Inclusive Literature Lists

The Billings Public Library supports and values and celebrates diversity and inclusion. We strive to curate a collection of resources that represents all demographics in our community's tapestry. We believe an inclusive and welcoming community is a stronger community.

This list of inclusive and diverse literature that the youth of our community can see themselves in as well as use as a conduit to build compassion for others is brought to you on behalf of collaboration between the Human Relations Commission of the City of Billings, the Billings Public Library, and a children's literature assistant professor from Montana State University Billings.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. We welcome your feedback, suggestions, and any recommendations for this list. We will take these into consideration as we continue to develop these lists.

October 2020: National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct.15)

Besos for Baby: A Little Book of Kisses
By Arena, Jen
2014-09 - LB Kids
9780316230377 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Texas 2x2 Reading List (2015)

Using simple Spanish words, this adorable bilingual read-aloud proves that love is the same in every language! Parents won't be able to resist giving baby "muchos besos" as they share this book, filled with bold, graphic illustrations, with their little "bebe.O Full color. ...More
Life of - La Vida de Pelé, the
By Rodriguez, Patty
Author Stein, Ariana
Illustrator Reyes, Citlali
2020-09 - Lil' Libros
9781947971530 Check Our Catalog SPA

Introduce little ones to the life of legendary soccer player, Pelé, in both English and Spanish.

Born October 23, 1940 in Brazil, Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known as Pelé, is widely regarded as one of the greatest soccer players of all time.

Patty Rodriguez is the co-founder of Lil' Libros, a publisher of bilingual children's books and co-author of more than ... More

Around the World With/Alrededor del Mundo Con
By Rodriguez, Patty
Author Stein, Ariana
Illustrator Reyes, Citlali
2018-03 - Lil' Libros
9780986109980 Check Our Catalog SPA

A Lil' Libros Bilingual Geography Book

Inspired by one of the world's most iconic comedians, Mario Moreno (better known as the inquisitive Cantinflas), this book will take little ones around the world while introducing them to their first English and Spanish words. Travel with the curious Cantinflas through Los Estados Unidos by train, through France on a hot air balloon, and ... More

Zapata: Colors/Colores: A Bilingual Book of Colors
By Rodriguez, Patty
Author Stein, Ariana
Illustrator Reyes, Citlali
2015-03 - Lil' Libros
9781495126574 Check Our Catalog SPA

A Lil' Libros Bilingual Book of Colors

As a leading figure during the Mexican revolution, Emiliano Zapata was an extraordinary man who fought for the less fortunate. This book introduces little ones to colors and their first English and Spanish words. Ride a caballo blanco (white horse), wear a brown sombrero (hat), and walk the green pastures where Zapata once ... More
Did you know that there are over 5000 types of potatoes sold in South America? Or that in Honduras, a song about conch soup reached the Billboard Top 100 Charts?

Latino culture spans Southern and Central America as well as the Caribbean, but often when we think of Latino foods, we think tacos, burritos, and other common Mexican dishes. *Proud to Be Latino: Food/Comida* ...

This bilingual board book by acclaimed authors Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy presents popular and beloved lullabies from all over the Spanish-speaking world. Full of charm and humor, and rich with the diversity of Latinx cultures, *Mamá Goose* is the perfect introduction to Latinx lullabies for English speakers, and a trove of familiar favorites for Spanish speakers.

La Llorona is a ghost, very prominent in the folklore of Latin America, who searches for her missing children, and brings misfortune to others. But this book is far from spooky. Count *piedras* in the river, eyes of owls, and red doors where La Llorona may be hiding.

Unable to find bilingual first concept books she could enjoy ...

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Unable to find bilingual first concept books she could enjoy ...
Some things are close -- cerca. Others are far -- lejos. With sweet simplicity, this charming dual-language board book and its companion volume, Lejos/Far, engage young children.

Mi cuarto est cerca de la cocina. My bedroom is close to the kitchen.

As she walks from her kitchen through a daisy-filled yard to the house next door, a little girl notices things ...More

La Vida de/The Life of Selena
By Rodriguez, Patty
Author Stein, Ariana
Illustrator Reyes, Citlali
2018-03 - Lil' Libros
9780986109997 Check Our Catalog

A Lil' Libros Bilingual Biography

Selena's career started at a young age when she became lead singer in her family's band, Selena Y Los Dinos. She went on to become an award-winning artist with albums like Amor Prohibido and Selena Live, and earned the title Queen of Tejano Music." Your little one will learn that Selena's favorite food was pizza and that the most important people ...More

Animal Talk: Mexican Folk Art Animal Sounds in English and Spanish
By Weill, Cynthia
2017-04 - Cinco Puntos Press
9781941026694 Check Our Catalog

"A beautiful, playful, child-centric approach to language learning--and if it spawns conversations about dialects, so much the better." --Kirkus

"This interactive picture book is sure to be a young crowd-pleaser and storytime favorite." --School Library Journal

Rub Fuentes is the daughter and apprentice of a famous Oaxacan woodcarver. Oddly, she met Efran Broa ...More

Dreamers
By Morales, Yuyi
2018-09 - Neal Porter Books
9780823440559 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2019)

We are resilience. We are hope. We are dreamers.

Yuyi Morales brought her hopes, her passion, her strength, and her stories with her, when she came to the United States in 1994 with her
infant son. She left behind nearly everything she owned, but she didn't come empty-handed.

*Dreamers* is a celebration of making your home with the things you have.

**Lucia the Luchadora: And the Million Masks**
By *Garza, Cynthia Leonor*
Illustrator *Bermudez, Alyssa*
2018-10 - Powl! Kids Books
9781576878941 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Lucia's little sister Gemma wants to be a luchadora like her big sister, but she is more bumble and splat than pizzazz and seems to find trouble wherever she goes. When Gemma makes a ginormous hole in Lucia's special silver mask, Lucia is incredulous and exasperated at how her little sister seems to get away with everything. But Lucia's grandmother, Abu, has an idea: a trip to the mercado to get...[more]

**The Heart of the World**
By *Lujan, Jorge*
Illustrator *Carrer, Chiara*
Translator *Lethem, Mara*
2018-06 - Enchanted Lion Books
9781592702534 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Pablo lives in Chile with his hardworking father. But Pablo also lives in Ecuador, deep in the Amazon rainforest. There is another Pablo living with his family in Mexico, after fleeing the dictatorship in Argentina. And in New York, Pablo shares an overcrowded apartment in the Bronx, where he's only allowed home for twelve hours at a time. Pablo is the son of a rural schoolteacher in Peru, and...[more]

**Across the Bay**
By *Aponte, Carlos*
Illustrator *Aponte, Carlos*
2019-09 - Penguin Workshop
9781524786625 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2020)

**RECIPIENT OF THE PURA BELPRE ILLUSTRATOR HONOR**

Author-illustrator Carlos Aponte takes readers on a journey to the heart of Puerto Rico in this enchanting picture book set in Old San Juan.

"A lively and honest story about filling voids and exploring what defines a family--as well as a love letter to a childhood home."--*Horn Book*

Carlitos lives in a happy home with...[more]
Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré
By Denise, Anika Aldamuy
Illustrator Escobar, Paola
2019-01 - HarperCollins
9780062748683 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2020)

RECIPIENT OF THE PURA BELPR HONOR

* A Today Show's Best Kids' Books of 2019 * Indie Next List Pick
* Junior Library Guild Selection *

"An appealing tribute and successful remedy to the lack of titles about the groundbreaking librarian...a ...More

Dancing Hands: How Teresa Carreño Played the Piano for President Lincoln
By Engle, Margarita
Illustrator López, Rafael
2019-08 - Atheneum Books for Young Readers
9781481487405 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2020)

Winner of the Pura Belpre Illustrator Award

A Kirkus Reviews Best Picture Book

In soaring words and stunning illustrations, Margarita Engle and Rafael López tell the story of Teresa Carreño, a child prodigy who played piano for Abraham Lincoln.

As a little girl, Teresa Carreño loved to let her hands dance across the beautiful keys of the piano. If she ...More

My Papi Has a Motorcycle
By Quintero, Isabel
Illustrator Peña, Zeke
2019-05 - Kokila
9780525553410 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2020)

A celebration of the love between a father and daughter, and of a vibrant immigrant neighborhood, by an award-winning author and illustrator duo.
When Daisy Ramona zooms around her neighborhood with her papi on his motorcycle, she sees the people and places she's always known. She also sees a community that is rapidly changing around her.

But as the sun sets purple-blue-gold behind...

**Octopus Stew**
By [Velasquez, Eric](#)
2019-09 - Holiday House
9780823437542 [Check Our Catalog](#)

What do you do when an octopus captures Grandma? Put on your superhero cape and rescue her! This clever picture book tells two stories in one, from award-winning Afro-Latino artist Eric Velasquez.

The octopus Grandma is cooking has grown to titanic proportions. "Tenga cuidado " Ramsey shouts. "Be careful " But it's too late. The octopus traps Grandma.

Ramsey uses both art...

**Danza!: Amalia Hernandez and El Ballet Folklorico de Mexico**
By [Tonatiuh, Duncan](#)
2017-08 - Harry N. Abrams
9781419725326 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Award-winning author and illustrator Duncan Tonatiuh tells the story of Amalia Hernandez, dancer and founder of El Ballet Folklorico de Mexico.

As a child, Amalia Hernandez saw a pair of dancers in the town square. The way they stomped and swayed to the rhythm of the beat inspired her. She knew one day she would become a dancer.

Amalia studied ballet and modern dance under the...

**Islandborn**
By [Diaz, Junot](#)
Illustrator [Espinosa, Leo](#)
2018-03 - Dial Books
9780735229860 [Check Our Catalog](#)

**Awards:**
Pura Belpre Award (2019)

From *New York Times* bestseller and Pulitzer Prize winner Junot Díaz comes a debut picture book about the magic of memory and the infinite power of the imagination.
Every kid in Lola’s school was from somewhere else. 
Hers was a school of faraway places.

“A 2019 Pura Belpre Honor Book for Illustration

"An emotional entry point to a larger, necessary discussion on this complex and difficult subject." – Kirkus Reviews

Four unaccompanied migrant children come together along the arduous journey north through Mexico to the United States border in this ode to the power of hope and connection even in the face of uncertainty and fear.

Every year, roughly

Musician, botanist, baseball player, pilot--the Latinos featured in this collection, Bravo, come from many different countries and from many different backgrounds. Celebrate their accomplishments and their contributions to a collective history and a community that continues to evolve and thrive today

Biographical poems include: Aida de Acosta, Arnold Rojas, Baruj Benacerraf, C

Awards:
Cybils (2015), Pura Belpre Award (2016)

The acclaimed author of "Ta Isa Wants a Car" presents a tender story
about a little girl whose Spanish-speaking grandmother cannot read in English. A 2016 Pura Belpre Honor Book. Full color.  

**Turning Pages: My Life Story**  
By [Sotomayor, Sonia](#)  
Illustrator [Delacre, Lulu](#)  
2018-09 - Philomel Books  
9780525514084 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor tells her own story for young readers for the very first time  

As the first Latina Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor has inspired young people around the world to reach for their dreams. But what inspired her? For young Sonia, the answer was books. They were her mirrors, her maps, her friends, and her teachers. They helped her to connect with ...More  

**A New Kind of Wild**  
By [Hoang, Zara Gonzalez](#)  
Illustrator [Hoang, Zara Gonzalez](#)  
2020-04 - Dial Books  
9780525553892 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

This sweet author-illustrator debut celebrates imagination, the magic of friendship, and all the different ways we make a new place feel like home.  

For Ren, home is his grandmother's little house, and the lush forest that surrounds it. Home is a place of magic and wonder, filled with all the fantastical friends that Ren dreams up. Home is where his imagination can run wild.  

For Ava, ...More  

**Stella Diaz Has Something to Say**  
By [Dominguez, Angela](#)  
2018-01 - Roaring Brook Press  
9781626728585 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

1st book in Stella Diaz series  

In her first middle-grade novel, award-winning picture book author and illustrator Angela Dominguez tells a heartwarming story based on her own experiences growing up Mexican-American.  

Stella D az loves marine animals, especially her betta fish, Pancho. But Stella D az is not a betta fish. Betta fish like to be alone, while Stella loves spending time with her mom and brother and her best ...More
Thoughtful, strong-willed sixth-grader Merci Suarez navigates difficult changes with friends, family, and everyone in between in a resonant new novel from Meg Medina.

Merci Suarez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just how different. For starters, Merci has never been like the other... More

"Refreshingly original. . . . Medina's beautiful, vivid prose conjures the Colombian setting with tactile language. . . . The story itself is a giant hug." -- The New York Times Book Review

Fans of Judy Moody and Clarice Bean will love Juana, the spunky young Colombian girl who stars in this playful, abundantly illustrated series. Juana loves many things: drawing, living in Bogot... More

A charming and delectably sweet debut. Mischief, friendship, and a whole lot of heart--Love Sugar Magic has it all. --Zoraida Cordova, award-winning author of the Brooklyn Brujas series. This middle grade novel is an excellent choice for tween readers in grades 5 to 6, especially during homeschooling. It's a... More
The Other Half of Happy
By Balcarcel, Rebecca
2019-08 - Chronicle Books
9781452169989 Check Our Catalog

Awards:
Pura Belpre Award (2020)

2020 Pura Belpre Honor Book
A Junior Library Guild Selection
ALSC Notable Children's Book
2020 Jean Flynn Award for Best Middle Grade Book
2020 Spirit of Texas Reading Program Recommended Title

This immersive and beautifully written novel follows the story of Quijana, a girl in pieces.

Quijana must figure out which parts of ...

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish
By Cartaya, Pablo
2018-08 - Viking Books for Young Readers
9781101997260 Check Our Catalog

One boy's search for his father leads him to Puerto Rico in this moving middle-grade novel, for fans of Ghost and See You in the Cosmos.

Marcus Vega is six feet tall, 180 pounds, and the owner of a premature mustache. When you look like this and you're only in the eighth grade, you're both a threat and a target.

After a fight at school leaves Marcus facing suspension, ...

Efren Divided
By Cisneros, Ernesto
2020-03 - Quill Tree Books
9780062881687 Check Our Catalog

"We need books to break open our hearts, so that we might feel more deeply, so that we might be more human in these unkind times. This is a book doing work of the spirit in a time of darkness." --Sandra Cisneros, author of The House on Mango Street

Efren Nava's Am is his Superwoman--or Soperwoman, named after the delicious Mexican sopes his mother often ...

...
Ghost Squad
By Ortega, Claribel
Author Ortega, Claribel A.
2020-04 - Scholastic Press
9781338280128 Check Our Catalog

*Coco* meets *Stranger Things* with a hint of *Ghostbusters* in this action-packed supernatural fantasy.

For Lucely Luna, ghosts are more than just the family business.

Shortly before Halloween, Lucely and her best friend, Syd, cast a spell that accidentally awakens malicious spirits, wreaking havoc throughout St. Augustine. Together, they ...More

On These Magic Shores
By Mendez, Yamile Saied
2020-06 - Tu Books
9781643790312 Check Our Catalog

Minerva must take care of her sisters after her mother's disappearance in this magical #ownvoices middle grade story that pairs perfectly with *Peter Pan*.

Minerva Soledad Miranda is determined to reach her goals, despite shouldering more responsibility than the other kids at school--like caring for her two sisters while her mom works two jobs. But one night, Minerva's mom doesn't ...More

Santiago's Road Home
By Diaz, Alexandra
2020-05 - Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books
9781534446236 Check Our Catalog

"With every chapter, readers will be further immersed in Santiago's story as they root for his triumph over injustice." --Booklist (starred review)

"With unflinching conviction, Diaz sketches a frank, brief account of refugee youth in an uncaring bureaucratic system." --Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

"Harrowing but deeply illuminating." ...More
The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez
By **Cuevas, Adrianna**
2020-07 - Farrar, Straus and Giroux (Byr)
9780374313609 [Check Our Catalog](#)

In this magical middle-grade debut novel from Adrianna Cuevas, *The Total Eclipse of Nestor Lopez*, a Cuban American boy must use his secret ability to communicate with animals to save the inhabitants of his town when they are threatened by a tule vieja, a witch that transforms into animals.

All Nestor Lopez wants is to live in one place for more than a few months and have ...More

What If a Fish
By **Fajardo, Anika**
2020-08 - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
9781534449831 [Check Our Catalog](#)

A whimsical and unflinchingly honest generational story of family and identity where hats turn into leeches, ghosts blow kisses from lemon trees, and the things you find at the end of your fishing line might not be a fish at all.

Half-Colombian Eddie Aguado has never really felt Colombian. Especially after Papa died. And since Mama keeps her memories of Papa locked up where Eddie ...More

Immigrant Architect: Rafael Guastavino and the American Dream
By **de Miguel, Berta**
Author **Diebolt, Kent**
Illustrator **Lorente, Virginia**
2020-04 - Tilbury House Publishers
9780884488125 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Booklist Starred Review

The Spanish architects Rafael Guastavino Sr. and his son, Rafael Guastavino Jr., designed more than one thousand iconic spaces across New York City and the United States, such as the New York City Hall Subway Station (still a tourist destination though no longer active), the Manhattan Federal Reserve Bank, the Nebraska State Capitol, the Great Hall of Ellis ...More

Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family’s Fight for Desegregation
By **Tonatiuh, Duncan**
2014-05 - Harry N. Abrams
9781419710544 [Check Our Catalog](#)

Awards:
Alabama Camellia Award (2016), Americas Award for Children & Young

A decade before the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling "Brown v. Board of Education," Sylvia Mendez, an eight-year-old girl of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, played an instrumental role in a landmark desegregation case in 1946 in California. Winner of the Pura Belpre Award. Full color.

Sharuko: El Arqueólogo Peruano Julio C. Tello / Peruvian Archaeologist Julio C. Tello
By Brown, Monica
Illustrator Chavarri, Elisa
2020-08 - Children's Book Press (CA)
9780892394234 Check Our Catalog SPA

A fascinating bilingual picture book biography of Peruvian archaeologist and national icon Julio C. Tello, who unearthed Peru’s ancient cultures and fostered pride in the country’s Indigenous history.

Growing up in the late 1800s, Julio Tello, an Indigenous boy, spent time exploring the caves and burial grounds in the foothills of the Peruvian Andes. Nothing scared Julio, not...