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.

Inclusive Literature: April 2023

Your Special Voice
By Adamolekun, Temi
Illustrator Okafor, Keisha
2022-12 - Little Simon
9781665912280 Check Our Catalog

This empowering board book inspires young readers to use their own special voice to make a difference in the world.

If you want to make a difference,

but you don't know where to start

Begin by searching way deep down
to find what's in your heart

Whether your voice shines through singing, drawing, or dancing--whether it's...

Swaddled with Love
By Preziosi, Alessandra
Illustrator Syed, Anoosha
2023-04 - Clarion Books
0358620333 Check Our Catalog

If it's time for a nap or a sweet good night, then it's time to swaddle baby, warm and tight. As tender as a cozy hug, this interactive shaped board book celebrates the joy of welcoming a new baby to the world-and the way all new parents wrap up their little ones with love.

Is there anything sweeter than a newborn swaddled in a beautiful blanket?

Swaddling a baby is a labor of...

My Party, Mi Fiesta: A Coco Rocho Book
By Raúl the Third
2022-04 - Versify
9780358394723 Check Our Catalog SPA

In this festive bilingual Spanish and English board book from New York Times bestselling, Pura Belpré Award-winning author-illustrator Raúl the Third, join Coco Rocho and friends from the World of Vamos! as they gather everything to throw a grand fiesta!

Throwing a party is always fun, especially when it's in both English and Spanish!

In this new board...

We Are Little Feminists: How We Eat
By de la Fuente-Lau, Shuli
2022-10 - Little Feminist Press
9781734182491 Check Our Catalog

Mealtime just got a whole lot more fun! HOW WE EAT helps families and educators discuss ability, culture, and food at home and in the classroom.

Complete with family discussion questions and a guide detailing the foods, tools, and utensils seen on each page. Created with 0-5-year-olds in mind.

See kids using bottles, spoons, chopsticks, GI tubes, forks, cups, and their...

...More
One Sky
By Becker, Aaron
Illustrator Becker, Aaron
2022-09 - Candlewick Studio
9781536225365 Check Our Catalog

Marvel at the sky in this meditative die-cut book, a follow-up to You Are Light and My Favorite Color, from the Caldecott Honor-winning creator of the Journey trilogy.

Its dawn begins in darkness.

With hope we greet its light.

Within the pages of this elegant book is the entire sky. Lyrical text moves readers through ...

One White Crane: A Calendar Year
By Lee, Vickie
Illustrator Chou, Joey
2022-12 - Henry Holt & Company
9781250801517 Check Our Catalog

One white crane, two black bears . . .

Simply told and beautifully rendered, this counting board book takes young readers through the months of the year. Each month focuses on a new animal, from seals in May to cicadas in September. Sweet, accessible text in English and Chinese pairs with eye-catching art for a wonderful repeat reading experience.

...More

Together: A First Conversation about Love
By Madison, Megan
Author Ralli, Jessica
Illustrator Passchier
2022-12 - Rise X Penguin Workshop
9780593520963 Check Our Catalog

...More

French 1,2,3: Lift the Flap and Learn
By Lewis, Liza
2023-02 - DK Publishing (Dorling Kindersley)
0744072832 Check Our Catalog
Learn to count to ten in English and French and build vocabulary with this bright, quirky board book.

Have you ever wondered what an elephant riding a skateboard would look like? Or how about four lions on scooters? Meet lots of different, and very funny, animals as they set out on their travels in this bilingual English-French, interactive flap book.

In *Lift the Flap* and …More

My First Book about Salah
By *Khan, Sara*
Illustrator *Lodge, Ali*
2023-01 - Kube Publishing Ltd
9780860378525 Check Our Catalog

The perfect book to introduce children to the Gift of Prayer (Salah).

This simple but beautiful book introduces children to the second pillar of Islam; the five daily prayers. It starts with reference to the Night Journey 'Isra wal Miraj' in which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) first received the Gift of Prayer. It outlines some of the practical aspects of Salah and explains why, when and where …More

Where We Come from
By *Coy, John*
Author *Gibney, Shannon*
Author *Shin, Sun Yung*
2022-10 - Carolrhoda Books (R)
9781541596122 Check Our Catalog

In this unique collaboration, four authors lyrically explore where they each come from--literally and metaphorically--as well as what unites all of us as humans.

Richly layered illustrations connect past and present, making for an accessible and visually striking look at history, family, and identity.

*We come from stardust / our bodies made of ancient …More*

Beautiful You, Beautiful Me
By *Spillett-Sumner, Tasha*
Illustrator *Perera, Salini*
2022-10 - Owlkids
9781771474528 Check Our Catalog

A child who looks different from her mother finds beauty and belonging in this new book from the creator of *New York Times* bestseller *I Sang You Down from the Stars*
Izzy's favorite place to be is in Mama's arms--skin to skin, safe and warm. One night, cuddled up on Mama's lap, Izzy notices something she's never noticed before:  

**Forever Cousins**  
By [Goodluck, Laurel](#)  
*Illustrator Nelson, Jonathan*  
2022-10 - Charlesbridge Publishing  
9781623542924 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

**Up and Down Mom**  
By [Child's Play](#)  
*Illustrator Maçon, Summer*  
2020-04 - Child's Play International  
9781786283405 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

Living with Mom is a bit like a roller coaster ride. At times, she is excited and full of energy, but at others, she is tired and withdrawn. But she's always my mom, and we're sharing the ride. For children who grow up in the care of a parent who has bipolar disorder, life can be filled with anxiety and uncertainty. With the aid of a clear and simple information spread, this story helps us to  

**Lion Lights**  
By [Turere, Richard](#)  
*Author Pollock, Shelly*  
*Illustrator Possentini, Sonia Maria Luce*  
2022-08 - Tilbury House Publishers  
9780884488859 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

Richard Turere's own story: Richard grew up in Kenya as a Maasai boy, herding his family's cattle, which represented their wealth and livelihood. Richard's challenge was to protect their cattle from the lions who prowled the night just outside the barrier of acacia branches that surrounded the farm's boma, or stockade. Though not well-educated, 12-year-old Richard loved tinkering with electronics.  

**Remembering Mom's Kubbat Halab**  
By [Sharif, Medeia](#)  
*Illustrator Kim, Paran*  
2022-10 - Albert Whitman & Company  
9780807569320 [Check Our Catalog](#)  

When a loved one dies, remembering them through shared experiences and the ways they expressed their love, helps with loss.
Bushra misses her mother, her dayik. So does her brother Sherzat. Mom used to help them with homework, read to them, and tuck them into bed at night. For Bushra, she would cook kubbat halab, perfectly golden rice-and-potato patties made without ...More

Baby Boy, You Are a Star!
By Pinkney, Andrea
Illustrator Pinkney, Brian
2023-01 - Cartwheel Books
9781338672428 Check Our Catalog

New York Times bestselling and award-winning duo Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney create a joyful and beautiful ode to all bright brown baby boys -- the fifth title in our acclaimed Bright Brown Baby series!

Baby boy. Precious boy. Yes! You're a STAR!

A joyful, poetic celebration and ode to all bright brown baby boys. With bouncing, rhythmic text from ...More

Dumpling Day
By Sriram, Meera
Illustrator de Antuñano, Inés
2021-11 - Barefoot Books
9781646862818 Check Our Catalog

...More

Elle the Humanist
By Harris, Douglas
Foreword by Dennett, Daniel
Author Harris, Elle
2020-09 - Label Free Publishing, LLC
9781734001341 Check Our Catalog

Elle the Humanist is a beautifully illustrated book by nine-year-old Elle Harris, presenting humanist ideas and ethics in a way that's warm, welcoming, and accessible for young readers. It features a foreword by renowned philosopher and author Daniel Dennett. Elle had a small problem. Growing up in a secular household, but in a community dominated by one religion, Elle was one of the few kids ...More

My Town / Mi Pueblo
By Solis, Nicholas
Illustrator Uribe, Luisa
2022-08 - Nancy Paulsen Books
9780593109915 Check Our Catalog
In this bilingual picture book, cousins from opposite sides of the border visit each other’s towns and delight in their similarities and differences.

Two cousins live in two towns, separated by a river. But there is also a bigger divide--the US-Mexico border--which means they live in different countries. On the girl's side, English is the main language, and on the boy's it's Spanish.  

Soaring in Style: How Amelia Earhart Became a Fashion Icon  
By Wilson, Jennifer Lane  
Illustrator Marlin, Lissy  
2022-02 - Capstone Editions  
9781684464289 Check Our Catalog

One and Everything  
By Winston, Sam  
Illustrator Winston, Sam  
2022-11 - Candlewick Studio  
9781536215663 Check Our Catalog


Once there were many stories in the world. There were stories with sunsets and wonderful tales filled with fairies and dinosaurs. But one day, a story decided that it was the best, the most...  

A Door Made for Me  
By Merritt, Tyler  
Illustrator Ollivierre, Lonnie  
2022-09 - Worthy Kids  
9781546012566 Check Our Catalog

Emotional and honest, this picture book explores a racist encounter from the perspective of a young Black boy, while offering a message of unconditional love and acceptance to soothe the pain that comes from blind prejudice.

In this story based on the author's childhood, a young Black boy confronts his first experience of overt racism. In recounting the events to his grandfather, the...
Saving the Butterfly: A Story about Refugees
By Cooper, Helen
Illustrator Smith, Gill
2022-06 - Candlewick Studio
9781536220551 Check Our Catalog

Two resourceful siblings begin a new life as refugees in a poetic picture book about thriving—in your own time--after great loss.

From an award-winning author and a talented debut illustrator comes a profound story about child refugees healing and building new lives. When rescuers meet the boat, there are only two people left--a big child and a little one. The big one, remembering the ...

One Thursday Afternoon
By Dilorenzo, Barbara
2022-09 - Flyaway Books
9781947888371 Check Our Catalog

When Granddad picks Ava up from school one Thursday afternoon, she's quiet. She doesn't want to talk about the lockdown drill that has stirred up her worries. How can she be so afraid in a place that has always felt so safe?

Granddad doesn't talk much either; he just offers creativity and companionship. And with his gentle encouragement, Ava begins to sense that although the world can be ...

You Matter to Me
By Richards, Doyin
Illustrator Paul Jr, Robert
2022-11 - Feiwel & Friends
9781250834485 Check Our Catalog

In this picture book written by Doyin Richards and illustrated by Robert Paul Jr., You Matter to Me, a dog describes what it's like to go on walks with his Black owner and wishes that people would see his human as he does: with love.

Biscuit the dog is adopted from the shelter and loves his new home and his new human family. The dad, especially, takes good care of Biscuit and ...

Story Quilts: Appalachian Women Speak
By Hitchcock, Shannon
With Page, Sophie
2023-01 - Reycraft Books
9781478875376 Check Our Catalog

... More
**Sana, Sana, Colita de Rana**  
By **Reyes, Citlali**  
Illustrator **Reyes, Citlali**  
2022-08 - Li'l Libros  
9781948066204 Check Our Catalog SPA

*Introduce your little ones to the power of standing up when you find yourself down in both English and Spanish.*

*Sana, sana, colita de rana! Si no sanas hoy, sanarás mañana!*

Inspired by the classic rhyming song, *Sana, sana, colita de rana*, that many American-Latino children grow up with, this book follows Tina in her quest to become an aspiring Mexican...More

**Good Morning, Sunshine!: The Joey Moss Story**  
By **Nicholson, Lorna Schultz**  
Illustrator **Carter, Alice**  
2022-08 - Sleeping Bear Press  
9781534111691 Check Our Catalog

Joey Moss first became known to many Canadians because of his work with the NHL Edmonton Oilers hockey team. Joey loved connecting with people. Whether he was singing Oh Canada on a jumbotron screen at a hockey game, welcoming a new friend with a playful wrestling match, or dancing on a runway for a charity fashion show, Joey loved making people feel good. But his impact and influence started long...More

**9 Kilometers**  
By **Aguilera, Claudio**  
Illustrator **Lyon, Gabriela**  
Translator **Schimel, Lawrence**  
2023-02 - Eerdmans Books for Young Readers  
9780802856005 Check Our Catalog

...More

**Buffalo Wild!**  
By **Havrelock, Deidre**  
Illustrator **Whitecalf, Azby**  
2021-10 - Annick Press  
9781773215334 Check Our Catalog

An exuberant celebration of the Buffalo's return to the wild.

Since Declan was born, his kokum has shared her love of Buffalo through stories and art. But Declan longs to see real Buffalo. Then one magical night, herds of the majestic creatures stampede down from the sky. That's when things really get wild...More
Azby Whitecalf’s playful illustrations add to the joy and …More

My Name Is Cool
By Sacre, Antonio
Illustrator Demonteverde, Sarah
2022-08 - Familius
9781641706575 Check Our Catalog

2023 Storytelling World Resource Award honoree

When I was born, I kept my eyes squeezed shut so tightly that my mom called me Mr. Magoo from a cartoon she loved.

My dad said I was going to be bilingual, like him, so he called me El Señor Magoo.

Little Antonio has a LOT of names. Different relatives call him different names, but the real culture shock happens …More

Sisterhood of Sleuths
By Chambliss Bertman, Jennifer
Illustrator Stamper, Vesper
2022-10 - Christy Ottaviano Books-Little Brown and Hach
9780316331074 Check Our Catalog

A clever and thought-provoking mystery that pays homage to classic Nancy Drew stories, perfect for fans of Wendy Mass and Trenton Lee Stewart.

Maizy always assumed she knew everything about her grandmother, Jacuzzi. So when a box full of vintage Nancy Drew books gets left at her mom’s thrift store, Maizy is surprised to find an old photo of her grandmother and two …More

Una Huna?: Ukpik Learns to Sew
By Aglukark, Susan
Illustrator Sandland, Amiel
Illustrator Brook, Rebecca
2022-09 - Inhabit Media
9781772274332 Check Our Catalog

Ukpik’s mother is eager to teach Ukpik how to prepare caribou skin, dry it, and use it to sew a pair of simple, useful mitts. But Ukpik can’t stop thinking about the beautiful new beads her mother traded the Captain for on his last visit. They are so bright and beautiful! Anaana knows it is more important for Ukpik to learn the skills she will need to make her own clothing in the cold Arctic …More
Sweet and Sour
By Florence, Debbi Michiko
2022-09 - Scholastic Press
9781338671599 Check Our Catalog

A heartfelt middle-grade novel about ex-best friends, betrayals, and revenge that is best served sour.

Revenge is sweet!

For as long as she can remember, Mai has spent every summer in Mystic, Connecticut visiting family friends. And hanging out with her best-friend-since-birth, Zach Koyama, was always the best part.

Then two summers ago everything ...More

A Different Kind of Normal: My Real-Life Completely True Story about Being Unique
By Balfe, Abigail
2022-10 - Crown Books for Young Readers
9780593566459 Check Our Catalog

Author-illustrator Abigail Balfe recounts her journey growing up autistic and the challenges of navigating the "normal" world around her in this joyfully illustrated memoir. Perfect for neurodivergent and neurotypical kids alike to learn more about neurodiversity.

This is Abigail's story about what it was like growing up autistic in a confusing "normal" world. With entertaining ...More

My Aunt Is a Monster: (A Graphic Novel)
By Yee, Reimena
2022-10 - Random House Graphic
9780593125465 Check Our Catalog

Curses! Adventures! And drama! Oh my! Safia might not be able to see the world, but that doesn't mean she can't experience it to the fullest as she finds herself on her very first adventure! This is a contemporary fantasy middle-grade graphic novel about discovering what you are truly capable of.

Safia thought that being blind meant she would only get to go on adventures through ...More
Front Country
By St Antoine, Sara
2022-10 - Chronicle Books
9781797215631 Check Our Catalog

My Side of the Mountain meets Greta Thunberg in this heartfelt, exciting novel about one girl's growing awareness of herself, the world, and the relationship between the two.

The world is not okay. Now what?

Ginny Shepard is glad to be in Montana for a month of backcountry camping before she starts high school. The world is on fire. That's the awful truth. And Ginny would …More

The Last Hope in Hopetown
By Tureaud, Maria
2022-10 - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
9780316368452 Check Our Catalog

Stranger Things meets Fake Blood in this deliciously charming and spooky debut novel about one girl's choice to save her vampire parents or do what's right for the greater good.

Twelve-year-old human Sophie Dawes lives a good life in Hopetown. There, vampires and humans live in harmony and Sophie and her adoptive vampire moms are living (or unliving) proof. There …More

The Trouble with Robots
By Mohrweis, Michelle
2022-09 - Peachtree Publishers
9781682634844 Check Our Catalog

Evelyn strives for excellence. Allie couldn't care less. These polar opposites must work together if they have any hope of saving their school's robotics program.

Eighth-graders Evelyn and Allie are in trouble. Evelyn's constant need for perfection has blown some fuses among her robotics teammates, and she's worried nobody's taking the upcoming competition seriously. Allie is new …More

This Last Adventure
By Dalton, Ryan
2022-02 - Carolrhoda Books (R)
9781541599284 Check Our Catalog

When Archie's beloved grandpa is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, Archie desperately wants to slow the progression of his grandpa's memory loss.
Using Grandpa's old journal entries as inspiration, he creates shared role-playing fantasies with epic quests for them to tackle together--allowing Grandpa to live in the present and stay in touch with his fading memories. ...More

**The Science of Being Angry**
By *Melleby, Nicole*  
2022-05 - Algonquin Young Readers  
9781643750378 [Check Our Catalog](#)

*From the acclaimed author of Hurricane Season, an unforgettable story about what makes a family, for fans of Hazel's Theory of Evolution and Ivy Aberdeen’s Letter to the World.*

Eleven-year-old Joey is angry. All the time. And she doesn't understand why. She has two loving moms, a supportive older half brother, and, as a triplet, she's never without company. Her ...More

**We're in This Together: A Young Readers Edition of We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders**
By *Sarsour, Linda*  
2022-11 - Salaam Reads / Simon & Schuster Books for You  
9781534439290 [Check Our Catalog](#)

*An empowering young readers edition of We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders, the memoir by Women's March coorganizer and activist Linda Sarsour that's "equal parts inspiring, emotional, and informative" (Kirkus Reviews).*

You can count on me, your Palestinian Muslim sister, to keep her voice loud, keep her feet on the streets, and keep my head held high because I am not ...More

**Lotus Bloom and the Afro Revolution**
By *Winston, Sherri*  
2022-09 - Bloomsbury Publishing PLC  
9781547608461 [Check Our Catalog](#)

*Longlisted for the National Book Award for Young People's Literature  
Member of the 2023 Notable Books for a Global Society (NGBS) List*

*From the beloved author of President of the Whole Fifth Grade, a story about a young Black girl who summons the courage to fight against a discriminatory dress code--and stand up for herself.*

Lotus Bloom just wants to express ...More
The Language of Seabirds
By Taylor, Will
2022-07 - Scholastic Press
9781338753738 Check Our Catalog

A sweet, tender middle-grade story of two boys finding first love with each other over a seaside summer.

Jeremy is not excited about the prospect of spending the summer with his dad and his uncle in a seaside cabin in Oregon. It's the first summer after his parents' divorce, and he hasn't exactly been seeking alone time with his dad. He doesn't have a choice, though, so he goes...  \[ More \]

Braver Than I Thought: Real People, Real Courage, Real Hope
By Reynolds, Luke
2022-09 - Aladdin Paperbacks
9781582708478 Check Our Catalog

Meet people who have had a profound impact on our world while bearing the physical and emotional scars born out of struggles and suffering, transforming their stories from pain to power in this inspirational middle grade nonfiction book about overcoming challenges.

Magazine spreads and Hollywood hits showcase stars with perfect skin, perfect faces, perfect hair, perfect lives,  \[ More \]

The Year the Maps Changed
By Binks, Danielle
2022-10 - Quill Tree Books
9780063211605 Check Our Catalog

Wolf Hollow meets The Thing About Jellyfish in Danielle Binks's debut middle grade novel set in 1999, where a twelve-year-old girl grapples with the meaning of home and family amidst a refugee crisis that has divided her town.

Timeless and beautiful, and it deserves to be read by people of all ages. -- Printz Award-winning author Melina  \[ More \]

The Brothers: A Hmong Graphic Folktale
By Yang, Sheelue
Illustrator Vu, Le Nhat
2023-01 - Picture Window Books
9781484672334 Check Our Catalog

...More
Based on the experience of real-life Auschwitz prisoner Dita Kraus, this graphic novel tells the incredible story of a girl who risked her life to keep the magic of books alive during the Holocaust.

Fourteen-year-old Dita is one of the many imprisoned by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Taken, along with her mother and father, from the Terezín ghetto in Prague, Dita is adjusting to the constant ...

A boy and his family must decide whether to remain in Cuba under a repressive government or risk everything for the chance of a new beginning in this gripping story from the award-winning author of The Red Umbrella.

There are two versions of Héctor: the public and the private. It's the only way to survive in communist Cuba—especially when your father was exiled to the ...

America's story is everybody's story.

The founding of America was not accomplished by a handful of people; it required the heart, soul, and grit of an entire nation. Today, we rightfully honor the efforts of the Founding Fathers, but what about everyone else who sacrificed for the cause?

Introducing Forgotten Founders, the inspiring book of stories about ...
