

Your Library Today



Mr. Breitsprecher's Edition

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www.mylmcweb.com

African American Authors: Chapter Books & YA Lit

Derrick D. Barnes is an award-winning author, writing books for young readers of all ages. Derrick is a graduate of Jackson State University with a BA in Marketing. Prior to becoming an author, he was hired as the first African American male copywriter in the history of Hallmark Cards.

derrickbarnes.com

Christopher Paul Curtis, a Newbery Medal and Coretta Scott King award-winning children's author, graduated from high school and enrolled at Flint's University of Michigan and got job at a General Motors assembly facility. He says writing overcame the boredom.

nobodybutcurtis.com

Sharon M. Draper is a teacher and writer! She has been honored as the National Teacher of the Year, is a five-time winner of the Coretta Scott King Literary Awards, and is a New York Times bestselling author.

sharondraper.com

Sharon G. Flake was once a house parent for youth placed temporarily in shelters. She's worked with young people in a foster care program for about eight years, and then attended the University of Pittsburgh where she developed her writing and communications skills.

sharongflake.com

Whoopi Goldberg, known around the world as an award-winning actress and movie star also writes great books which bubble with her fun-loving personality

<http://tinyurl.com/bzofbw4>

Eloise Greenfield had her first poem published in the Hartford Times in 1962. Her first book was published in 1972. She is now the author of more than 40 books for

The African American Experience Matters

Wisconsin Sen. Lena Taylor (Milwaukee), reflecting on the realization that an upcoming election could reduce representation of African Americans from in Wisconsin's legislature from 8 members to four, stated:

Can you believe I am still only the 5th African American state senator in Wisconsin's history?

After centuries, Black America remains connected by a common history and like experiences such as hyper segregation, Jim Crow Laws, Poll Taxes, Black Codes, voter suppression tactics and institutional racism. If we live in a bubble, it is a bubble isolated from privilege and opportunity all the while sustained through faith.

Even the most politically and economically successful African Americans remain intensely aware of the harsh realities faced by many of our brothers and sisters. We understand economic hardship, because we do not have the luxury of forgetting.

Diverse viewpoints are important. There was a time when it was hard to find books for children and young adults that featured realistic African American characters. For generations, most youth books featuring African Americans were not written by African American authors, even when they were written from the perspectives of African American characters.

Perhaps the ethnicity of a children's book author does not matter if their work, as a whole, is sensitive to and reflects life as African American children may experience it. Librarians increasingly agree -- experience does matter -- today you can find diverse authors and books at your local library!

children -- poetry, biography, picture books, and older fiction

<http://tinyurl.com/bejxwbs>

Nikki Grimes is poet and award-winning author of more than 45 books for children and adults. She considers herself more of a poet than a storyteller. Nikki started creating verse when she was six and has been writing ever since.

www.nikkigrimes.com

Virginia Hamilton is America's most honored writer of children's literature. Born during what she called "the outer edge of the Great Depression", Ms. Hamilton passed away in 2002. Her wonderful books are still widely read and will be for generations.

www.virginiahamilton.com

Shelia P. Moses born the 9th child in a family of 10, is a poet, author, playwright, and producer. She got started as a writer at a young age, self-publishing her first book *One More River to Cross*, which is a collection of essays and poems -- writing styles she still enjoys today.

tinyurl.com/azwpysy

Walter Dean Myers had a high school teacher that recognized his writing skills. "It's what you do," she told him. Myers didn't understand what she was saying, but when he dropped out of high school, he didn't stop writing. Years later, when working on a construction job in New York, Myers remembered what his teacher had shared.

walterdeanmyers.net

Connie Rose Porter was born the third youngest of nine children in a family living at a housing project. She went on to earn degrees from SUNY, Albany, and Louisiana State University. After graduating, Ms. Porter taught English and creative writing at Milton Academy, Emerson College, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

tinyurl.com/bx8v9f9

Harriette Robinet was born in Washington D.C. and spent her childhood summers in Arlington, Virginia, where her mother's father had been a slave under General Robert E. Lee. An award-winning author, she attended the College of New Rochelle in New York and then Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

hgrobinet.com

Mildred D. Taylor writes novels based on stories from her own family, stories she learned at family gatherings throughout her life. Nearly all of her characters are based on family members or acquaintances she has known or learned about

tinyurl.com/bcrxq25

Mildred Pitts Walter, a teacher, also reviewed books for the L.A. Times. She noticed that there were few children's books about African Americans. She asked a publisher to publish more -- they asked her to write books for them.

tinyurl.com/6f2phdz

Rita Williams-Garcia continues to break new ground in young people's literature. Author of four award-winning novels, her books are known for their realistic portrayal of teens of color.

ritawg.com

Jacqueline Woodson used to tell people she'd be a teacher or a lawyer or a hairdresser when she grew up; but even as she would say these things, Ms. Woodson knew what made her happiest -- writing. She's written lots of books and she's still writing more.

jacquelinewoodson.com

Our African American Authors Pathfinder features too many great writers to be able to identify all of the great books they have written. Some of the authors are still writing new ones -- we have provided a website for each African American author to make it easy to find all of the books that may be available at your local library or bookstore. Here are a few of the great books on this list. Your friendly librarian will help you find more!

Chapter Books (grades 3-6)

Ruby and the Booker Boys [Series]; by Barnes, Derrick D.
The Watsons Go to Birmingham: 1963; by Curtis, Christopher Paul
Clubhouse Mysteries [Series]; by Draper, Sharon M.
Sassy [Series]; by Draper, Sharon M.
The Broken Bike Boy And The Queen of 33rd Street; by Flake, Sharon
Sugar Plum [Series]; by Goldberg, Whoopi
Koya DeLaney and the Good Girl Blues; by Greenfield, Eloise
Dyamonde Daniel [Series]; by Nikki Grimes
The road to Paris; by Grimes, Nikki.
Her Stories: African American Folktales, Fairy Tales, and True Tales; by Hamilton, Virginia (Note: *All ages*)
The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales; by Hamilton, Virginia (Note: *All ages*)
The legend of Buddy Bush; by Moses, Shelia P.
Darnell Rock Reporting; by Myers, Walter Dean
All-Bright Court; by Porter, Connie Rose
Missing From Haymarket Square; by Robinet, Harriette
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry; by Taylor, Mildred D.
Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World; by Walter, Mildred Pitts
One Crazy Summer; by Williams-Garcia, Rita
Feathers; by Woodson, Jacqueline.
Peace, Locomotion; by Woodson, Jacqueline

YA Lit (grades 7-10)

The Battle of Jericho; by Draper, Sharon M.
Forged by Fire; by Draper, Sharon M.
Romiette and Julio; by Draper, Sharon M.
Tears of a Tiger; by Draper, Sharon M.
Bronx Masquerade; by Grimes, Nikki
A Girl Named Mister; by Grimes, Nikki
In the Beginning: Creation Stories from Around the World; by Hamilton, Virginia
The House of Dies Drear; by Hamilton, Virginia
Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush; by Hamilton, Virginia
Joseph; by Moses, Sheila
Dope Sick; by Myers, Walter Dean
Fallen Angels; by Myers, Walter Dean
Hoops; by Myers, Walter Dean
Lockdown; by Myers, Walter Dean
Monster; by Myers, Walter Dean
Riot; by Myers, Walter Dean
Imani All Mine; Porter Connie Rose
Every Time a Rainbow Dies; Rita Williams-Garcia
Jumped; Rita Williams-Garcia
Like Sisters on the Homefront; Rita Williams-Garcia
Behind You; by Woodson, Jacqueline
Beneath a Meth Moon; by Woodson, Jacqueline
The Dear One; by Woodson, Jacqueline
I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This; by Woodson, Jacqueline
If You Come Softly; by Woodson, Jacqueline