; Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Toyogi National Stadium in Tokyo, Japan; La Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain; Montreal Biosphere in Quebec, Canada; Bamboo Church in Cartagena, Columbia; Paper Tube School in Chengdu, Sichuan, China; and Sclera Pavilion in London, England.

And of course, if you really want to dig into a cityscape, there's nothing better than nonfiction for facts. *A World of Cities* (2017), rendered artistically by James Brown with text by Lily Murray, is a gorgeous collection of infographic poster-style celebrations of the world's major cities—Hong Kong, Istanbul, Prague, Dublin, Seoul, Lisbon, Venice, Dubai, Amsterdam, Athens, Delhi, Beijing, Vienna, Mexico City, Toronto, Cairo, Berlin, Shanghai, Cape Town, Saint Petersburg—with history, population, iconography, famous landmarks from the Coliseum in Rome to Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, and extraordinary facts (for example, there are more than 3,000 mosques in Istanbul; 30 percent of Stockholm is made up of waterways; Paris' Louvre museum has over 8.8 million visitors a year; the Sydney Harbor Bridge is the widest long-span bridge in the world, etc).

Once you start digging into the experience of city life in children's literature, it's like a piece of beautiful yarn that just keeps unraveling. There is the French book *The Wonderful Fluffy Little Squishy* by Beatrice Alemagna, which won the Mildred L. Batchelder Award in 2016 for best translation, about a girl on a birthday quest for her mother on the cobblestoned French city streets, through boulangeries and papeteries, the bright artwork thick with crowds and shops. *Auntie Luce's Talking Paintings* (Latour, 2018) is based on one of Haiti's most celebrated female artists—Luce Turnier—who painted the author's portrait as a child, and it is brilliant with brush strokes of market women with fruit baskets balanced on their heads and tap tap buses with bright signs and coconut water vendors. And Sydney Smith's *Small in the City* (2019) is a heartbreaking monologue from a small child to their cat who is lost in a snowstorm in the middle of a bustling city, recognizing the overwhelming dangers and noises and sensory overload for something so small in a place so large.

And it is not just young children who are curious about city life and anxious to see it represented in their books, either because it's entirely familiar or because it's entirely foreign to their lived experience. Older youth and teens similarly crave the windows and mirrors of books that bustle as well. The popularity of the topic is evident by the trend of adapting city-set novels into films, in the tradition of *Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist* (Cohn, 2006), a whirlwind night around Brooklyn and Manhattan, and *The Fault in Our Stars* (Green, 2013), the classic teen cancer romance set in Indianapolis and Amsterdam, and including new films like *The Hate U Give* (Thomas, 2017), set in a fictional poor black neighborhood of Garden Heights and filmed in Atlanta, Georgia, and *The Sun is Also a Star* (Yoon, 2016), a multi-racial romance set in one day in New York City.

It's also evident in what wins awards year after year. *One Crazy Summer* (Williams-Garcia), about two sisters in Oakland, California in 1968 living with their aunt who is involved in the Black Panther party, won a Newbury Honor, National Book Award finalist, and Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction in 2011. *Inside Out & Back Again* (Lai), about a girl in wartime Saigon who is shipped to Alabama and juxtaposes not only cultural chasms but the navigation of city versus country living, won the National Book Award and Newbury Honor in 2011. *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* (Sanchez) was a National Book Award finalist in 2017 and follows a high school student losing her sister and finding herself in the city of Chicago. The 2018 Coretta Scott King -- John Steptoe Award for



New Talent went to David Barclay Moore for *The Stars Beneath Our Feet*, a middle grade novel about a boy in Harlem who loses his brother in a gang shooting and is trying to heal. *Brown Girl Dreaming*, National Book Award winner, Newbury Honor, and Coretta Scott King Award winner in 2015, is Jacqueline Woodson's biographical story told in verse about being raised as a black girl in the South and moving to Brooklyn, New York, and Woodson's book *Harbor Me*—to which the role of the city is so crucial that the Statue of Liberty is on the cover—won the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for Youth/Teens in 2019 for its frank discussion between New York City high school students about everything from racial profiling to deportation. Even *New Kid* (Craft), the 2020 Newbury Award winner, is very specifically about the entirely different lives being lived by children in neighboring boroughs of New York City, from Washington Heights to Riverside.

The list of middle grade and YA books where the city setting is crucial to the experience of the book goes on, and it has exploded since the founding of #WeNeedDiverseBooks in 2014 to encompass many rich and wonderful chapter books about cities across the globe: *This Side of Home* in Portland, Oregon (Watson, 2015), *Red Butterfly* in Tianjin, China (Sonnichsen, 2015), *Dear Martin* in Atlanta, Georgia (Stone, 2017), *American Girls* in Los Angeles, California (Umminger, 2016), *Other Words for Home* (Warga, 2019) about a girl's move from Syria to Cincinnati, Ohio, *The Breadwinner* in Kabul, Afghanistan (Ellis, 2017), *Pyramid Hunters: The Iron Tomb* in Cairo, Egypt (Vegas, 2016), *The Bridge Home* in Chennai, India (Venkatraman, 2019), and so many more. This is a trend that seems to be on the uptick, and I believe I'm not alone in hoping that it only increases from here.

In closing, I share a story that takes place in the opposite of a city. I served in the U.S. Peace Corps from 2006-2008 in a small, rural farming village in Moldova called Pirlita in Eastern Europe. There was no running water, spotty electricity, and people rode on horse carts for transportation. When I got there, there was only one book in Pirlita, and it was the leather-bound Bible of the village priest that no one could see or touch. My heart ached for the 400 children in my village, to imagine a childhood without books or illustrations of any kind, without those mirrors or windows or sliding doors.

So I wrote grants, and we bought bookshelves and got donations of picture books that I hand-translated into Romanian. By the time I left, we had a one-room lending library of 600 books with two tween girls trained as the town librarians. I say this because of the shock of abundance when I came back state-side. There are 17,566 public libraries in the United States. There are more public libraries than Starbucks (American Library Association, 2017). And that's not even counting school libraries or bookstores or other ways to access books. Think about the worlds that are available to us, and the number of cities that we can explore in the books that bustle from our shelves.

May we read, may we travel inside those books, and may we invite others along for the thrilling ride.

Becca Worthington moved from New York City to North Carolina in 2015 for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. She received a Bachelor's in English and Playwriting from James Madison University and a MLIS in Children's Services for Public Libraries from Queens College in NYC. She currently serves as the Children's Librarian at the sparkling wonderland of ImaginOn, providing library services for children and youth, often using very weird puppets and costumes.

PICTURE BOOKS

The Wonderful Fluffy Little Squishy

Alemagna, Beatrice. The Wonderful Fluffy Little Squishy. New York: Enchanted Lion Books, 2015.

Winner of the Mildred L. Batchelder Award in 2016 for best translation, this book follows a girl on a birthday quest for her mother across the cobblestoned French city streets, through boulangeries and papeteries, crowds and shops, on search for the ultimate present.

A World of Cities

Brown, James. A World of Cities. Somerville: Candlewick, 2017.

Did you know there are more than 3,000 mosques in Istanbul, and 30 percent of Stockholm is made up of waterways? This gorgeous collection of infographic poster-style celebrations of the world's major cities—Hong Kong, Istanbul, Prague, Dublin, Seoul, Lisbon, Venice, Dubai, Amsterdam, Athens, Delhi, Beijing, Vienna, Mexico City, Toronto, Cairo, Berlin, Shanghai, Cape Town, Saint Petersburg, and more—includes history, population, iconography, famous landmarks from the Coliseum in Rome to Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, and extraordinary facts.

Madeline

Bemelsmen, Ludwig. Madeline. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1939.

The first in a classic series about a girls' boarding school in Paris follows one particular pupil named Madeline and has illustrations that feature landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, and Avenue des Champs-Elysees.

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood

Campoy, F. Isabel & Howell, Teresa. Illustrated by Rafael Lopez. Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.

Rafael Lopez, the illustrator and the person who inspired the story, transformed San Diego, California's East Village area into a place of beauty through vibrant, community-painted murals. The book starts with a girl named Mira who loves to paint living in the heart of a grey city. One day, she comes upon a man with a pocketful of paintbrushes—a muralist—whose loud, bold colors light up the walls like sunshine. Eventually, the whole town, from teachers to policemen, joins together to add color, pop, and pizazz to the streets. Its exploration of mural work and artistic graffiti celebrates the lived urban experience.

Last Stop on Market Street

De la Pena, Matt. Illustrated by Christian Robinson. Last Stop on Market Street. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2015.

Winner of the 2016 Newbury Award, Caldecott Honor, and Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor. A boy named CJ and his Nana take a city bus after church to volunteer with the homeless across town. The majority of the book takes place on the bus ride, alongside busking guitar-players, a blind man with a seeing-eye dog, an elderly woman with butterflies in a jar, but the book ends when they disembark at the last stop, surrounded by graffiti-tagged windows and boarded-up stores. CJ wonders why it's so dirty, but Nana points at a rainbow and says dirt makes someone a better witness for beauty. It's a perfect story of finding kindness and beauty within the poverty and struggles of a major city.

Home

Ellis, Carson. Home. Somerville: Candlewick Press, 2015.

Home may be a house in the country or an apartment in the city, or a boat, a wigwam, a tree hollow, a wasp's nest, or a musical tour bus. The home of a Slovakian duchess, a Kenyan blacksmith, a Norse god, and a babushka look very different, as does a stone cottage on a cliffside or a teacup-sized house under a mushroom. Home is an exquisite and thought-provoking portrayal of how personal a residence is to the individual or family inside of it.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Corduroy

Freeman, Don. Corduroy. New York: Scholastic, 1968.

A heartwarming friendship story about a toy bear in a New York department store being befriended and purchased by a young girl. It has been a bestseller for over 40 years, and The City of New York recognized Freeman in 1976 for his body of work like Corduroy portraying the city.

Pocket Full of Colors: The Magical World of Mary Blair, Disney Artist Extraordinaire

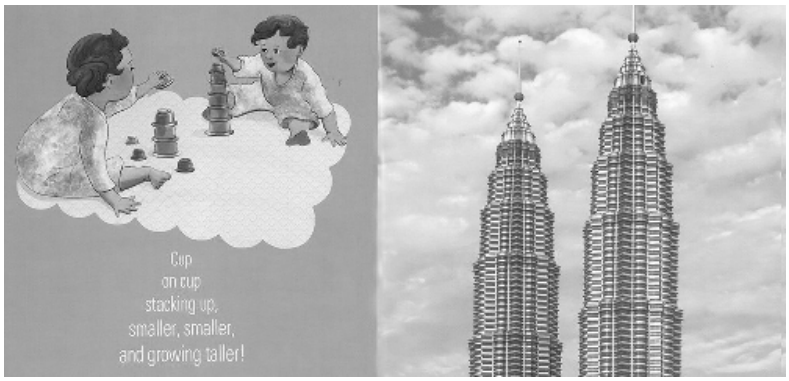
Guglielmo, Amy & Tourville, Jacqueline. Illustrated by Brigette Barrager. Pocket Full of Colors: The Magical World of Mary Blair, Disney Artist Extraordinaire. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2017.

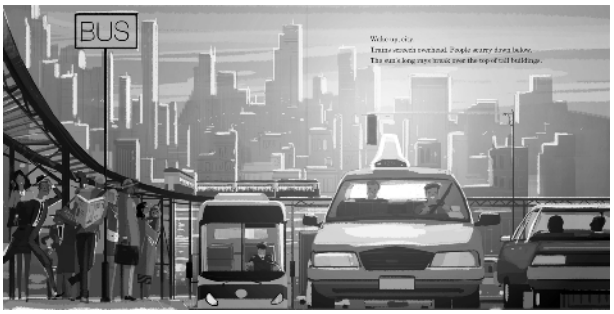
This is the true story of Mary Blair, the Disney animator and legend responsible for designing the "It's a Small World" ride in Disneyland. Although she herself was based in the city of Los Angeles, she collected colors on her trip around the world with Walt Disney through Brazil, Argentina, and Peru and used them to feature places from China, Morocco, and Kathmandu and make the global ride a sensation.

Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building

Hale, Christy. Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building. New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc. 2012.

In this creative and elaborate introduction to architecture for young children, each spread pairs a concrete poem and an example of young children at play next to a famous piece of architecture in a similar style in some of the biggest cities and architects of the world, including: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, NY; Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Toyogi National Stadium in Tokyo, Japan; La Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain; Montreal Biosphere in Quebec, Canada; Bamboo Church in Cartagena, Columbia; Paper Tube School in Chengdu, Sichuan, China; and Sclera Pavilion in London, England.





Good Morning, City

Kiernan, Pat. Illustrated by Pascal Campion. Good Morning, City. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2016.

Written by a Brooklyn news anchor, this is a love letter to big city workers who rise before dawn, from the bakers mixing and kneading and the thump of a newspaper on a brownstone step, to the rumbling of a delivery truck and diner waitresses clinging bells for breakfast orders, to garbagemen loading trucks and the whacking and banging of a construction crew hard at work.

Same, Same but Different

Kostecki-Shaw, Jenny Sue. Same, Same but Different. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2011.

Based on the American author's travels to Nepal and India, this is a book about an art exchange between two young boys in cities across the world. They both ride a bus to school, but one is large and yellow and the other is a red rickshaw. They both have pets, but one has goats, cows, and chickens and the other has a dachshund and a fish. Same, Same but Different (2011) is a beautiful cross-cultural comparison book about cities around the globe and the universality of friendship.

Auntie Luce's Talking Paintings

Latour, Francie. Illustrated by Ken Daley. Auntie Luce's Talking Paintings. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2018.

Based on one of Haiti's most celebrated female artists—Luce Turnier—who painted the author's portrait as a child, this book is brilliant with brush strokes of market women with fruit baskets balanced on their heads and tap tap buses with bright signs and coconut water vendors. It is a beautiful story of acceptance and belonging told through the lens of Haitian history.

Michelle's Garden: How the First Lady Planted Seeds of Change

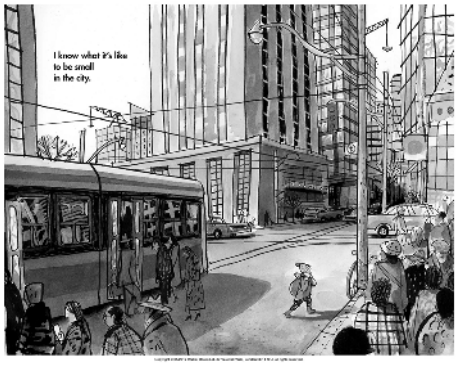
Miller, Sharee. Michelle's Garden: How the First Lady Planted Seeds of Change. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2021.

Although farming is usually associated with rural areas, this story focuses on the urban gardening initiative piloted at the White House in Washington, D.C. under First Lady Michelle Obama, inspired by her Chicago childhood.

Small in the City

Smith, Sydney. Small in the City. New York: Neal Porter Books, 2019.

A heartbreaking monologue from a small child to their cat who is lost in a snowstorm in the middle of a bustling city, recognizing the overwhelming dangers and noises and sensory overload for something so small in a place so large.



Eloise: A Book for Precocious Grown Ups

Thompson, Kay. Eloise: A Book for Precocious Grown Ups. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.

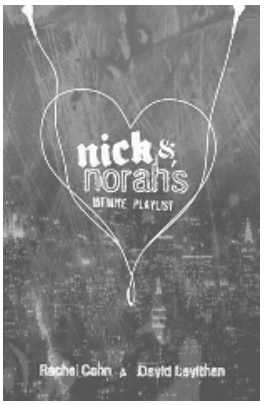
The first book in a series about a precocious girl who lives on the top floor of the NYC Plaza Hotel with her nanny (which the author did herself as a child) who travels to other major cities such as Paris and Moscow.

CHAPTER BOOKS FOR OLDER READERS

Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist

Cohn, Rachel & Levithan, David. Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist. New York: Ember, 2006.

Told in alternating first person narrative from Nick, a heartsick teen exploring the New York indie rock scene, and Norah, a girl questioning most of what she knows, this young adult novel covers a whirlwind night around Manhattan in a quest to discover a legendary band's secret venue.



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

New Kid

Craft, Jerry. New Kid. New York: Harper, 2019.

This 2020 Newbury Award winning graphic novel is a semi-autobiographical account of a 12-year-old black boy from Washington Heights who experiences culture shock when he enrolls in a prestigious and predominantly white New York private school.

The Breadwinner: A Graphic Novel

Ellis, Deborah. The Breadwinner: A Graphic Novel. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2017.

This graphic novel adaptation of the animated film inspired by a novel of the same name tells the story of 11-year-old Parvana, a girl who supports her family during the Taliban's dangerous and terrifying rule in Afghanistan by disguising herself as a boy.

The Fault in Our Stars

Green, John. The Fault in Our Stars. New York: Penguin Books, 2013.

A young adult romance about two teenagers who meet at a cancer support group and form an unlikely bond that takes them across the world.

Inside Out & Back Again

Lai, Thanhha. Inside Out & Back Again. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books, 2011.

Told in verse, this is the story of a girl in wartime Saigon who is shipped to Alabama and must cross not only cultural chasms but the navigation of city versus country living. Winner of the National Book Award and Newbury Honor.

The Stars Beneath Our Feet

Moore, David Barclay. The Stars Beneath Our Feet. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017.

The 2018 Coretta Scott King -- John Steptoe Award for New Talent. A middle grade novel about a boy in Harlem who loses his brother in a gang shooting and is trying to heal, using a massive LEGO building project as an emotional escape.

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter

Sanchez, Erika L. I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2017.

National Book Award finalist in 2017. After her perfect-seeming sister is hit and killed by a truck, Julia uncovers some secrets that her sister may have been keeping. This is about a high school student losing her sister and finding herself in the city of Chicago.

Red Butterfly

Sonnichsen, A.L. Illustrated by Amy June Bates. Red Butterfly. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2015.

Kara is 11 years old, and she lives in a poor section of the city in Tianjin, China. In China, families are limited to one child, and boys are more valuable than girls. The only thing even worse than a girl, is a girl with a deformity. She has a deformed right hand, so her parents abandoned her next to a garbage dump as an infant, but she was taken in by an elderly American woman. This book is told entirely in poems, broken into three sections with black and white illustrations, and it's beautiful and haunting and very sad.

Dear Martin

Stone, Nic. Dear Martin. New York: Ember, 2017.

Justyce McAllister is at the top of his class, and he has left his rough Atlanta neighborhood behind, but that doesn't seem to matter to his new classmates or to the white police officer who puts him in handcuffs. He looks to Dr. Martin Luther King's words for wisdom but doesn't know if they can help any more.

American Girls

Umminger, Allison. American Girls. New York, Flatiron Books, 2016.

15-year-old Anna steals her stepmother's credit card and runs away from home to stay with her half-sister in Los Angeles, but instead of being glamorous, she gets swept into Hollywood D-list movie sets and a project on disturbing the Manson girls until she begins to wonder if she, too, is becoming one of the lost girls of L.A.

Pyramid Hunters: The Iron Tomb

Vegas, Peter. Pyramid Hunters: The Iron Tomb. New York: Aladdin, 2016.

When Sam Force goes to Egypt to spend the summer with his uncle Jasper, he's ready for the usual vacation filled with museums and lessons about the pharaohs and ancient gods. Instead, Sam arrives at the airport and learns that his uncle is missing and wanted by the police. After narrowly escaping his own arrest, Sam sets off to find his uncle, using the series of clues that Jasper left behind, but a group of mysterious men are hot on his trail. This is essentially Indiana Jones as a kid, set in Cairo, Egypt.

The Bridge Home

Venkatraman, Padma. The Bridge Home. New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2019.

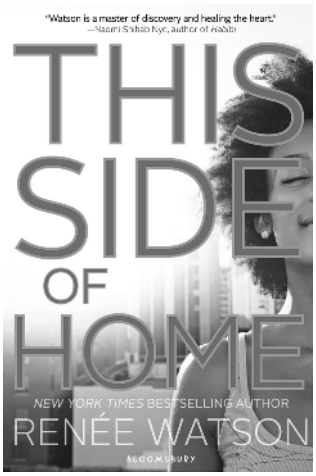
Runaway sisters Viji and Rukku know that life is tough on the streets of Chennai, India, but they find shelter on an abandoned bridge that's the hideout of two homeless boys, Muthi and Arul. The four of them are soon scavenging the city's trash heaps for food and supplies and form a sort of family unit. This is a survival story inspired by children the author met in her years in India.

Other Words for Home

Warga, Jasmine. Other Words for Home. New York: Balzer + Bray, 2019.

When Jude's hometown in Syria becomes dangerous, she and her mother leave their father and brother to live with relatives in Cincinnati, Ohio. Suddenly, Jude is confronted not only with the overwhelming pace of America but with a new identity and label as Middle Eastern. Told in verse.

This Side of Home

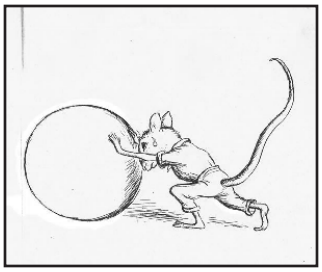


Watson, Renee. This Side of Home. New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.

Maya and her identical twin sister, Nikki, have plans to attend the same historically African American college, but when their neighborhood in Portland, Oregon begins to gentrify and lose its "ghetto" reputation, Nikki begins spending her time at trendy coffee shops while Maya feels the need to lean into her black heritage. Will growing up mean growing apart?

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Stuart Little



White, E.B. Stuart Little. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945.

This classic, which has been adapting into film multiple times over the past decades, is a fantastical adventure about a tiny mouse born to a human family navigating New York City.

One Crazy Summer

Williams-Garcia, Rita. One Crazy Summer. New York: Amistad, 2010.

Two sisters in Oakland, California in 1968 are sent to live with their aunt for the summer who is involved in the Black Panther party, and the girls get a radical new education. Winner of the Newbury Honor, National Book Award finalist, and Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction in 2011.

Brown Girl Dreaming

Woodson, Jacqueline. Brown Girl Dreaming. New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2014.

National Book Award winner, Newbury Honor, and Coretta Scott King Award winner in 2015, Jacqueline Woodson's biographical story told in verse is about being raised as a black girl in the South and moving to Brooklyn, New York.

Harbor Me

Woodson, Jacqueline. Harbor Me. New York: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018.

Winner of the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for Youth/Teens in 2019. Six New York City high school students are sent to a room and told to talk, without any parents or teachers, about whatever they want. At first, for these relative strangers, it is awkward, but it soon devolves into a frank discussion between about everything from racial profiling to deportation.

The Sun is Also a Star

Yoon, Nicola. The Sun is Also a Star. New York: Delacorte Press, 2016.

Natasha's family is 12 hours away from being deported to Jamaica when she runs into Korean American Daniel, and sparks fly. Thus begins a one-day romance in New York City.

The City Girls

Aki. The City Girls. Henry Holt and Co, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-250-31395-9

In *The City Girls*, the morning starts on the roof, watching the sunrise between the skyscrapers. Next up, grabbing a bagel or muffin from the coffee cart on the street as the doors roll up on the storefronts. From there, the sidewalk and street get livelier, full of bustling people hurrying to work or walking with their children, bicycles, busses, and even a dog holding its leash. For the City Girls, "crossing streets - lights and whistles, honks and tweets" is just a part of their day until the rain makes them head down into the subway. A short ride later, and they're at their first stop; their "favorite bookstore" that's full of colorful books, great bookshelf ladders, and plenty of comfy chairs. Of course, a walk through the museum is in order, where they wave to the other classes of kids, and then it's time for lunch at a café named "Eggsquisite." "Eggs over easy, poached, or fried!" the story tells us as the girls surround an egg-shaped table. After an afternoon in the park with tall flowers and tall towers, the City Girls take a taxi home and end the day together upstairs with "bright lights on the city night."

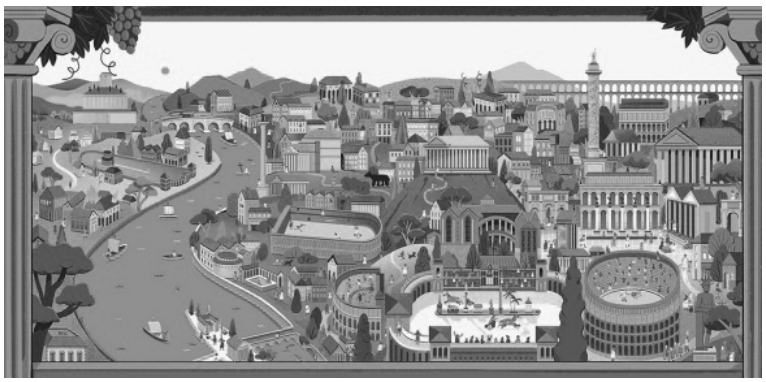
The City Girls is an adorable book about the city and the scenes within. This fun picture book follows a group of diverse girls as they traverse through a colorful and busy city. Written by Aki, whose real name is Delphine Mach, this book is the third story for our group of girls who started their adventures in *The Weather Girls* (2018) and then *The Nature Girls* (2019). Reminiscent of the great children's book Madeline by Ludwig Bemelmans, with girls in matching yellow jackets and texts that rhyme, *The City Girls* is a delightful book about everyday life in the city.

Reviewed by Sam Martin

REVIEW

Cities in Layers: Six Famous Cities Through Time

Steele, Philip. Cities in Layers: Six Famous Cities Through Time. Big Picture Press, 2020.

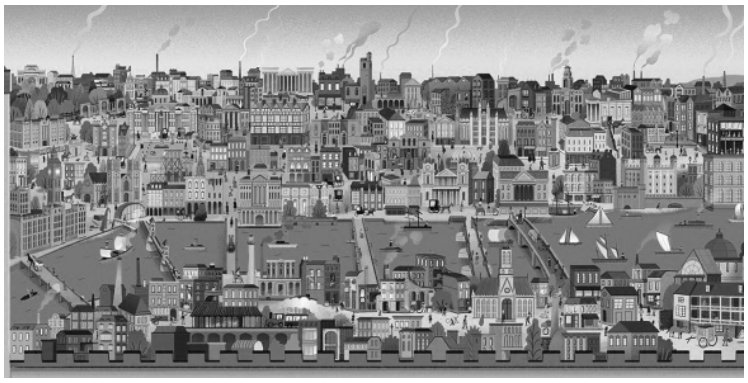


For an engaging trip to some of the world's most renowned locations, read *Cities in Layers: Six Famous Cities Through Time*, by Philip Steele. Steele is an English author whose many nonfiction books for young readers cover history, geography, sociology, and culture. Illustrator Andrés Lozano, a Spanish artist living in the U.K., is known for his bold, vibrant style in painting and illustration. Together, Steele and Lozano have created a colorful, clever book that, while being a significant educational work of nonfiction, is also fanciful and mysterious, drawing the reader into an exploration of varied aspects of history.

Cities in Layers begins by defining a city and giving general information regarding structures and infrastructures common to cities: walls and defenses, buildings and monuments, bridges, roads, and more. Following that is a spread across which stretch comparative timelines that coordinate with the information offered for the selected cities. Having framed the study in this way, the book then leads the reader through time and space across Rome, Istanbul, Paris, Beijing, London, and New York City. Each city is given four spreads that cover three time periods, beginning with "today" and moving backwards through two earlier times, varying depending on the city.

The six cities are introduced individually with their global location, "quick facts," an image of the relevant national flag, and mini-biographies of three famous people who lived there during the highlighted time periods. Short reading passages for each time period follow, in reverse chronological order. After the informational sections come the maps, one per time period, each with 25-30 points of description below it, corresponding to numbers found on locations on the map. Within each map are cut out shapes that reveal the page behind it, showing what existed there in the past; usually, these cut-outs are of a famous building, drawing attention to how it has changed, and sometimes explaining why.

A red flag marks the spot to begin one's exploration of the cities. The illustrations are so busy and full of tiny scenes, it can be hard to find the flag and the numbers denoting the important locations. One might want to read with a magnifying glass; however, that can be fun, and the book is similar to a seek-and-find book in that its detailed spreads invite readers to examine each picture closely. At approximately 10 x 13 inches, it is a large book; with city-sized illustrations, it needs to be. The full-color pages are rich with soft jewel tones reminiscent of the hues used in maps and globes. In addition, the pages are matte-finish, which makes them easy on the eyes for readers poring over the intricate pictures.



As an educational text, *Cities in Layers* offers multiple options for use in formal and informal study. It is skillfully written, with an appropriate level of complexity for upper elementary and early middle grades

readers, including figurative language, useful and sophisticated vocabulary, and opportunities for making inferences and drawing conclusions.

This is a book that's fun to read in the school library, where students can easily access additional resources, both print and online, about whatever aspects of the book catch their interest. It's also a great starting place for group projects; for example, one in which each student is assigned a facet of a city to research and report on, such as architecture, economics, politics, and culture. Less formally, it's a collaborative book in that it's big enough for students to gather around, sharing in the fun of finding famous sites and comparing their discoveries within and across locations.

Other supplemental sources may be needed to address the book's narrow range of cities. While it is rich in information and diverse in its choice of people highlighted in the biographies, *Cities in Layers* misses an opportunity for inclusivity in its selection of cities, failing to include any places from South America and Africa. Therefore, pair this book with others that offer similar information for those locations, considering other fascinating ancient-to-modern sites such as Mogadishu, Somalia or Quito, Ecuador.

The final spread of the book addresses cities of the future, referencing the 1960s cartoon *The Jetsons*, which featured flying cars and robots that did housework. The author asks, "What will the cities of the future look like?" In this, the book offers yet another avenue of student engagement, hinting at opportunities for creative writing and drawing prompts based on this question. However, rather than imagine incredible hovercraft or consider ways to let machines do our chores, Steele brings up concerns about population growth, climate change, and resource management, putting the responsibility for the wise design of tomorrow's cities on those who will build them: today's children. Steele offers encouraging solutions currently in development by today's adults, such as green walls, water purification, urban gardens, and magnetic trains, and closes the journey by reminding readers, "It is up to us and future generations to make sure that we get things right" (pg. 61).

From the ancient world and the origins of great urban centers to the future of those remarkable historic sites, *Cities in Layers* invites readers to discover, appreciate, and imagine some of the most interesting places in this wonderful world we share.

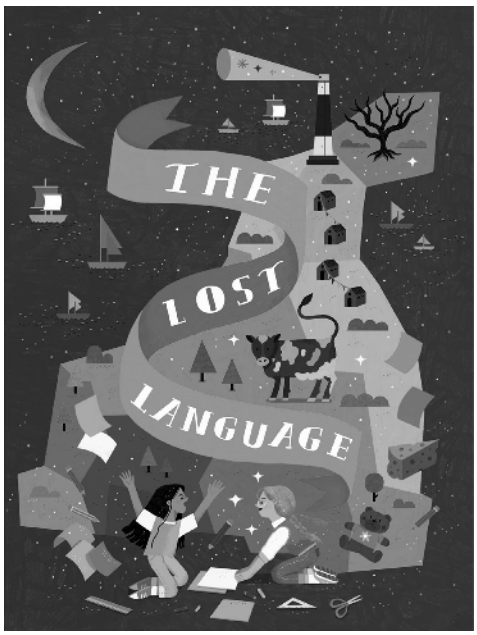
Reviewed by Jessica Camargo

REVIEW

The Lost Language

Mills, Claudia. The Lost Language. Margaret Ferguson Books, 2021. ISBN 978-0823450381.

In Claudia Mills's touching novel *The Lost Language*, two inseparable friends take on the challenge of saving one of the many endangered languages in the world. Betsy and Lizard hatch a plan to save "Guernésiais," an endangered language spoken by only 200 people, in an effort to assist Betsy's mother in her work as a linguist who documents dying languages. As Betsy narrates the events in her life as a sixth grader, we begin to understand the complicated relationship Betsy has with her mother and her best friend, both of whom Betsy struggles to please. How can Betsy "bloom" as her mother wants while also remaining inseparable from her outgoing and dominating best friend? When Betsy's relationships with her mother and Lizard begin to crumble around her, her task at hand quickly switches from saving a language to saving the relationships that mean the most to her.

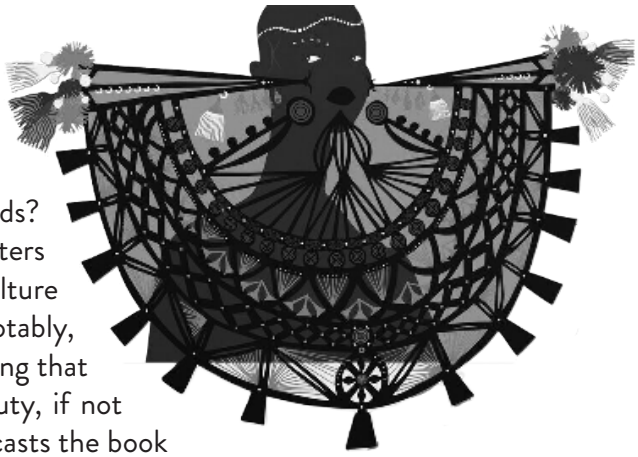


This verse novel serves as an exciting introduction to diversity in the world, not only diversity in the languages we speak but in race, social communities, and personality types. At the same time, Mills highlights the significant role that language has in developing one's identity and maintaining social relationships. In pursuit of pleasing the people around her, Betsy struggles to use her own voice. However, when her relationships start to fall apart, she begins to realize the importance of her own thoughts and feelings. In the process, she also begins to see the struggles that those around her have hidden so well. Mills writes an engaging and thrilling story that illustrates the importance of finding your own voice when navigating the intricacies of interpersonal relationships between friends and family. *The Lost Language* serves as a riveting introduction to the challenging topics of diversity, inclusion, mental health, and forgiveness.

Reviewed by Ally Gentry

Nkemdiche: Why We Do Not Grow Beards

Nwazota, Obiora. Illustrated by Lucie Van Der Elst. Nkemdiche: Why We Do Not Grow Beards. Okpara House, 2021. ISBN 1735839701.



The cover of Obiora Nwazota's *Nkemdiche: Why We Do Not Grow Beards* is intriguing. Who or what is Nkemdiche? Who is the "we" who do not grow beards? The tale begins with a block of text in over-sized letters reading "The hairstory of African women is a vibrant culture about power, creativity, sacredness, and beauty." Notably, the idea of beauty is the last item on the list, indicating that the other qualities are at least as important as beauty, if not more so. Building upon the title, the next sentence casts the book as my hological: "This is a story about a time when women grew beards." Both words and images push anyone who opens the book to question expectations and assumptions about gender, age, culture, identity, and more.

The women in the story represent various peoples and regions of Africa—the Ashanti, the women of the Edo kingdom, the all-female regiment of the Fon. The women are businesswomen, skilled traders, and engage in "boundless creativity", beautifully on display each season when a town in Nigeri's Igboland hosts the Parade of Beards. What follows is the story of how the title character, Nkemdiche, upsets the balance of the society through her actions. And it is the story of how Umuada, "a sisterhood of first daughters of the land" decides, as a body, to restore that balance. It is a story of the creativity of the individual, but it is, simultaneously, a story about the importance of the collective. The story, and its implications, are both timeless and timely.

Nkemdiche is the inaugural publication of Chicago-based Okpara House. The company's mission is "to harness the power of good design, dialogue, and academic research as powerful agents to stimulate, reactivate, elevate, and reimagine Igbo culture." To achieve this end, they enlist the collective talent of both Igbo and non-Igbo creators. The illustrator of this exquisite book is Lucie Van der Elst, born in France and now of Chicago. The designers are Nick Adam and Bud Rodecker, whose work on this project has been recognized by the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) 50 Books | 50 Covers Design Award. It is visually stunning, rich in color and intricacy of design. The collaborative efforts of all involved have resulted in a book that readers can lose themselves in many times over, relishing aspects they love even as they see the book anew.

Reviewed by Dianne Johnson-Feelings

REVIEW

Summer Camp Critter Jitters

Johhn, Jory. Illustrated by Liz Climo. Summer Camp Critter Jitters. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2021. ISBN: 9780593110980

Change can be scary, especially when experiencing a new place. For the first time in their lives, a handful of young animals face their scariest change yet: heading to summer camp. Each critter shares what makes them feel anxious, whether it's the bunny's fear of making too much noise as he hops around the cabin, or the skunk's fear of smelling up the campfire if someone tells too spooky of a tale. However, when they arrive to camp, they encounter an even bigger challenge: their camp counselor is stuck in a tree! These camping critters must put their heads together and face their fears as they help their counselor to safety.

Jory John and Liz Climo show how anxiety is a normal feeling to have when trying out new activities, whether it be going to summer camp for the first time or other big life events. They also illustrate how, though you may feel anxious, there are friends who can help you overcome those scary feelings and embrace new adventures. *Summer Camp Critter Jitters* is a wonderful read that can help young readers feel confident in making big changes and understand the power of friendship and teamwork.

Reviewed by Shannon Murphy

Somewhere in the City

Frank, J.B. Illustrated by Yu Leng. Somewhere in the City. Familius, 2021. ISBN: 978-1-64170-260-7

Somewhere in the City is a delightful tale of a child waiting for their parent to come home. Written by J. B. Frank, an award-winning children's television producer, this story centers on Lucy, a young girl who's desperately waiting at home for Daddy. Standing at her bedroom window, Lucy's so excited that she even calls down to the dog below her, saying, "Daddy's coming home." "Woof-woof," replies the dog. While Lucy continues to wait at her window, she takes in the sights and sounds of the city below. She notices the bakery across the street as the baker mixes up tomorrow's bread. She yawns, while the lady at the bus stop is yawning too. And she dances along to the music from the grocery store below as the grocer mops the flow. Nothing can distract her for too long, especially with Mommy calling, "Time for bed, my little sleepyhead." "Hurry up," reads the foam in the sink; Lucy needs Daddy home, or she can't sleep.

While Lucy waits somewhere in the city, Daddy is trying to get home quickly. Rushing through the door of his office building, Daddy's trek to Lucy isn't easy; it's a circus out there. No really. The musician on the corner looks like a polar bear while a friendly penguin invites Daddy to stay. A bright yellow bulldozer blocks Daddy's path while sheep fill-up the crosswalk. A diner with elephants in the window has bright neon lights that read, "Come on in." And even the vehicles on his street look different. They're now bumper cars full of smiley monkeys. Nothing will stop him from getting home to Lucy, though, just in time to read a story before bed.

Somewhere in the City shows the contrasting world of Lucy and her dad at the end of the day. The story jumps back and forth as Lucy waits, and her dad does everything he can to make it home in time for bed. The beautiful illustrations of this picture book by Yu Leng are full of fun and colorful images that require a second glance as the city comes alive for Lucy and her dad. An excellent read for story time in Pre-School, as an easy reader in Kindergarten, or as a bedtime story for your kids, *Somewhere in the City* brings magic to the city landscape and the universal tale of waiting for your parents to life.

Reviewed by Sam Martin

Finding Love and Friendship in a Big City: Two New Picture Books about City Life

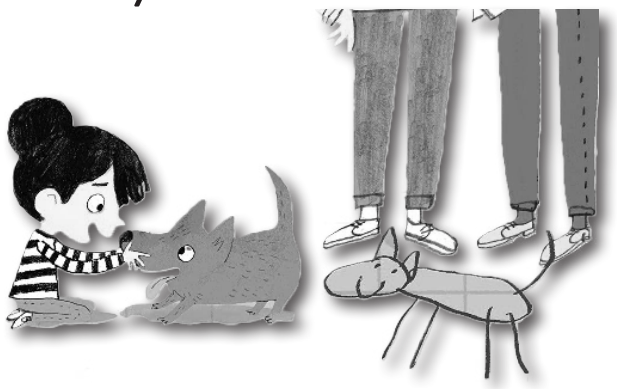
By Shannon Murphy

Living in a large city can be wonderful, exciting, and full of bustle, but it can also feel like a lonely yet overcrowded place. Both of the picture books *Scribbly: A Real Imaginary Friend Tale* and *Love Is Powerful* identify these conflicting concepts of a big city and how young girls can overcome this overwhelming feeling of city life.

In Ged Adamson's *Scribbly* (Harper, 2021), Maude moves to an apartment in a big city with her mom and is overwhelmed; she does not know anyone in this new place and begins to feel lonely. To make herself feel better, she creates Scribbly, an imaginary dog she drew who is her companion as she plays and experiences new things. She bonds with Scribbly, to the point where she feels uncomfortable if Scribbly cannot join her on her adventures. However, her mom tells her she should try to attend a neighbor's birthday party without Scribbly. Maude's reaction is that she "wasn't so sure that was great news. It isn't always easy meeting new people," showing her anxiety about going to a birthday party alone in this new city. At the party, she struggles to find a way to connect with her peers and as "the more kids arrived at the party, the more nervous [she] felt." At this moment, Scribbly appears.

What happens next does not hinder her from making friends, but draws in a peer. When a child comes up to Maude, he asks about Scribbly; this gives Maude a chance to connect with another child and who asks to see all of Scribbly's tricks. Maude and Scribbly soon become the center of attention and draw the rest of the children to them with their fun antics. By using Scribbly to make herself more at ease in this new environment, Maude is able to step outside her comfort zone and begin to form new connections within this scary city.

Much like Maude, Mari from *Love Is Powerful* (Candelwick Press, 2020) lives in a city apartment with her mom in the center of the hustle and bustle. One day, her mom begins to make a sign for the march seen outside their window. Mari presses her face against the window as "buses, cars, and taxis honked and grumbled down the busy street to watch as people begin to march with their own signs. They even descend in an elevator,



as LeUyen Pham illustrates vertically, causing readers to turn the book on its end in order to read the words on the page. This shows the move from the apartment into the city streets below, where Mari and her mom join the city in the march for women's rights. They are in the center of the action by being in the city, and Mari has the unique opportunity to share her marching message with the world.

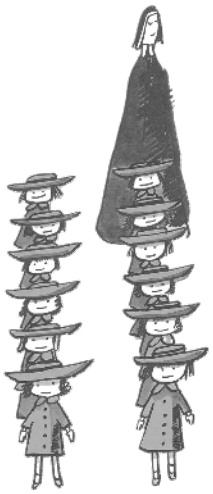
Mari wonders anxiously "'how will the whole world see our message'" as they make posters and participate in the march. Mari is concerned with being just one person in this big city—and in the world—and that no one will see her message. However, as the march continues on, Mari finds her voice among the crowd and is raised on her mother's shoulders to show her "Love is Powerful" sign for all to see. Her voice in this large city event gives Mari a great stage to spread the message of love to the world. Her voice is so great that it created this book; Mari, a six-year-old girl at the time, was in the Women's March in Washington, D.C., and has her picture and story told on the last two pages of the book. This real little girl inspired the writer and illustrator to create this book and they continue to share her message.

The story of Maud and the true story of Mari both chronicle what life can be like in a big city: lonely, scary, and so large that you can get lost within it. However, both are able to conquer their individuals battles; Maud is able to connect with children in this new city and Maud is able to share her message to the world.

Shannon Murphy is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where she earned her master's degree in English and studied children's literature.

City Girls in Pink and Yellow

by Samantha Holt



Ludwig Bemelmans' *Madeline* (1939) and Kay Thompson's *Eloise* (1955) feature two of the most iconic young heroines of children's picture books published in the United States, but just as important in making these books classic pieces of children's literature are the cities and landmarks that leap from the background to become central figures of the stories. While Madeline is surrounded by the architecture and landmarks of Paris, Eloise inhabits one of the most recognized New York City buildings: The Plaza Hotel. Hilary Knight's illustrations depict Eloise and the Plaza in black and white sketches with pops of both bright and pale pinks, using the same pink for Eloise's hair bow as he uses for much of the flooring and furniture of the Plaza. Where Eloise is awash in pink, Ludwig Bemelmans' sketched and painted illustrations cover Paris and her inhabitants in a luminous yellow. It is fitting for the City of Light, and even when Bemelmans occasionally uses blues, grays, and greens to demonstrate time of day and seasonal settings the bright yellow of the uniforms worn by Madeline and her schoolmates is eye-catching.

While living at a Parisian boarding school with eleven other girls, Madeline traverses Paris so habitually that it is the reader who stops to marvel at the landmarks filling Bemelmans' pages rather than the characters themselves. The Palais Opéra Garnier, Notre Dame, the Tuileries Gardens, the Eiffel Tower, and Sacré-Coeur are just a few of the icons splashed throughout the book. At the time of the story's publication, Paris was still recovering from World War I and was quickly being launched into World War II. Perhaps in a nod to these circumstances, Madeline and her schoolmates are saddened when they encounter a wounded soldier (recognizable as such by his cap and the medal pinned to his chest) outside of the Hotel des Invalides. Bemelmans' sketches and paintings not only reference the difficulties Paris is facing, but celebrate the city by embracing its beauty.

Just as the sketches depict the radiance of Paris, Madeline depicts the city's courageous spirit. She is the smallest of all twelve girls at the school, but she is also the most spirited. She is not afraid of small or large beasts, she embraces the cold and wintry weather, walks the walls along the River Seine, and upon having her appendix removed proudly and boldly shows off her scar to her friends. She is not only surrounded by Paris, but embodies its vitality. Like Paris at the time of the book's release, Madeline bravely faces an emergency. Although she faces an appendectomy rather than war, she is so intertwined with the city of Paris that it is impossible not to recognize her own gutsy personality in the essence of her surroundings. To think of Madeline is to think immediately of Paris, and to see it through the eyes of a little girl to whom it is magical and wondrous and above all, home.

Like Madeline, Eloise also embodies the characteristics of her home city. Surrounded by an English nanny, a French waiter, a busboy who dreams of Madrid, and a lunch companion who feeds her German cakes, Eloise is a young upstart who clatters around one of the most luxurious hotels in the country wearing her roller skates. She is always busy, getting involved in all of the goings-on at the hotel whether invited or not, and she loves to play pretend because it lets her be anything or anyone she can dream of being. Opportunity abounds, so much so that Eloise also frequents the men's salon and the barber shop and pretends to lead meetings for General Motors in the hotel's Baroque Room. She is independent, spending much of her day tearing around the hotel on her own while her nanny remains back in their suite, and her love of self-expression is evidenced by her tendency to write her name on walls, create hats out of any object that suits her (Kleenex, egg cups, and cabbage leaves being a few of her favorites), and her precocious understanding of herself and the world around her. Eloise, like New York City, is an icon in the Land of Opportunity.

Although both Madeline and Eloise stand out as lively, feisty young heroines, their stories are iconic for the cities and landmarks embedded within them as they are for the personalities of their protagonists. You cannot separate Eloise from the Plaza or Madeline from Paris, because each girl is so intertwined with the setting of her story that they become part of one another. For these city girls, home is not only where the heart is but part of what makes up the heart.

Samantha Holt holds an M.A. in Children's Literature from UNC Charlotte. Some of her favorite books are picture books, and she hopes to one day create her own.

Chicago Books for Children

by Jodie Slothower

In "Chicago" Carl Sandburg's 1914 poem, he described the growing metropolis as the "City of the Big Shoulders," meaning that Chicagoans had hustle and muscle. When I was growing up in the Chicagoland area and heard this poem, I also thought the poem emphasized how big the city is. To a child, the city was large: tall skyscrapers, sprawling airports, an expansive park stretching for miles along Lake Michigan, huge manufacturing plants, and wide, eight-lane highways connecting it all. I also imagined Sandburg was referring to the city as a place that embraces all the people living there, the diversity of cultures in numerous neighborhoods. I was naïve, of course, that people were treated fairly. Yet, that is part of Chicago's struggle. Chicago continues to try to reflect Sandburg's vision: proud, gritty, beautiful, and aspirational.

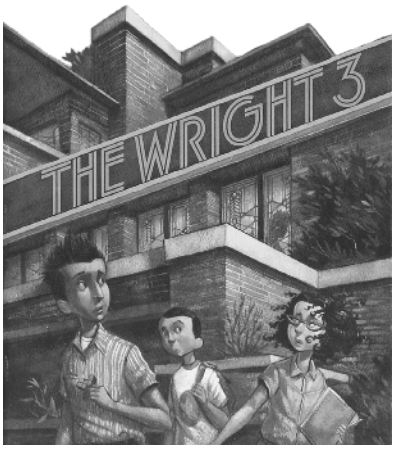
The following books for young readers reflect Chicago's size, history, and rich culture. In books about Chicago for children, the stories are grounded in the city, yet tell stories that are compelling whether you live near or far from the big Midwestern metropolis

The first series of books are ones that bring Chicago down to size. In Marianne Malone's four-book series *The Sixty-Eight Rooms,* she creates imaginative stories based on the idea of what would happen if three children had a magical token so they could shrink to fit into the famous Thorne Rooms in the Art Institute of Chicago. These popular rooms are miniature recreations of famous historical rooms from American and European history. Even filmmaker Wes Anderson visits the Thorne Rooms while in Chicago. The chapter books explore historical events in the rooms while incorporating events in contemporary Chicago.

Blue Baillett's best books — *Chasing Vermeer and The Wright Three* — are about inquisitive children who live in Hyde Park, a neighborhood where the University of Chicago is located. The fictional children attend the university's lab school where Baillett taught and where Barack Obama's children attended before moving to Washington, D.C. These engaging chapter books for middle schoolers are multi-dimensional. Readers get involved in mysteries involving art and architecture as well as solving puzzles incorporated into the book's line drawings and a secret code printed on the bottom of the pages.

In Chasing Vermeer, Petra and Calder are reeled into a mystery about a painting by Vermeer that has disappeared in route to Chicago's Art Institute. To solve the case, they learn about their neighborhood, especially a local used bookstore, the Art Institute, and the futuristic writer Charles Fort. Sometimes, Calder works through ideas by associating them with pentominoes, which are five square-shaped blocks that form combinations.

In *The Wright Three,* Petra and Calder are joined with their friend Tommy to stop the destruction of The Robie House, a famous home built by Frank Lloyd Wright in Hyde Park. This book's compelling mystery considers multiple ways to solve problems as well as Fibonacci numbers and drawings.



Chicagoans value the city's architects. A good place to learn about Wright, who lived and built buildings in Chicago, is *Frank Lloyd Wright for Kids: His Life and Ideas (For Kids Series)* by Kathleen Thorne-Thomsen. Thorne-Thomsen includes a good mix of history about the architect, explanation of his designs, and projects students in Grade 4 and above will enjoy. A picture book for younger children about Wright's early life is *The Shape of the World: A Portrait of Frank Lloyd Wright* by K.L. Going with illustrations by Lauren Stringer. The book show Wright as a boy playing in nature and with wooden Frobel blocks, which influenced his architecture style.

Gwendolyn Brooks is another famous Chicago. She wrote many thoughtful poems for children. *Bronzeville Boys and Girls*, collection of poems about children in the Chicago neighborhood, received acclaim in it was first published 1956. Recently, Faith Ringgold illustrated the poems with celebratory acrylic paintings. Another new picture book, with illustrations by Jan Spivey Gilchrist, is the uplifting collection of poetry *We are Shining.* Brooks encouraging words conclude, "Life is for us, and is shining. We have a right to sing." Brooks was the first Black woman

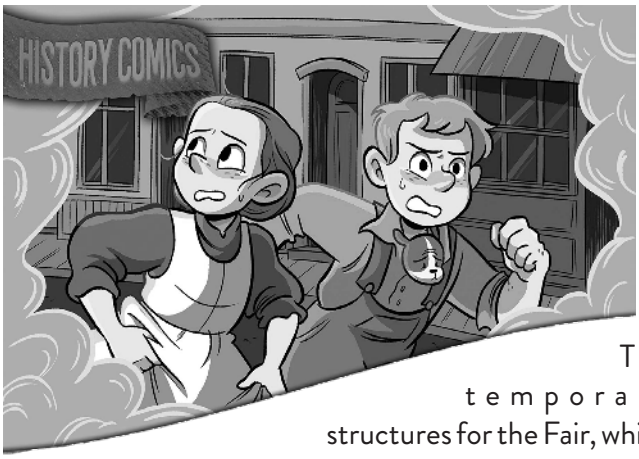
appointed as a poetry consultant to the Library Congress and also served as Poet Laureate of Illinois.

Another successful Chicago woman is Sarah E. Goode, one of the first African-American women to receive a U.S. Patent. The picture book *Sweet Dreams, Sarah* by Vivian Kirkland and illustrated by Chris Ewald is about the determination and creativity of Goode who was born a slave and became a successful master woodworker. After emancipation, she moved to Chicago where she had a thriving furniture business with her husband. Goode received her patent in 1885 for a bed that would fold into a cupboard to create more space in crowded apartments.

One historical event every Chicagoan knows about is the Chicago Fire of 1871. In *The Great Fire*, Jim Murphy has written and compiled a compelling book of illustrations, photographs, maps, eyewitness accounts, and a historical narrative about this destructive fire that caused more than 100,000 people to be displaced. The city had been built with wood structures and mediocre plumbing. It was a tinder box ready to explode.

Kate Hannigan wrote a lively story about middle-school age children caught up in the devastation in *The Great Chicago Fire: Rising from the Ashes for the History Comics* series with illustrations by Alex Graudins. In *Children of the Fire*, Harriette Gillem Robinet considers the Fire from the perspective of recently emancipated young Black girls hoping for a pleasant visit but the Fire destroys their relatives' home. While the fire wrecked the city, the silver lining is that it became an opportunity for a better place with improved building codes, wider streets, and a renewed community. After recent wildfires, the 1871 Chicago fire may have new meaning for young readers about how Chicago was rebuilt.

To celebrate rebuilding after the fire, Chicago hosted the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. The Fair introduced the world to the Ferris Wheel, which is the subject of Robert Lawson's *The Great Wheel*. *Fair Weather* by Richard Peck is about a 13-year-old who leaves her rural town to visit her aunt and the "wonder of the age" — The World's Fair. *In The Progress of Our People: A Story of Black Representation at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair* (I Am America Set 4) by Anne E. Johnson, Lorraine Williams is looking forward to seeing Black opera singer Sissieretta Jones at the Fair. When reporter Ida B. Wells encourages Black Americans to boycott the Fair because it doesn't represent Black people, Lorraine tries to figure out a positive solution.



The temporary structures for the Fair, which was nicknamed the "White City," were the inspiration for the architecture of the city of Oz in L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Chicagoans are still inspired by the Fair as today visitors can ride a large, modern Ferris Wheel on Navy Pier. The popular Jackson Park area is built from the original fair site.

Chicago is a city of proud neighborhoods where people from around the world live, share their cultural heritage and speaking many languages. In *Stella Diaz Has Something to Say* by Angela Dominguez, Stella is a young immigrant to Chicago from Mexico. She mixes English and Spanish as she speaks, which is also how Dominguez writes the book. Stella is a creative girl who enjoys animals, art, and math and draws on these skills when her language abilities are challenged.

Chicago is also the heart of the Midwest, where farmers grow crops that workers in the city manufacture and market. That comes together in *Auntie Yang's Great Soybean Picnic* by Ginnie Lo about Chinese immigrants who realize that soybeans grown on farms surrounding Chicago also grow in China. They start a picnic tradition of inviting family to enjoy soybean dishes of China and Illinois. Lo's illustrated this book by painting on porcelain plates which appear as photographs in the book. The story is based on her aunt's summer picnics held for decades for their extended Chinese family and friends.

To me, *Auntie Yang's Great Soybean Picnic* celebrates the best of Chicago — people who bring their rich cultural traditions, settle in the big city, and figure out how to successfully thrive in a Midwestern metropolis that presents challenges as well as opportunities for success.

Jodie Slothower grew up in the Chicagoland area. She particularly enjoyed visiting the Chicago museums with her family and seeing the holiday lights. She now lives a few hours away from the city but visits often. She is a writer and an owner of a small marketing company.

Coming of Age in Urban America:
The City as Represented in Four Young Adult Novels

By Jan Susina

Recently *Time* magazine released its list of "The 100 Best YA Books of All Time." While the list was selected by a panel of popular and critically celebrated contemporary young adult authors including Elizabeth Acevedo, Jenny Han, Jason Reynolds, and Angie Thomas, the *Time* list has generated debate among readers of young adult literature of books that were included on the list as well as books and authors that were left out. One of the observations I made of the books on this list of best young adult books is that a majority of them were set in cities. This is not surprising for a number of reasons.

First is that publishing in the United States remains centered in urban areas such as New York, Boston, and Los Angeles. Many writers for young adults are also from urban areas and they tend to write about what they know. In 1921, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, the founder of the influential Banks Street School of Education in New York City, published the *Here and Now Story Book*. She emphasized the need for children's books that reflected the demographic shift of the American population from rural to urban areas. Readers of all ages want to read stories that reflect their environment. It is not surprising that many children's and young adult books feature life in the city.

Historically there have always been children's books that involve characters who we now would identify as young adults or teenagers. Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* appears on *Time's* list of best YA books although those terms had yet been coined. The novel is often classified as children's literature despite the fact that the March sisters grow from children to adults in course the novel. The development of an independent category written specifically for young adult readers began to flourish in the United States after World War II. One of the books to spur the growth of young adult literature is J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* published in 1951. Originally published as a novel for adults, the book was embraced by teen readers who identified with the disaffected sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield and his misadventures in New York City. Salinger wrote about the Manhattan that he knew both as a child and as adult but filters it through the eyes of a troubled teenager. Many of the key episodes of the novel occur in specific New York City locations: the lagoon in Central Park where Holden expresses concern for the ducks in winter, the skating rink at Rockefeller Center where Holden skates with Sally Hayes, the comforting Museum of Natural History full of glass cases where nothing changes, Grand Central Terminal where Holden spends a depressing night after abruptly leaving Mr. Antolini's apartment, and the Central Park Carrousel where he watches his sister Phoebe grab for the gold ring. All of these actual locations contribute to the authenticity to the novel and to help to validate the voice of its teen protagonist. The city provides *The Catcher in the Rye* a complicated and confusing landscape which mirrors Holden troubled emotions as he attempts to bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood with mixed results.

The Catcher in the Rye and its confused narrator has become the model for many subsequent YA novels in which angsty, but self-aware, teen protagonists come of age in an urban settling. While *The Catcher in the Rye* details life in New York City in the 1950s, Francesca Lia Block's innovative *Weetzie Bat* (1989), combines magic realism with careful details of growing up as a punk teenager in Los Angeles in the late 1980s. Block has referred to *Weetzie Bat* as her love letter to Los Angeles. Coming of age in the shadows of Hollywood, Weetzie and her friends refer to the city as Shangri-L.A., where "It's always Christmas." Like Salinger, Block provides plenty of specific details of urban life in Los Angeles: the prints of movie stars in Graumann's Chinese Theatre, the Hollywood Sign, Tiny Naylor's drive-in restaurant where the waitresses are on skates, and driving Laurel Canyon

where Jim Morrison and Harry Houdini once lived.

Both *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Weetzie Bat* provide readers with the glimpse of exciting life experienced by a teen narrator in the big city, be it either on the East Coast or the West Coast. Both novels provide wish fulfillment for teenage readers who aspire to become writers in the manner of Holden or a movie star like Weetzie. However, it is worth noting despite the many realistic details of city life in both novels, both Salinger and Block provide a surprisingly narrow view of the urban living. New York City is much greater and more diverse than Manhattan, just as Los Angeles is much more complex and diverse than Hollywood. One of the limitations of both novels is that they focus almost exclusively on the lives of wealthy urban teens and their environments.

Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* (2017) provides readers a larger range of adolescent life in an urban settling. While Thomas does not specifically identify the setting in the book, she has said that she was motivated to write the book after the shooting of Oscar Grant in Oakland, California and the popular 2018 film adaption of the novel was filmed in Atlanta. In addition to addressing police violence against African Americans, Thomas's novel also examines how the Black protagonist, Starr Carter, must navigate between two dramatically different sections of the city. She refers to Garden Heights, the neighborhood where her family lives, as "the ghetto," while she and her brother attend Williamson, an exclusive prep school located an hour away in a predominately white section of the city The contrast between the worlds of her home and school is made reinforced with her relationships with her best males friends: Khalil, who is killed by the police and considered a gang member, and Chris, her wealthy white boyfriend from school. Eventually Starr's family choses to leave Garden Heights for a safer and more mixed-race neighborhood located in the suburbs just outside the city. As an African-American writer, Thomas provides a more nuanced and culturally diverse representation of urban life which contrasts the differences of life of affluent and working-class teens.

Erika Sanchez's *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* (2017) is set in Chicago and explores the complicated life of Julia Reyes, the daughter of undocumented Mexican-American parents. Sanchez has said that she wanted to create a Mexican-American version of *The Cather in the Rye*. Changing the race and gender of the novel's protagonist dramatically alters the story and the ways in which the city is presented. Holden comes from a wealthy family and struggles to come to terms with the death of his younger brother Allie who was "the most intelligent one in the family." Julia is constantly being compared to her dead older sister, Olga, who was seen by her parents as "the perfect Mexican daughter." Like Holden, Julia is a budding writer and very much a flaneur, like Weetzie Bat, who explores neighborhoods in Chicago. She rides the L, visits the Art Institute of Chicago, explores used bookstores of Wicker Park, and even ventures to Evanston where her wealthy, white boyfriend Connor lives. Like Thomas in *The Hate U Give*, Sanchez makes explicit to readers that Chicago is made of distinctive neighborhoods that reflect the vast cultural and economic differences. While Salinger and Block show adolescent readers how life is experienced in the city from the point of view of an affluent, white perspective, Thomas and Sanchez show how urban living is experienced by minority and working-class characters. Reading all four novels provides a richer and more diverse sense of urban living for teen readers.

Young adult novels set in cities provide aspirational reading for those readers who contemplate moving to urban environments to achieve their dream careers. All four of these YA novels represent the excitement and rich cultural opportunities that can be enjoyed by adolescents in a city. While these novels the celebrate the benefits of urban living, they don't shy away from the dangers that teens may confront while living in the city. Olga is killed by bus while texting as she crosses the street. Jordan watches two of her friends killed: one by a stray bullet in a drive-by shooting and the another by a police officer. Holden is beaten up by a hotel pimp. Weetzie confronts abusive boyfriends, excessive drug use, and teen pregnancy as part of her coming of age. Adolescence is often identified as a challenging transitional period that is filled with storm and stress as teens struggle to come to understand themselves and their place in the world. Cities in YA books provide a dramatic setting where it is easy for teen characters to lose themselves but also provide opportunities to meet different people and engage in new experiences. These urban landscapes enable adolescent characters to confront some of the many social and emotional conflicts that contemporary teen readers face.

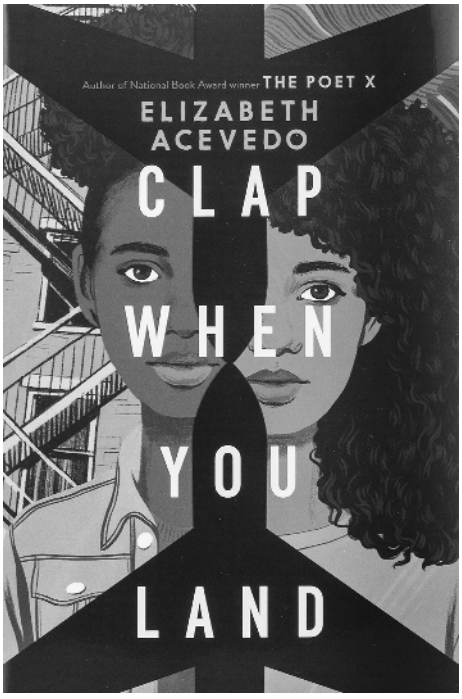
Jan Susina is an English professor who offers courses in Young Adult Literature at Illinois State University. He frequently includes the four novels mentioned in this essay in his courses.

Three New Stories from Streets of New York

By Abby Moore

Time and place have a remarkable impact on a story. Not only does the setting provide context for the characters' beliefs, behaviors, dreams, and desires, it can become an additional character that helps move the plot forward to the climax of the story. When a book is set in the city, any city, the action tends to be frenetic and urgent and the characters respond to that energy and urgency. No matter when or where, the city can impact the course of events in such a way that may change lives forever. However, regardless of where characters in a story live and grow up, they will almost always have the power to choose their own fate. Such is the case with the central characters in three new books set in New York City.

Clap When You Land, by Elizabeth Acevedo, is a dual-narrator novel written in verse. Camino and Yahaira are mourning the loss of their father, separately, because they have no idea that the other exists. Camino, who knows "too much of mud" and stray dogs and dangerous men, lives with her Tia in a small beach town called Puerta Plata in the Dominican Republic. Yahaira lives in Morningside Heights, a neighborhood in New York City, "that houses a mix of people: Dominicans & Puerto Ricans & Haitians/ Black Americans & Riverside Drive white folk/& of course,



the Columbia Students who/disrupt everything." She knows fire escapes and bodegueros and Lincoln Center. What they don't know is if their father truly died in that plane crash and so they wait, each teen girl dealing with the unknown in her own way. When devastating evidence, including a single gold tooth, is recovered, the girls learn about each other's existence and navigate the shock of loss and betrayal with the help of friends and neighbors. Finally, they meet, first via video chat and then in Puerta Plata, where their larger-than-life father will be buried. Much of the action in *Clap When You Land* takes place in the Dominican Republic and Acevedo tells Camino's story with lines and verse that rock the reader back and forth, similar to the way the waves of the ocean push and pull at Camino's body when she swims. Yahaira, much like the city she comes from, is concrete and straight lines, unbending in her anger at her father for the secrets he kept from her. Together, the sisters return to New York City, exactly 60 days after the plane crash that changed their lives so drastically. *Clap When You Land* is not a book that provides answers to the difficult questions it brings up. There is no red bow to perfectly tie up the ending. Camino and Yahaira still have much to figure out, but they'll do it together, in the city.

Like a Love Story by Abdi Nazemian is set in New York City in 1989. Reza, an Iranian immigrant who was living in Canada, moves to the city because his mom has married again - married a man he doesn't know. Reza is a stranger with a secret in a city that can eat people alive. Judy and her best friend Art were born and raised in New York City. They have privilege, but they do not live easy lives: Art is gay; it is dangerous to be gay in 1989 because AIDS is almost always a death sentence in 1989. Judy is an aspiring fashion designer who struggles with her weight and finding her place in fashion culture where thin is in.

They, Reza, Judy, and Art, are a love triangle waiting to happen. They come together and tear apart; their only constant is Judy's uncle Stephen, but he is dying. Set against a backdrop of campy protests, mean girls, and Madonna posters, *Like a Love Story*, is about love in all its glorious forms; it's also about death. The city, however, is alive in this book. Recognizable landmarks like Central Park, Wall Street, and St. Mark's Place, a lower east side street "where hippies, drag queens, and musicians unite" are integral to the storyline. Acid washed jeans, fluorescent pink, and Debbie Harry provide context for a time and place in history that is gone, but certainly not forgotten. Judy, Art, and Reza look for love, self-acceptance, and identity among the many streets and alleys of New York City. And while they all eventually move away from that place, the epilogue tells the reader how they always come back, year after year, to celebrate life and to remember all that they lost in 1989 in New York City.

Just Like That, the latest middle grade novel by Gary Schmidt is set in 1968. Meryl Lee is headed up to the rocky beaches of Maine to escape the crushing sadness of losing the boy she's always loved. Matt Coffin is already in Maine, having made his way up there from New York City. They're both running from sadness and violence. At St. Elene's Preparatory Academy for Girls, Meryl Lee struggles to find her place among the wealthier and more accomplished girls who've attended the school for years. Matt has no place, but is hopeful that he's finally outrun the danger that has been his constant companion since escaping that long dark alley in New York City. Two seemingly unrelated storylines come together with the help of Dr. MacKnockater, the headmistress at St. Elene's, who recognizes lost souls when she sees them. By standing up for what is right, Meryl Lee finds those elusive accomplishments she has been chasing since the beginning of the term and earns friends, and much respect, along the way. Matt, with the help of a variety of characters: peers and grown-ups alike, finally faces down the monster he met in the city. And becomes the first-ever boy enrolled at St. Elene's Preparatory Academy for Girls. While not set in the city, the main characters in *Just Like That* have been forever impacted by the dirt and grime of the streets. However, unlike the books discussed previously in this essay, this one provides its readers with a hopeful and happy ending.

New York City is a fabled place where dreams can come true, but it is also dark and dirty and dangerous. It can be unkind to those who live there. It is not for the weak of heart. It is also a place of color and culture where all types of people can find community and a home, if they're lucky. In all three books written about in the essay, New York City directly impacted the characters and the outcome of the stories. It is a place that refuses to stay in the background and no matter if one stays in New York City or leaves, it will always captivate those who have felt it's overwhelming presence beat in their heart.

Abby Moore is an Associate Professor and the Education, Honors, & Global Engagement Librarian at UNC Charlotte. Before transitioning to academia, she was a high school English teacher and a high school librarian in New York City.

The Emerald City and The White City

By Dina Massachi

A little over one hundred and twenty years ago, a fictional young girl from a dismally gray farm traveled down a road made of yellow bricks towards a city in hopes that a wizard would grant her deepest wish. While you're probably familiar with the story of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, or it's better-known film counterpart staring Judy Garland, it's sort of remarkable to think about a young child fearlessly traveling to a strange, huge city— especially a child who hadn't experienced much outside of her own backyard. Dorothy is warned that "it is a long journey, through a country that is sometimes pleasant and sometimes dark and terrible", and this warning proves true. However, the struggle of the journey is what allows each of Dorothy's companions to discover their latent talents, test their merit, and realize that what they wish for most already exists inside of them. Of course, this mirrors the tests that farmers and city folk alike would have encountered during Baum's life.

There is a story about a cyclone that hit Aberdeen, a Dakota territory that Baum lived in, and Baum wrote this tale in his newspaper, the *Aberdeen Saturday Pioneer.* Baum's Wicked Witch of the West sent bees, crows and wolves— real plights to real farmers— long before she released her Winged Monkeys to capture Dorothy. Perhaps most notable, though, are the numerous ways that Baum's Emerald City overlap with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. For many attendees, the trip to Chicago was as great an adventure as Dorothy's travels down the yellow brick road and the goal of reaching the newly rising "White City" in Chicago certainly mirrors Dorothy's pilgrimage to Baum's Emerald City. More than 27 million people from all over attended the exposition during its six-month run. When World's Fair attendees arrived, they had to pass through an entrance portal to gain entrance to the grounds. Baum may have used this detail when he created a high, thick wall around the Emerald City; like the entrance portal of the World's fair, the only way through this wall is to pass by the Guardian of the Gates. Further, the White City itself was an illusion that was more stage set than real buildings meant to last— everything was built to be temporary. This mirrors the illusions that Baum's Wizard uses to help make the Emerald City seem grand. Before Dorothy and her companions are allowed to enter the Emerald City, they are given green glasses that are locked in place on their heads. As Oz tells Dorothy after he is unmasked as a circus performer, "I thought, as the country was so green and beautiful, I would call it the Emerald City, and to make the name fit better I put green spectacles on all the people, so that everything they saw was green." Not only is the Wizard's magic nothing but stagecraft, but the Emerald City is actually white once the glasses come off!

Baum worked closely with W. W. Denslow, the Chicago artist who illustrated *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,* when the book was in creation. The two men desperately wanted the book to be illustrated in color, and, when the publisher denied their request, they split the cost to make it happen. Some have speculated that Denslow may have suggested some of the plot elements, so it is interesting to note that Denslow borrowed from the architecture of the White City as he drew the buildings within the Emerald City. Denslow's White City inspirations, and the fact that Baum went to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, certainly suggest that the Emerald City and the White City have a close connection.

Visitors who went to the 1893 Chicago World's Fair left with new ideas about commerce, industry, technology and entertainment. Readers of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* also experienced something new— Baum's girl on an adventure, Denslow's color illustrations, and the interweaving of real bits of American life within a fantasyland were all fabulously modern for their time. Baum's best-known tale was not always titled *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz;* early titles included *The City of Oz, The Great City of Oz,* and *The Emerald City.* Though many of Baum's central characters and plot elements are agrarian in nature, it is evident that his falsely green city, and its false leader, are central to the tale and part of what made this story an American classic.

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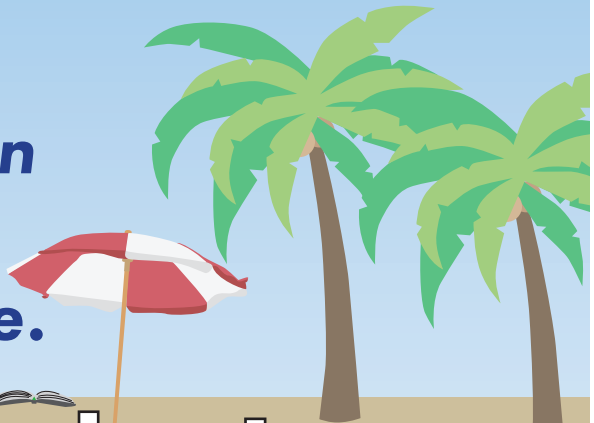

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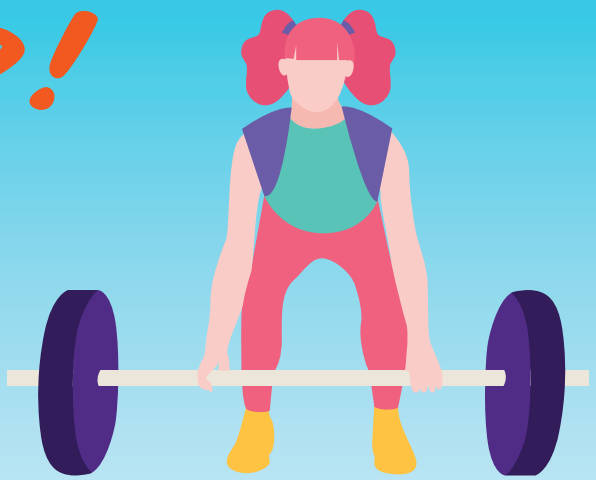

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