

#blackboylit: Black Boys and Independent Reading

Dr. Kimberly N. Parker | Shady Hill School & Mr. Jack Hill | Cambridge Friends School

October 24, 2018 AISNE Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Conference

#AISNEDiversity2018

@JackHilledtoday

@TchKimPossible

Pause & Ponder

On a Post-It note, please write your name and answer the following question:



What are you hoping to get out of today's session?

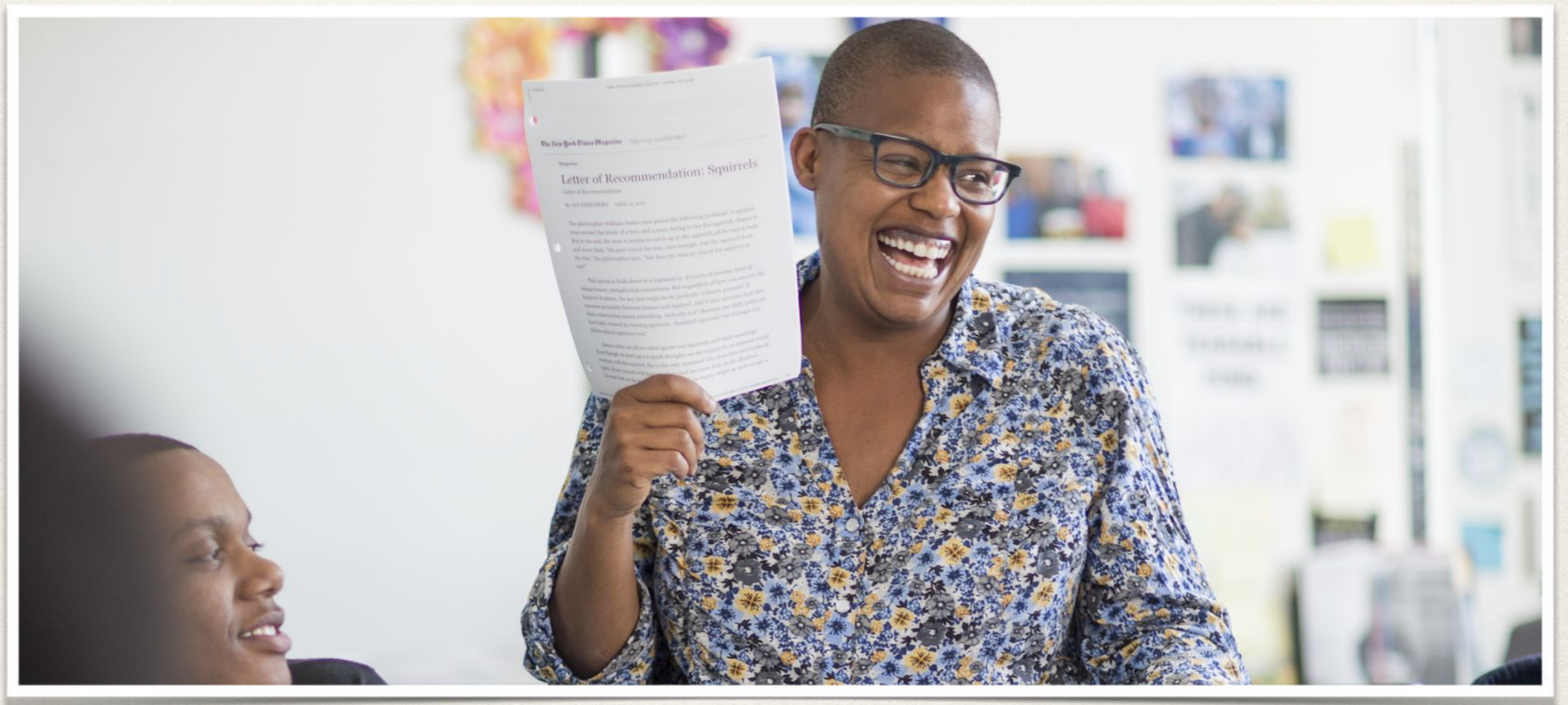
When you're done, please post on a sheet of big paper. Thank you!

Introductions: Mr. Jack Hill



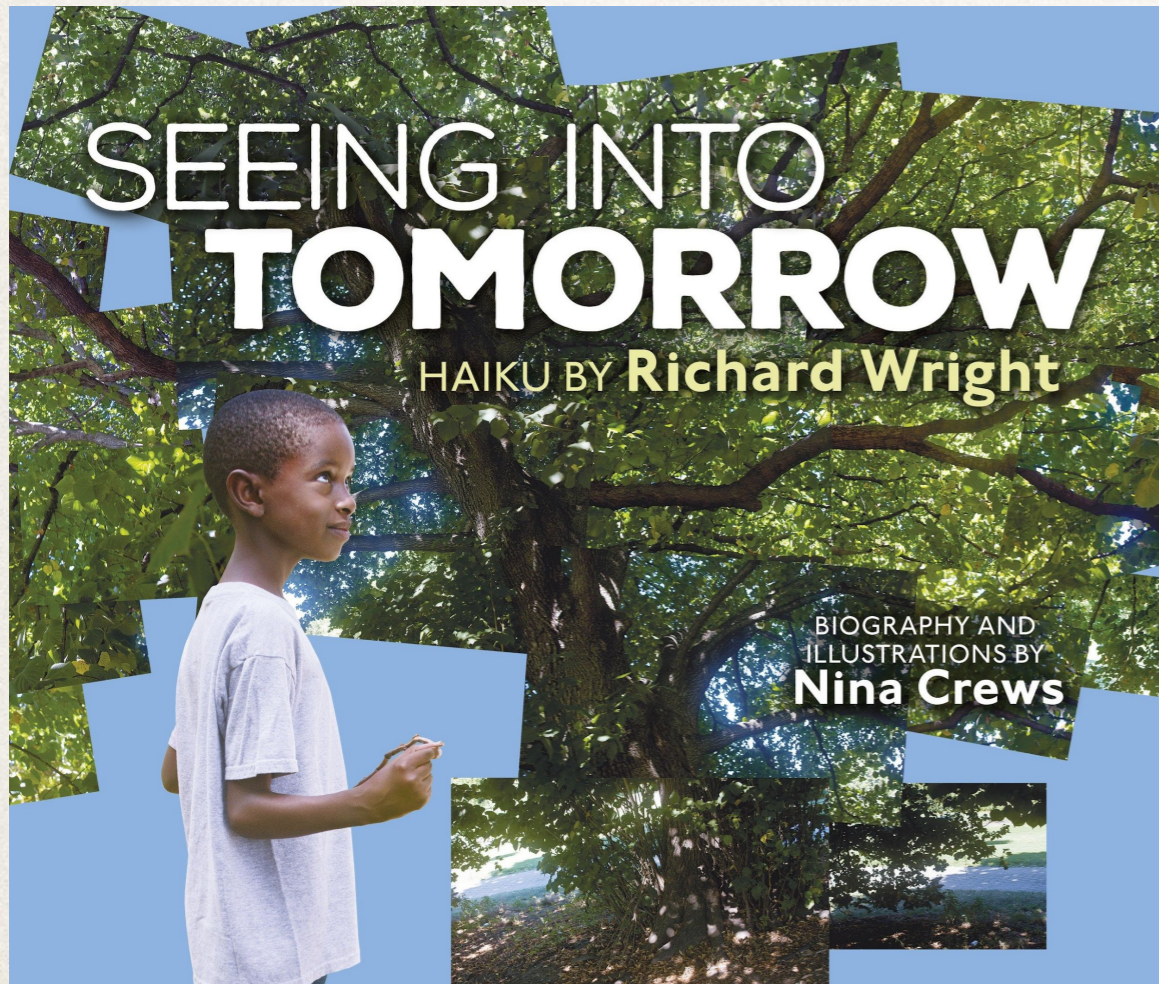
@JackHilledtoday

Introductions: Dr. Kim Parker

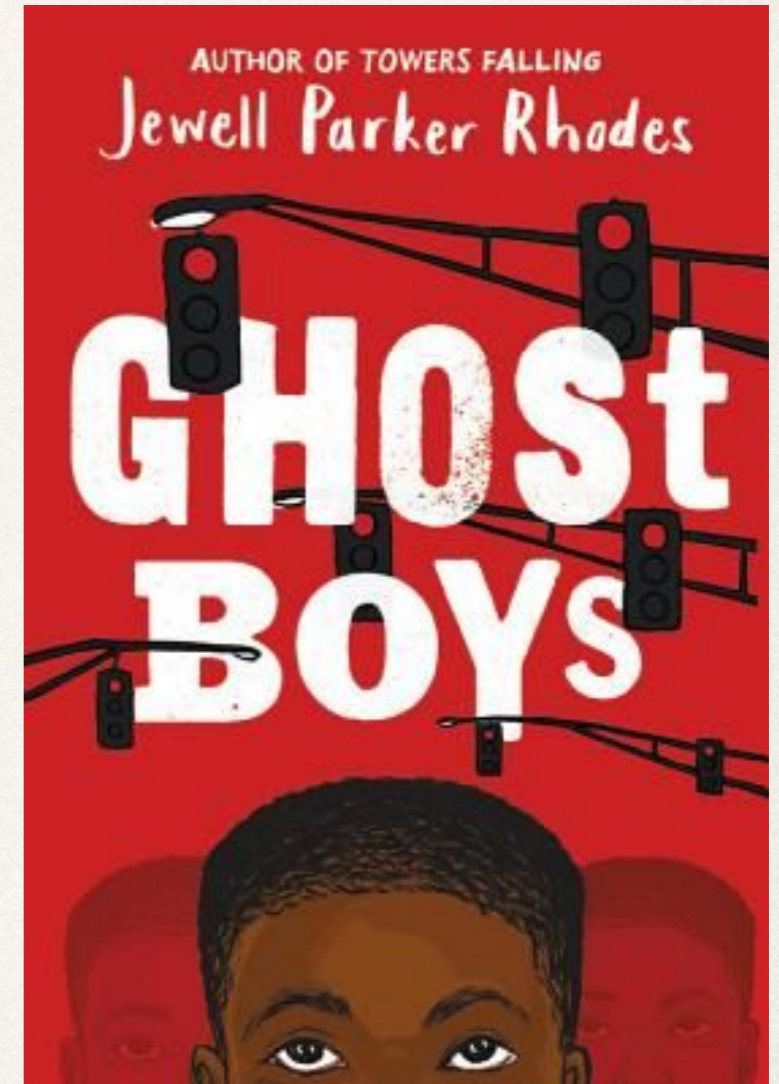


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Currently Reading



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#AISNEDiversity 2018

ALSC Charlemae Rollins President's
Program [#alaac2018](#) [@alscallkids](#)
[@wearealsc](#) "They don't need you to save
them, they need you to see them".
[@JasonReynolds83](#)



2:00 PM - 25 Jun 2018

Our Work Today

- Black Boys, Masculinities & Literacy: Myth v. Reality
- The Importance of Choice
- Evaluating and Selecting Books for a New Canon
- Discussion/Problem-Solving



5 Big Ideas

1. **Single stories** about Black boys and reading need to be interrogated and changed
2. **Independent choice reading** and **#blackboylit** as a site of counternarrative
3. We must make our classrooms places that **transform the literacy lives of Black boys**
4. **Particular books** resonate with Black boys and can open a gateway to what's possible
5. YOU can make your classroom an **intentional literacy community**

The Danger of a Single Story



“The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

-Chimamanda Adichie

Single Stories About Black Boy Readers: Myths



- Black boys hate reading
- Black boys avoid emotions (IRL and in texts)
- Black boys won't read books with a female protagonist
- Black boys only like reading certain "types" of books
- Black boys would rather play with technology than read a book
- Others?

What We DO Know About Black Boys & Literacy

- Boys **DO** read; move from a deficit-based narrative to a **strengths-based** narrative
- Boys want books that: **make them laugh; reflect and extend their current realities; are true** (non fiction)
- Boys like **reading with their friends**; book clubs are a possible place for sustained engagement
- Boys want to **CHOOSE** what they read
- Boys need **constant access to books at their reading level**, a teacher who can help them develop and nurture a reading habit, and **time** to become proficient

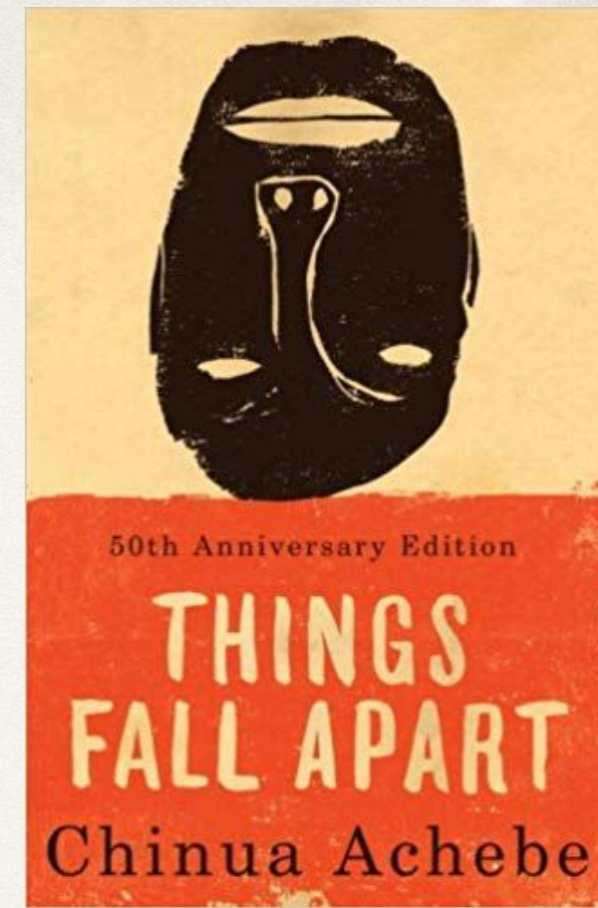
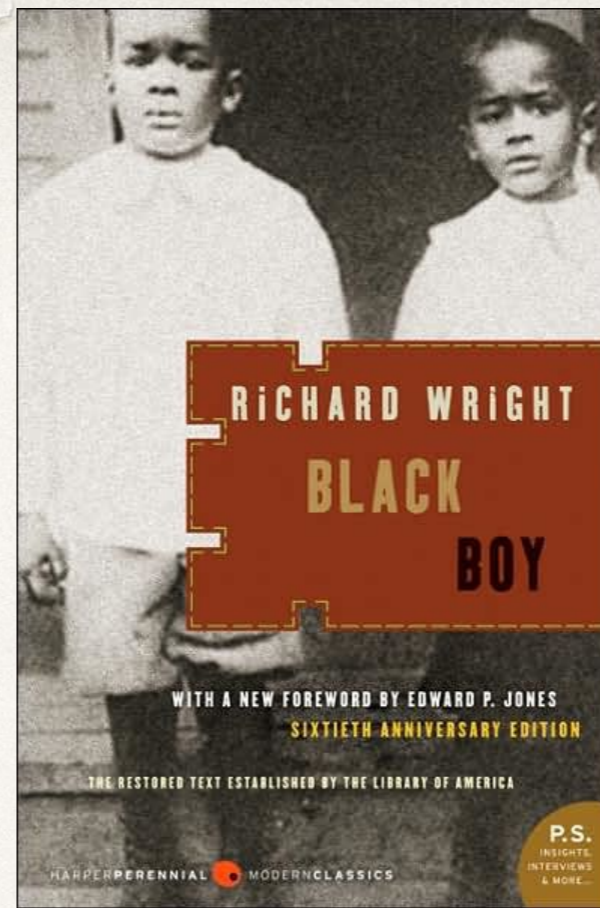
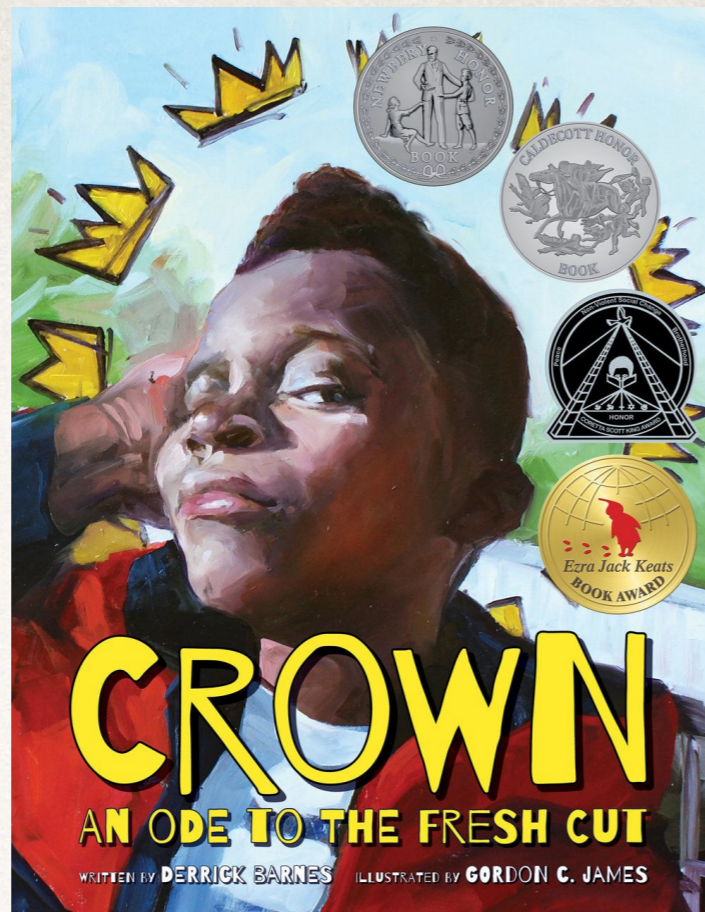
Healthy Black Boy Masculinities

- “Masculinities are shaped by skewed conceptions of gender, a sexist culture, *and* the range of structural conditions that impact Black men quite negatively” (Moore, 2013)
- Re-creating masculinities beyond destructive Black male gender performances
- Aspiration over intervention
- Celebrating and nurturing the achievement of Black boys

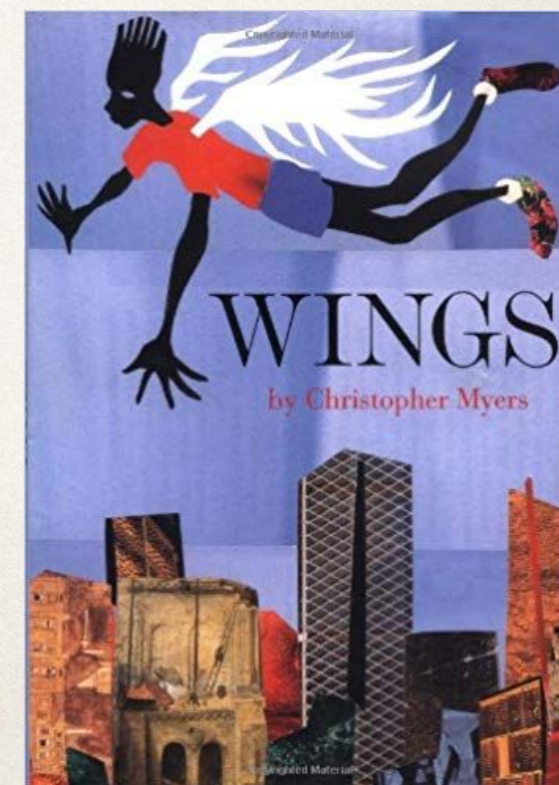
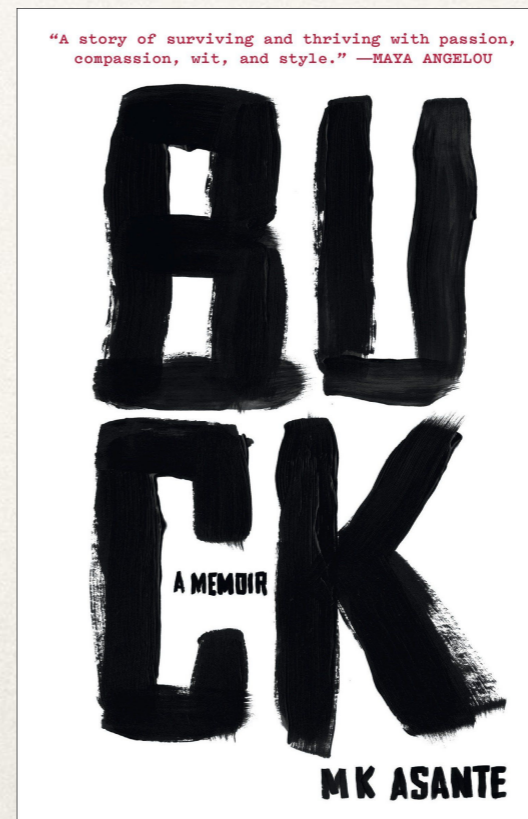
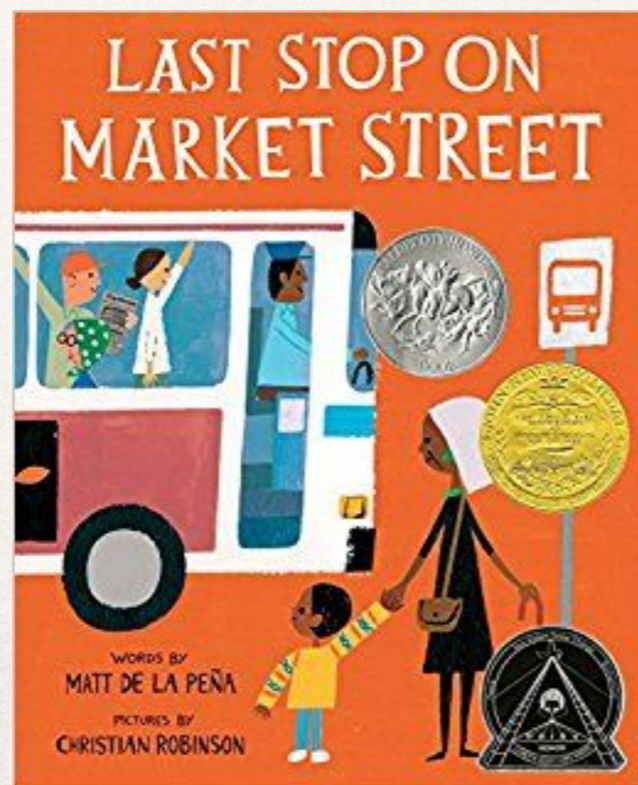
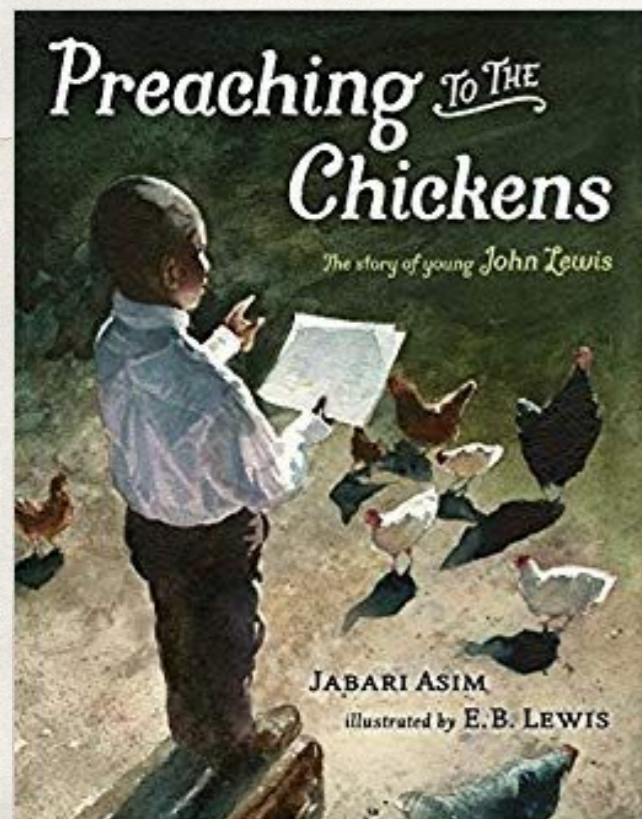
ON THE
OTHER
SIDE OF
FREEDOM

THE CASE FOR HOPE

DERAY MCKESSON



Healthy Black Boy Masculinities



The Need for a Counternarrative

- “A message that stands in opposition to the taken-for-granted beliefs about an oppressed group” Dr. Theresa Perry, 2009
- “Affirms Black intelligence, Black achievement, Black humanity [and] beliefs and behaviors about education” Perry, 2009
- “Storyline anchored in concrete stories of the past and present...that helps students and adults envision themselves as full members of the democracy” Perry, 2009
- “Convey hope, create desire, prefigure the future, and provoke actions” Perry, 2009

YOUNG

PROMOTING HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

GIFTED

AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

AND BLACK

TERESA PERRY CLAUDE STEELE ASA HILLIARD III

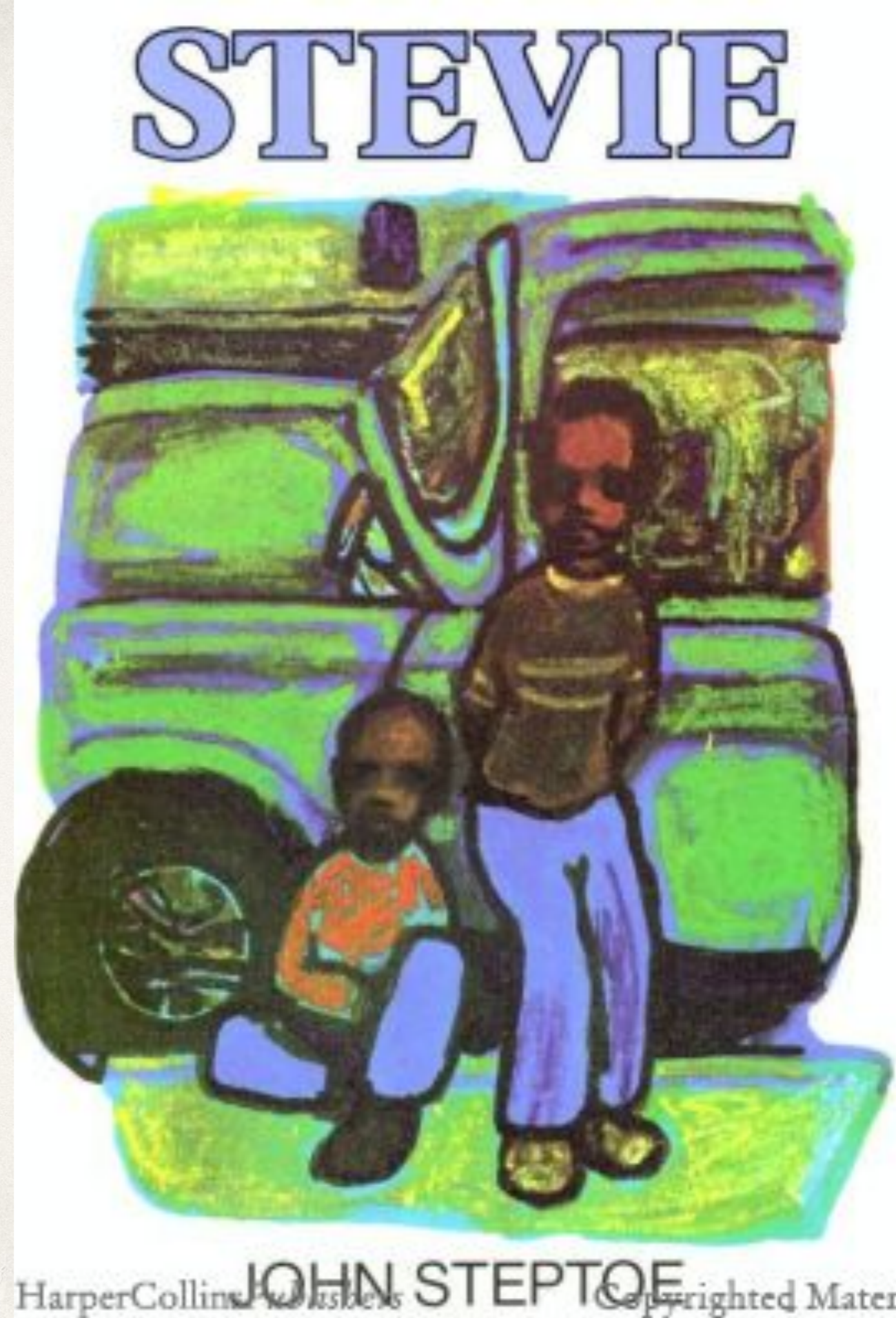
Starting With *Stevie*: The World of #Blackboylit

Sesame Street's Gordon Reads *Stevie*
Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_pbnKOlkjyc (6:32)

Guiding Questions:

- What experiences are represented?
- What are Black boys doing?
- What is the importance of what they are doing?
- What examples of a counternarrative do you notice?



Evaluating #blackboylit

In small groups, please select at least **ONE** picture book, read it together, then discuss the text using these questions [handout]:

- What **experiences** are represented? (*range*)
- How are **gender and masculinity** portrayed? (*fixed, fluid, heteronormative, opportunity to challenge patriarchy*)
- Is there an abundance of **Black love**? (*solidarity & understanding, especially of Black families, women, girls*)
- Is the text **liberatory**? Is it a **counternarrative**? (*grounded in past & present, convey hope, provoke action, resistance, transformation, agency, healing*)

Sharing Out

- Observations
- Comments
- Wonderings



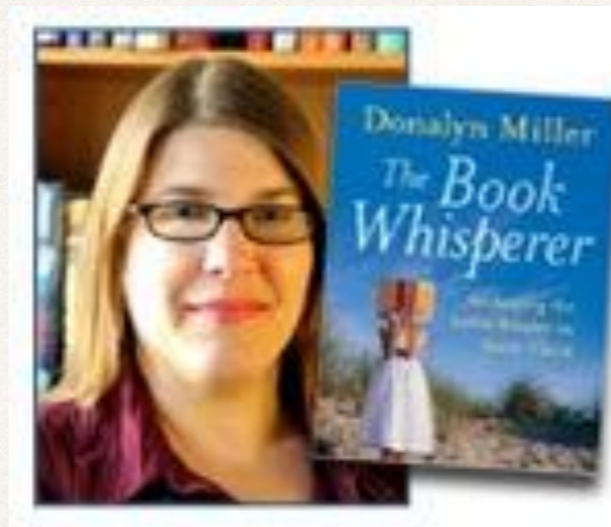
“Young people who view reading as enjoyable and read outside of class on a daily basis are much more likely to experience success as readers.”

–National Council of Teachers of English, 2014



Research-Based Foundation For Choice Reading

“I can cite the research that supports the beliefs that drive my practice.” Cris Tovani



Donalyn Miller
Independent
Reading

Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop

“Mirrors, Windows, Sliding Glass Doors”

Dr. Violet J. Harris

Multicultural Children’s Lit



Dr. Richard Allington
Daily Literacy

Connecting Black Boys to Texts: The HOW

- ▶ **Books, books, books!** 80% self-selected, 20% whole-class texts; DIVERSE; “Mirrors, windows, sliding glass doors” (Bishop, 1992)
- ▶ **Choice:** motivates students; builds stamina; increased text complexity; development of a reading life
- ▶ Challenged to read **40 books a year/20 books a semester** (Miller)
- ▶ **20 mins. daily to read in class;** 5-10 mins. to write; 20 mins. of reading for HW
- ▶ **Reading conferences** (Miller, Routman), Status of the Class (Miller)
- ▶ **Book Talks:** Five for Friday, on-going, DAILY

Building Your Classroom Library

- ▶ Getting to **know your readers** (Denver Reading Attitude Survey, other means)
- ▶ Take **inventory** of what you currently have in your library; evaluate genre representation
- ▶ Evaluate **representation** (Teaching Tolerance Appendix D)
 - ▶ Who is present? Who is **missing**?
 - ▶ Are **#ownvoices** represented?
 - ▶ What are **Black boys** doing?



“Choice in reading matters to me because I’ll read more if I can choose....I would hate to be given a book that doesn’t challenge me to be a better reader. I feel like books are like clothes—everyone has a different style. Making someone read a book is almost like making them wear uniforms—not everyone is going to like them. All these years my love for reading has been suppressed because I didn’t have a choice. Now that I do have a choice I think it would kill me to go back to being assigned books. This year being able to pick the books and also being able to stop reading them if I wanted made me fall in love with reading. I actually go home and read my books because I want to.”

–Zeyvoun F., Sophomore

Your Next Steps



"All that you touch you change. All that you change changes you. The only lasting truth is Change."

-Octavia Butler

- What would you have to do in order to feel empowered to make the work we've done together today a reality?
- What would you have to learn and unlearn? Who might be your partners?
- What might be opportunities to improvise or adapt what you are already doing?

Suggested Texts to Start your #blackboylit Canon



AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR BLACK BOYS: PREK- 12

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

DR. KIM PARKER
SHADY HILL SCHOOL

Scholastic Reading
Summits
Raleigh, NC
Greenwich, CT
July 2018

CONTACT

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TWITTER: @TCHKIMPOSSIBLE

FICTION

- *Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut*, Derrick Barnes (2017)
- *Everett Anderson's Goodbye*, Lucille Clifton (1983)
- *Bud, Not Buddy*, Christopher Paul Curtis (1999)
- *Clean Your Room*, Harvey Moon, Pat Cummings (1991)
- *Tears of a Tiger* (trilogy), Sharon Draper (1996)
- *Jaden Toussaint* (series), Marti Dumas (2015)
- *Bird*, Zetta Elliott (2008)
- *Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything In It*, Sundee Frazier (2008)
- *The Bat Boy and His Violin*, Curtis Gavin (1998)
- *The First Part Last*, Angela Johnson (2003)
- *Riding Chance*, Christine Kendall (2016)
- *Yummy, the Last Days of a Southside Shorty*, G. Neri (2010)
- *Big Jabe*, Jerdine Nolen (2003)
- *Autobiography of My Dead Brother*, Walter Dean Myers (2006)
- *Max Found Two Sticks*, Brian Pinkney (1994)
- *As Brave as You*, Jason Reynolds (2017)
- *The Boy in the Black Suit*, Jason Reynolds (2015)
- *Ghost*, Jason Reynolds (2017)
- *X: A Novel*, Ilyash Shabazz and Kekla Magoon (2016)
- *Hoodoo*, Ronald Smith (2015)
- *Stevie*, John Steptoe (1969)
- *Bippity Bop Barbershop*, Natasha Tarpley (2002)
- *Little Cliff* books, Clifton Taulbert (1999-2002)
- *Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World*, Mildred Pitts Walter (1986)
- *Locomotion*, Jacqueline Woodson (2007)
- *Miracle's Boys*, Jacqueline Woodson (2000)

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Available: www.classroomlinernotes.wordpress.com

Discussion

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#DisruptTexts

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Thank You!



scene: portrait of a black boy with flowers

& he is not in a casket
nor do I say roses all around him
& mean a low blood tide

he does not return to the dirt

the stem does not bloom
from concrete. he does not

bring the flowers to his best friend's
funeral nor does he give them
to a woman who will grieve him one day




the boy is in his grandmother's garden
& the world does not matter

his lungs are full of a green, full scent
& pollen dusts his skin gold as he grows

--DANEZ SMITH



Why read 20 minutes at home?

Student A Reads	Student B Reads	Student C Reads
20 minutes per day	5 minutes per day	1 minute per day
3,600 minutes per school year	900 minutes per school year	180 minutes per school year
1,800,000 words per year	282,000 words per year	8,000 words per year
		
Scores in the 90th percentile on standardized tests.	Scores in the 50th percentile on standardized tests.	Scores in the 10th percentile on standardized tests.

If they start reading for 20 minutes per night in Kindergarten, by the end of 6th grade, Student A will have read for the equivalent of 60 school days, Student B will have read for 12 school days, and Student C will have read for 3.

Want to be a better reader? Simply read.

What's In Your Canon?

Join us as we disrupt texts each week and reimagine the literary canon.

Look for the #DisruptTexts discussion posted every Monday and follow throughout the week!

#DisruptTexts



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