

Capture the Feeling

ELA activities the focus on character, perspectives, and feelings an opportunity to extend what they're learning about the qualities and skills that build resilience.

What's Inside?

- A flexible lesson for grades 2-8 that blends ELA activities with social-emotional learning using the fiction and non-fiction you're already reading
- A list of diverse read-aloud books that support the lesson.
- A list of chapter books that support this lesson.

Sources

<https://www.hmhco.com/blog/need-a-timesaver-try-an-activity-that-ties-sel-to-ela>

<https://www.leeandlow.com>

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/book-lists/books-that-explore-feelings-for-4th-to-5th-grade>

CAPTURE THE FEELING

A Social-Emotional Learning Activity
for ELA Students in Grades 2–8

Student Objectives

Practice and build the following

SEL competencies:

- **Self-awareness:** Identifying emotions
- **Social awareness:** Perspective-taking
- **Relationship skills:** Teamwork
- **Responsible decision-making:** Analyzing situations, evaluating, reflecting



Prepare

Select 1–2 pages of fiction or nonfiction in which characters demonstrate or reflect a range of feelings. Identify 3–5 feelings to discuss with students. Then, assign the reading as homework and, during the in-class lesson, have students look at the reading selection for reference.



Introduce

Explain that fiction and nonfiction characters have feelings and emotions similar to ours. Tell students that figuring out characters' feelings can make it easier to connect with what they read, along with helping them learn to recognize their own feelings and the feelings of people in their lives.



Practice

After reading with students, identify one of the 3–5 feelings you located in the text in step 1. Alternately, you may ask a student to identify one feeling.

Ask students to:

- Define or describe the feeling.
- Find clues that point to the feelings in the reading. Tell younger students to act as “feelings detectives.”
- Provide examples of real-world situations, behaviors, or events that might cause—or be caused by—each feeling.

For example, if a student misses the bus, s/he might feel anxious.

- Strategize appropriate ways to handle or express each feeling.

For example, if a student misses the bus and feels anxious, what steps could that student take to improve the way s/he feels?

Practice (continued)

Tell students that:

- Feelings can affect behavior, and behavior can affect feelings.
- Most feelings come and go, and people experience a range of feelings each day.
- When feelings become intense or overwhelming, it's a good idea to share them with a trusted adult, such as a parent, caregiver, or teacher.

Work with students to identify 2–4 more feelings in the text. Repeat the process of writing each feeling-word on the board, defining it, finding clues, providing examples, and strategizing how to handle or express it.



Extend

Repeat the activity once a week to build an extended feeling-word vocabulary.

- Ask students to identify feelings in texts by circling, highlighting, or tagging words or passages.

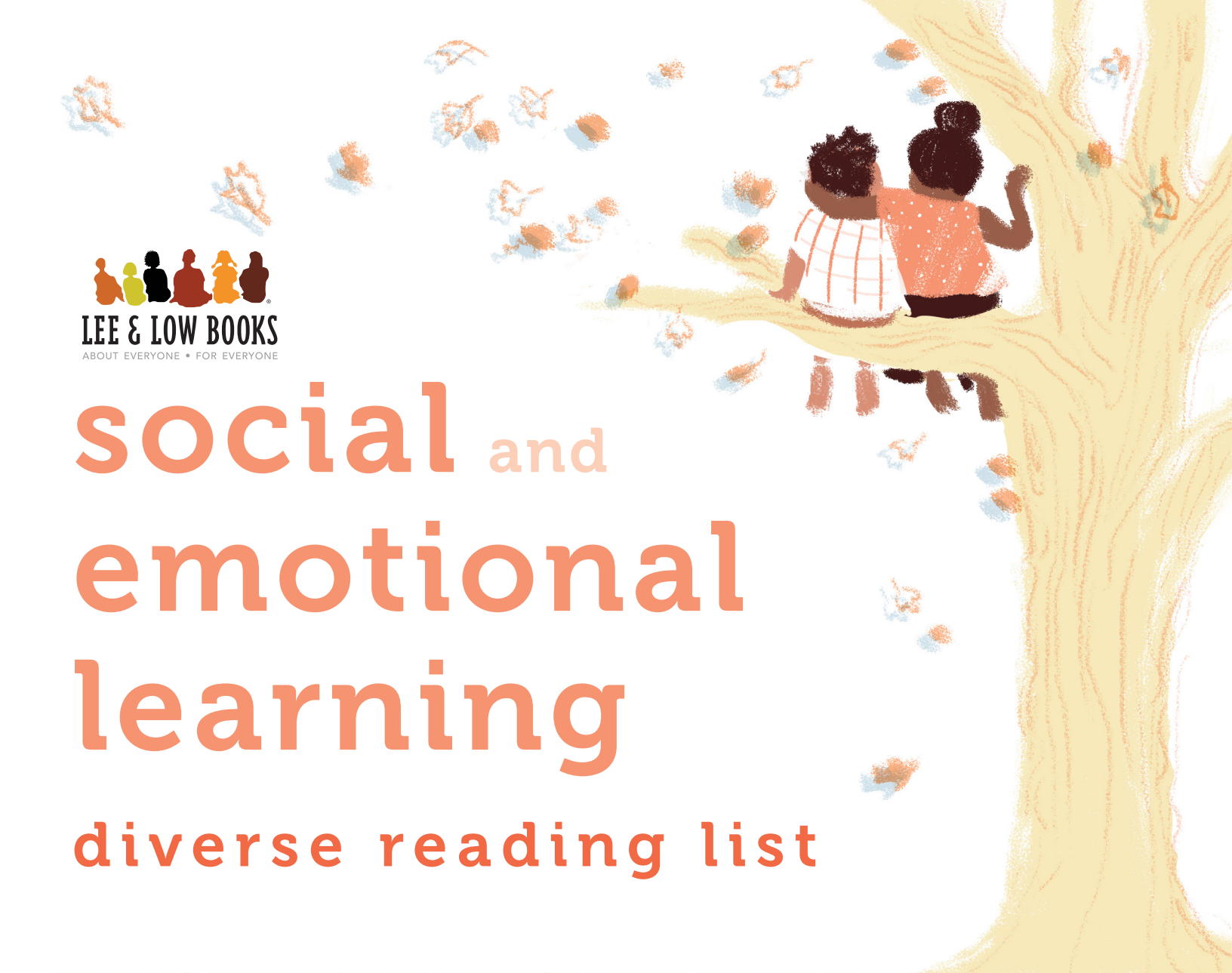
Write or post a cumulative list of feelings on a classroom display board.

- Have kids illustrate the various feelings and post their illustrations by the appropriate words.

Have students work in pairs or small groups to strategize how to handle identified feelings.

- Ask students to come up with and share TV shows, movies, video games, poems, comic books, etc. in which people handle or express their feelings well.



An illustration of two children sitting on a thick tree branch. The child on the left is wearing a white and red plaid shirt, and the child on the right is wearing a red shirt with white polka dots. They are surrounded by many falling orange and yellow leaves. The tree trunk is on the right side of the frame, and the background is a soft, light yellow.

social and emotional learning

diverse reading list

Discover our educator favorites for SEL read-alouds to pair with your curriculum!

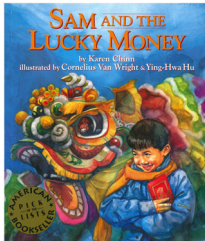
These exemplar texts will help you model and explore strategies for tackling challenges and building community. Both fiction and nonfiction titles feature protagonists from diverse backgrounds and are written by award-winning authors and illustrators.

Check each Lee & Low book's link for corresponding lesson ideas and activities.

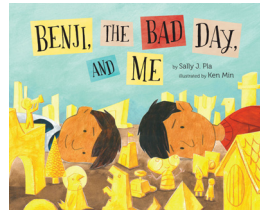
empathy

teaching students the ability to understand the feelings of another person

grades preK-2

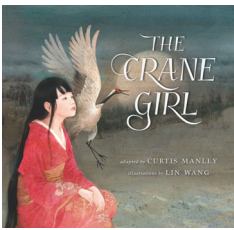


SAM AND THE LUCKY MONEY • written by Karen Chinn, illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Hu • When a young Chinese American boy sets out to spend the lucky money he receives for Chinese New Year, he discovers that no gift is too small when it comes from the heart. (Also available in Chinese and Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/sam-and-the-lucky-money

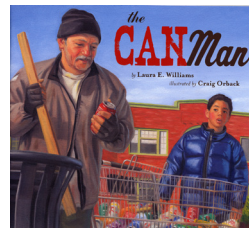


BENJI, THE BAD DAY, AND ME • written by Sally J. Pla, illustrated by Ken Min • Sammy is having the absolute rottenest, worst day ever. His little brother, Benji, knows exactly what that's like in this tender, neurodiverse story. • leeandlow.com/books/benji-the-bad-day-and-me

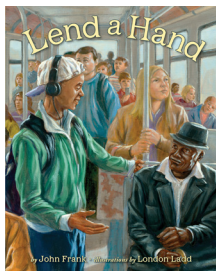
grades 3-5



THE CRANE GIRL • written by Curtis Manley, illustrated by Lin Wang • A boy helps an injured crane, which then returns in human form to weave silk and save the boy and his father from poverty. Adapted from Japanese folktales and told in alternating prose and haiku. • leeandlow.com/books/the-crane-girl



THE CAN MAN • written by Laura E. Williams, illustrated by Craig Orback • To earn money, a young boy decides to collect and redeem empty cans, but ends up giving his money away to a homeless man. • leeandlow.com/books/the-can-man

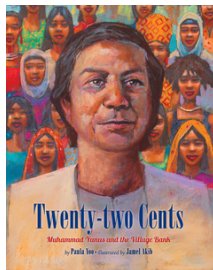


LEND A HAND: POEMS ABOUT GIVING • written by John Frank, illustrated by London Ladd • Poems about sharing and making a small difference in someone's life. • leeandlow.com/books/lend-a-hand

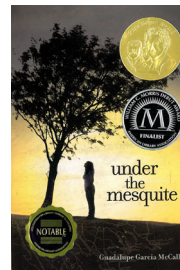


SHE WAS THE FIRST!: THE TRAILBLAZING LIFE OF SHIRLEY CHISHOLM • written by Kathryn Russell-Brown, illustrated by Eric Velasquez • A timely, inspiring picture book biography of the dynamic twentieth-century educator, activist, and politician Shirley Chisholm. • leeandlow.com/books/she-was-the-first

grades 6-8



TWENTY-TWO CENTS: MUHAMMAD YUNUS AND THE VILLAGE BANK • written by Paula Yoo, illustrated by Jamel Akib • A biography of 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, who revolutionized antipoverty efforts by developing the innovative concept of micro-lending. • leeandlow.com/books/twenty-two-cents

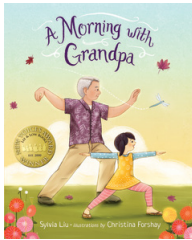


UNDER THE MESQUITE • written by Guadalupe Garcia McCall • Lupita, a budding actor and poet in a close-knit Mexican American immigrant family, comes of age as she struggles with adult responsibilities during her mother's long illness. • leeandlow.com/books/under-the-mesquite

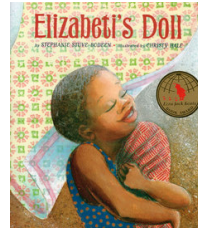
positive relationships

teaching students how to interact with others in respectful & kind ways

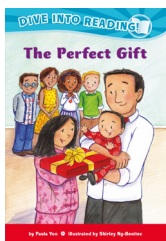
grades preK-2



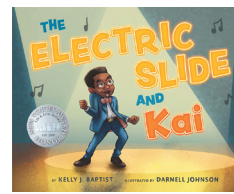
A MORNING WITH GRANDPA • written by Sylvia Liu, illustrated by Christina Forshay • A curious and active little girl spends the day learning tai chi from her grandfather, and in turn tries to teach him how to do yoga. leeandlow.com/books/a-morning-with-grandpa



ELIZABETH'S DOLL • written by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen, illustrated by Christy Hale • As her mother cares for a new baby, a young African girl learns about motherhood from her own very special doll. This award-winning story is a universal tale of love. (Also available in Spanish.) leeandlow.com/books/elizabeths-doll



THE PERFECT GIFT • written by Paula Yoo, illustrated by Shirley Ng-Benitez • In this early chapter book from the popular Confetti Kids series, Mei's little brother is turning 100 days old, and Mei is determined to find the perfect gift for his special day. • leeandlow.com/books/the-perfect-gift



THE ELECTRIC SLIDE AND KAI • written by Kelly Baptist, illustrated by Darnell Johnson • Kai is the only member of his family who can't get the dance steps to the Electric Slide right. But Kai is determined to bust a move in this fun and sweet celebration of African American families. • leeandlow.com/books/the-electric-slide-and-kai

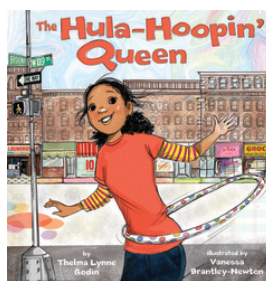
grades 3-5



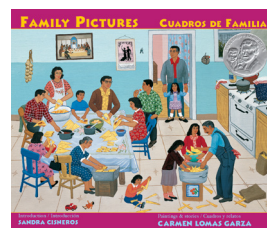
LOVE TWELVE MILES LONG • written by Glenda Armand, illustrated by Colin Bootman • Set on a plantation in the 1820s in Maryland, this story based on the life of young Frederick Douglass shows the power of his mother's love. leeandlow.com/books/love-twelve-miles-long



JULIETA AND THE DIAMOND ENIGMA • written by Luisana Duarte Armendáriz • From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler meets Merci Suarez in this smart young middle-grade mystery about a diamond gone missing from the Louvre and the sweet and spunky girl who cracks the case. leeandlow.com/books/julieta-and-the-diamond-enigma



THE HULA-HOOPIN' QUEEN • written by Thelma Lynne Godin, illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton • A spunky African American girl has a hula-hooping competition with her friends in Harlem, and soon everyone in the neighborhood, young and old alike, joins in on the fun. • leeandlow.com/books/the-hula-hoopin-queen

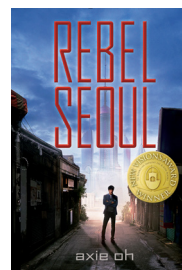


FAMILY PICTURES/CUADROS DE FAMILIA • written and illustrated by Carmen Lomas Garza • The story of Carmen Lomas Garza's girlhood in Kingsville, Texas, told through fifteen paintings and stories, each focusing on a different aspect of Carmen's traditional Mexican American culture as she grew up. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) leeandlow.com/books/family-pictures-cuadros-de-familia

grades 6-8



SUMMER OF THE MARIPOSAS • written by Guadalupe Garcia McCall • In this creative retelling of *The Odyssey*, fifteen-year-old Odilia and her younger sisters embark on a journey to return a dead man to his family in Mexico, and must outwit monsters and witches to make it back home again. (Also available in Spanish.) leeandlow.com/books/summer-of-the-mariposas

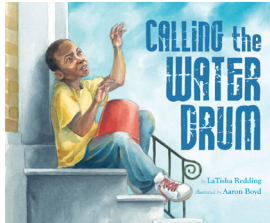


REBEL SEOUL • written by Axie Oh • When Jaewon is assigned to partner with supersoldier Tera in Neo Seoul's top weapons development division, he must decide where he stands: with the people his rebel father protected or with the totalitarian government that claims it will end all war. leeandlow.com/books/rebel-seoul

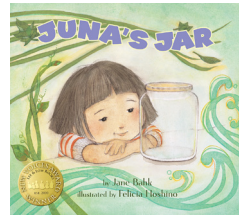
recognizing & managing emotions

teaching students how to handle their feelings

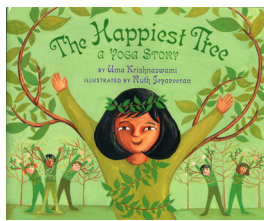
grades preK-2



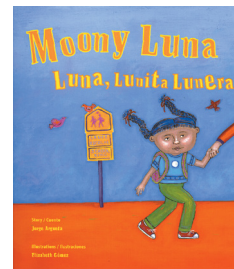
CALLING THE WATER DRUM • written by LaTisha Redding, illustrated by Aaron Boyd • After a young Haitian boy loses his parents as they attempt to flee Haiti in a boat, he can only communicate with the outside world through playing his drum. leeandlow.com/books/calling-the-water-drum



JUNA'S JAR • written by Jane Bahk, illustrated by Felicia Hoshino • Juna, an imaginative Korean American girl, goes on magical adventures, by way of her special kimchi jar, in search of her best friend who moved away. leeandlow.com/books/juna-s-jar

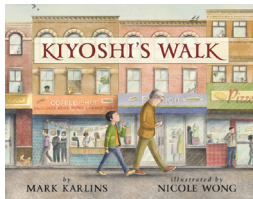


THE HAPPIEST TREE: A YOGA STORY • written by Uma Krishnaswami, illustrated by Ruth Jeyaveeran • A young Indian American girl grows in self-confidence when she learns to practice yoga and apply the underlying principles to her performance in a school play. (Also available in Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/the-happiest-tree

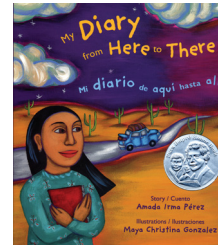


MOONY LUNA/LUNA LUNITA • written by Jorge Argueta, illustrated by Elizabeth Gómez • A loving tale about a young girl afraid to go to school for the first time. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/moony-luna-luna-lunita-lunera

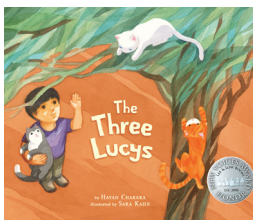
grades 3-5



KIYOSHI'S WALK • written by Mark Karlins, illustrated by Nicole Wong • Where do poems come from? This beautiful picture book about a young aspiring poet and his grandfather shows that the answer lies all around us—if we take the time to look. leeandlow.com/books/kiyoshi-s-walk



MY DIARY FROM HERE TO THERE/MI DIARIO DE AQUÍ HASTA ALLÁ • written by Amada Irma Pérez, illustrated by Maya Christina Gonzalez • Amada records her fears, hopes and dreams about moving from Mexico to the other side of the border in California in her trusted diary. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/my-diary-from-here-to-there-mi-diario-de-aqui-hasta-alla

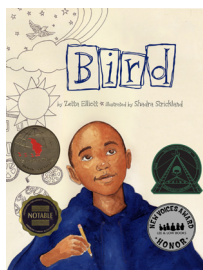


THE THREE LUCYS • written by Hayan Charara, illustrated by Sara Kahn • When his village comes under attack and he loses one of his beloved cats, a young Lebanese boy must learn to hope for a peaceful future. leeandlow.com/books/the-three-lucys

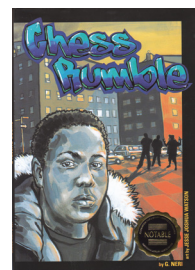


KIKI'S JOURNEY • written by Kristy Orona-Ramirez, illustrated by Jonathan Warm Day • Kiki's tender story sensitively portrays the rewards and challenges of contemporary Indian life, as Kiki grapples with her Tiwa Indian heritage and Los Angeles city roots. • leeandlow.com/books/kiki-s-journey

grades 6-8



BIRD • written by Zetta Elliott, illustrated by Shadra Strickland • An African American boy nicknamed Bird uses drawing as a creative outlet as he struggles to make sense of his grandfather's death and his brother's drug addiction. • leeandlow.com/books/bird

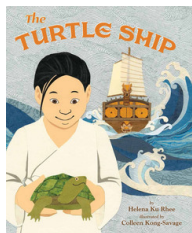


CHESS RUMBLE • written by G. Neri, illustrated by Jesse Joshua Watson • In this longer story told in free verse, a troubled boy learns to use his mind instead of his fists through the guidance of an unconventional mentor and the game of chess. leeandlow.com/books/chess-rumble

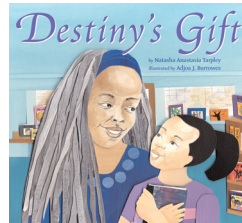
problem-solving

teaching students how to find a solution to a complicated issue or situation

grades preK-2



THE TURTLE SHIP • written by Helena Ku Rhee, illustrated by Colleen Kong-Savage • A young Korean boy named Sun-shin designs one of the greatest battleships in history and fulfills his dream of sailing the world. • leeandlow.com/books/the-turtle-ship



DESTINY'S GIFT • written by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley, illustrated by Adjoa J. Burrowes • Destiny tries to keep her friend's neighborhood bookstore from going out of business by using her resourcefulness and creativity. • leeandlow.com/books/destiny-s-gift

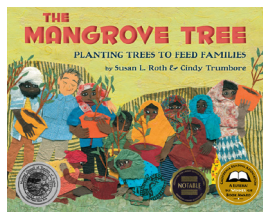


RAINBOW WEAVER/TEJEDORA DEL ARCOIRIS • written by Linda Elovitz Marshall, illustrated by Elisa Chavarri • A young Mayan girl isn't allowed to use her mother's thread to weave, so with a little ingenuity, she discovers how to repurpose plastic bags to create colorful weavings. Based on an actual recycling movement in Guatemala. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/rainbow-weaver-tejedora-del-arcoiris



FINDING THE MUSIC/EN POS DE LA MÚSICA • written by Jennifer Torres, illustrated by Renato Alarcão • In this bilingual book, a determined Latina girl accidentally breaks her grandfather's vihuela and ventures into her community to find someone who can fix the instrument, leading her to discover her grandfather's legacy as a mariachi player. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/finding-the-music-en-pos-de-la-musica

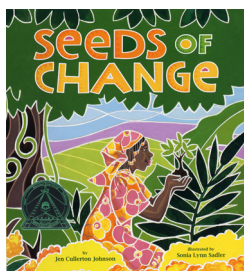
grades 3-5



THE MANGROVE TREE: PLANTING TREES TO FEED FAMILIES • written by Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbore, illustrated by Susan L. Roth • With alternating verse and prose passages, readers discover how Dr. Gordon Sato's mangrove-tree planting project transformed an impoverished village in Eritrea into a self-sufficient community. • leeandlow.com/books/the-mangrove-tree



SEVEN GOLDEN RINGS • written by Rajani Larooca, illustrated by Archana Sreenivasan • In this clever, convivial picture book, an Indian boy untangles a mathematical conundrum to win a place at the Rajah's court. • leeandlow.com/books/seven-golden-rings



SEEDS OF CHANGE: PLANTING A PATH TO PEACE • written by Jen Cullerton Johnson, illustrated by Sonia Lynn Sadler • This picture book biography profiles scientist Wangari Maathi, the first African woman — and first environmentalist — to win a Nobel Peace Prize for her work planting trees in her native Kenya. • leeandlow.com/books/seeds-of-change

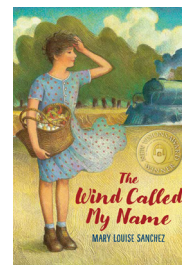


STRONG AS FIRE, FIERCE AS FLAME • written by Supriya Kelkar • In 1857 India, 12-year-old Meera escapes a life she has no say in—and certain death on her husband's funeral pyre—only to end up a servant to a British general in the East India Company. When a rebellion against British colonizers spreads, she must choose between relative safety in a British household or standing up for herself and her people. • leeandlow.com/books/strong-as-fire-fierce-as-flame

grades 6-8



MARTÍ'S SONG FOR FREEDOM/MARTÍ Y SUS VERSOS POR LA LIBERTAD • written by Emma Otheguy, illustrated by Beatriz Vidal • José Martí dedicated his life to the promotion of liberty: the abolishment of slavery, political independence for Cuba, and intellectual independence from colonialism for all Latinos. This bilingual biography is written in verse with excerpts from Martí's seminal work, *Versos Sencillos*. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) • leeandlow.com/books/marti-s-song-for-freedom-marti-y-sus-versos-por-la-libertad



THE WIND CALLED MY NAME • written by Mary Louise Sanchez • In this heartwarming historical middle-grade set in the 1930s, Margarita Sandoval and her family try to navigate the shifting winds of belonging in their new Wyoming town. • leeandlow.com/books/the-wind-called-my-name

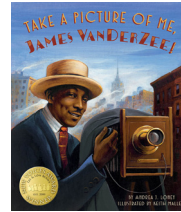
grit & perseverance

teaching students to achieve success despite difficulty or obstacles in the way

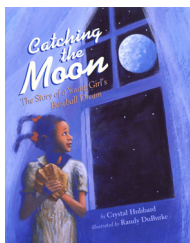
grades preK-2



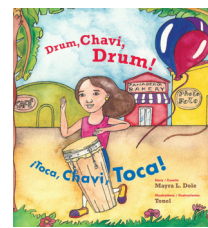
GEORGE CRUM AND THE SARATOGA CHIP • written by Gaylia Taylor, illustrated by Frank Morrison • An account of the life and career of George Crum, a biracial chef who is credited with the invention of the potato chip at a Saratoga Springs, New York, restaurant in 1853. • leeandlow.com/books/george-crum-and-the-saratoga-chip



TAKE A PICTURE OF ME, JAMES VANDERZEE! • written by Andrea J. Loney, illustrated by Keith Mallett • A biography of James VanDerZee, innovative and celebrated African American photographer of the Harlem Renaissance. • leeandlow.com/books/take-a-picture-of-me-james-van-der-zee

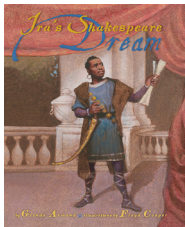


CATCHING THE MOON: THE STORY OF A YOUNG GIRL'S BASEBALL DREAM • written by Crystal Hubbard, illustrated by Randy DuBurke • The spirited story of Marcenia Lyle, the African American girl who grew up to become "Toni Stone," the first woman to play for an all-male professional baseball team. • leeandlow.com/books/catching-the-moon

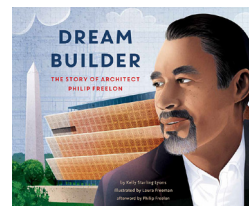


DRUM, CHAVI, DRUM!/TOCA, CHAVI, TOCA! • written by Mayra L. Dole, illustrated by Tonel • Even though nobody in her neighborhood thinks girls should play the drums, Chavi knows she was born to drum. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) leeandlow.com/books/drum-chavi-drum-toca-chavi-toca

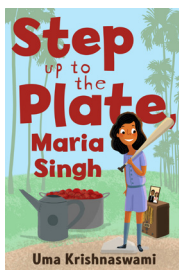
grades 3-5



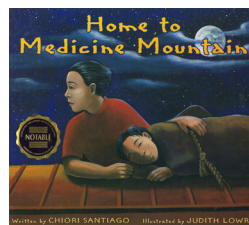
IRA'S SHAKESPEARE DREAM • written by Glenda Armand, illustrated by Floyd Cooper • A biography chronicling the life of Ira Aldridge, an African American performer who is considered to be one of the greatest Shakespearean actors of the nineteenth century. leeandlow.com/books/ira-s-shakespeare-dream



DREAM BUILDER: THE STORY OF ARCHITECT PHILIP FREELON • written by Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by Laura Freeman • You've seen the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Now meet the man whose life went into building it. • leeandlow.com/books/dream-builder

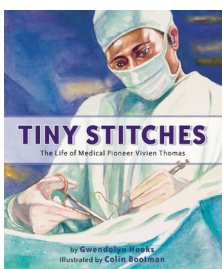


STEP UP TO THE PLATE, MARIA SINGH • written by Uma Krishnaswami • While her parents and neighbors are struggling through World War II, working for India's independence, and trying to stay on their farmland, nine-year-old Maria Singh learns to play softball just like her heroes in the All-American Girls' League. • leeandlow.com/books/step-up-to-the-plate-maria-singh

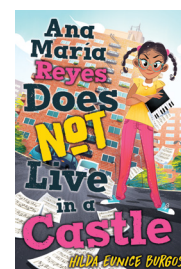


HOME TO MEDICINE MOUNTAIN • written by Chiori Santiago, illustrated by Judith Lowry • Two young Maidu Indian brothers, sent to live at a government-run Indian residential school in California in the 1930s, find a way to escape and return home for the summer. • leeandlow.com/books/home-to-medicine-mountain

grades 6-8



TINY STITCHES: THE LIFE OF MEDICAL PIONEER VIVIEN THOMAS • written by Gwendolyn Hooks, illustrated by Colin Bootman • The life story of Vivien Thomas, an African American surgical technician who developed the first procedure used to perform open-heart surgery on children. leeandlow.com/books/tiny-stitches



ANA MARÍA REYES DOES NOT LIVE IN A CASTLE • written by Hilda Eunice Burgos • The Penderwicks meets *In the Heights* in this sparkling middle-grade debut about a young Dominican American girl in New York City. • leeandlow.com/books/ana-maria-reyes-does-not-live-in-a-castle

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perspective-taking

teaching students about seeing a situation from another person's point of view

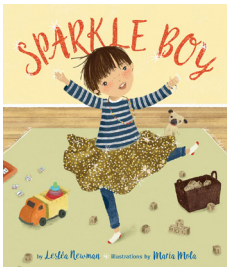
grades preK-2



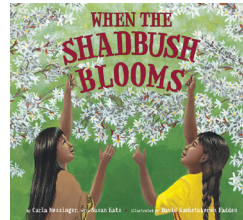
UNDER MY HIJAB • written by Hena Khan, illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel • This lovely book from the author of *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns* invites readers to understand and appreciate hijab and the Muslim women who decide to wear it. leeandlow.com/books/under-my-hijab



MAMÁ THE ALIEN/MAMÁ LA EXTRATERRESTRE • written by René Colato Laínez, illustrated by Laura Lacámara • A young girl sees the word "alien" on her mother's Resident Alien card and worries her mother is from another planet, until she finds out that the word has more than one meaning. (Bilingual English/Spanish.) leeandlow.com/books/mama-the-alien-mama-la-extraterrestre

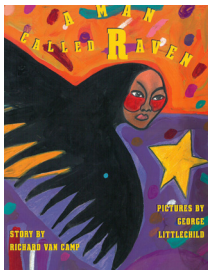


SPARKLE BOY • written by Lesléa Newman, illustrated by Maria Mola • Young Casey loves sparkly things, but his older sister Jessie does not approve of his interest until an encounter with bullies helps her learn to accept and respect Casey for who he is. • leeandlow.com/books/sparkle-boy

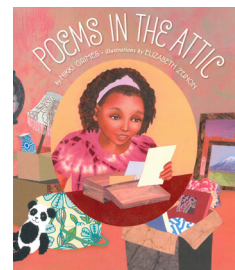


WHEN THE SHADBUSH BLOOMS • written by Carla Messinger with Susan Katz, illustrated by David Kanietakeron Fadden • A young Lenape Indian girl observes and reflects on the small, important ways her family today, and her ancestors generations before, celebrate the cycle of seasons.. • leeandlow.com/books/when-the-shadblush-blooms

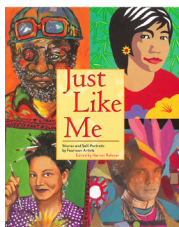
grades 3-5



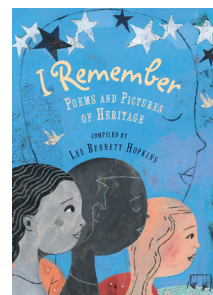
A MAN CALLED RAVEN • written by Richard Van Camp, illustrated by George Littlechild • Set in the Northwest Territories of Canada, Van Camp's contemporary Native story draws from the animal legends and folklore told to him by his Dogrib elders. Littlechild's bold use of color and perspective captures the sense of mystery and magic surrounding a strange raven man who teaches two boys the meaning of respect for nature. • leeandlow.com/books/a-man-called-raven



POEMS IN THE ATTIC • written by Nikki Grimes, illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon • A young girl becomes closer to her mother after discovering a box of poems her mother wrote about her experiences growing up as the child of an Air Force serviceman and living around the world. Told in alternating free verse and tanka (similar to haiku) poems in different perspectives. leeandlow.com/books/poems-in-the-attic



JUST LIKE ME • edited by Harriet Rohmer, illustrated by Fourteen Artists • Through stories, paintings, and childhood photographs, these fourteen artists open their hearts and invite us to enter their worlds. leeandlow.com/books/just-like-me

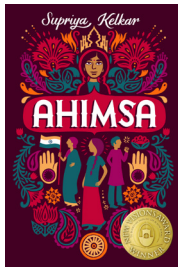


I REMEMBER: POEMS AND PICTURES OF HERITAGE • edited by Lee Bennett Hopkins, written by various poets, illustrated by various artists • An outstanding celebration of diversity and family: fourteen poets and sixteen illustrators of diverse backgrounds share memorable childhood experiences and reflect upon their different heritages, traditions, and beliefs. • leeandlow.com/books/i-remember

perspective-taking

teaching students about seeing a situation from another person's point of view

grades 6-8



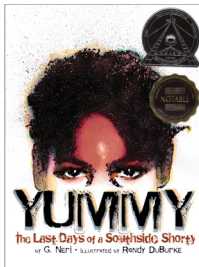
AHIMSA • written by Supriya Kelkar

• In this historical novel, Gandhi asks for one member of each family to join the fight for independence from the British, and when Anjali's mother is jailed for doing so, Anjali must step out of her comfort zone to take over her mother's work. • leeandlow.com/books/ahimsa



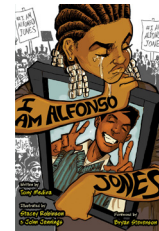
BOY, EVERYWHERE • written by

A. M. Dassu • What turns citizens into refugees and then immigrants? In this powerful middle-grade debut, Sami and his family embark on a harrowing journey to save themselves from the Syrian civil war. • leeandlow.com/books/boy-everywhere



YUMMY: THE LAST DAYS OF A SOUTHSIDE SHORTY • written by G. Neri, illustrated by Randy DuBurke

This graphic novel is based on the true story of Robert "Yummy" Sandifer, an eleven-year-old boy from Chicago's South Side who was killed by his own gang members. • leeandlow.com/books/yummy



I AM ALFONSO JONES • written by

Tony Medina, illustrated by Stacey Robinson and John Jennings • *Hate U Give* meets *The Lovely Bones* in this unflinching graphic novel about the afterlife of a young man killed by an off-duty police officer, co-illustrated by *New York Times* bestselling artist John Jennings. • leeandlow.com/books/i-am-alfonso-jones

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Books that explore feelings for 4th to 5th grade

by: Connie Matthiessen for www.greatschools.org

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SCHOOLS

Coraline by: Neil Gaiman

(HarperCollins Publishers, 2002) 208 pages.

Coraline's world is full of frustrating things: her boring bedroom, her dad's bad cooking, and the fact that everyone mispronounces her name. Rain frustrates her too, because when it rains her mother won't let her go outside. One especially rainy day she has nothing to do so she explores her new house and discovers a world much like her own, only better. Coraline is thrilled at first, until she learns that this new world is full of dark secrets that threaten her family and her future.

A Wrinkle in Time by: Madeleine L'Engle

(Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1962) 256 pages.

Meg, an awkward girl who doesn't quite fit in, has a lot to worry about. Her beloved father has suddenly disappeared, and neighbors are beginning to gossip that he's run off with another woman. It turns out that his disappearance is connected with his scientific work, and Meg, her brilliant little brother, and her friend Calvin set out to find him — a search that takes them on an exciting but dangerous galactic adventure.

Wonder by: R.J. Palacio

(Random House Children's Books, 2012) 320 pages.

This beautiful novel will help kids understand what it's like to be that kid — the one everyone stares at, laughs at, and avoids. Auggie Pullman has a facial disfigurement so extreme that he wore a toy astronaut helmet to preschool. He was homeschooled until fifth grade, but now he is going to regular school, where he encounters both cruelty and kindness. The book will remind readers how much courage it takes to be different — and how essential it is to be kind.

A Long Walk to Water by: Linda Sue Park

(Clarion Books, 2010) 128 pages.

This book, based on a true story, juxtaposes the experience of two young people facing extraordinary challenges. Nya, who lives in Sudan, must walk two hours twice a day to fetch water for her family. Salva, who is also Sudanese, ran away

from his village when rebel forces attacked it. He walks days in search of refuge. Salva ultimately ends up in the U.S., where an American family adopts him. When he goes back to Sudan to help his people, he builds a well that helps Nya, too.

Twenty-two Cents by: Paula Yoo, illustrated by: Jamel Akib

(Lee & Low Books, Inc., 2014) 40 pages.

Muhammad Yunus, who grew up in Bangladesh, conceived the idea of microcredit when he encountered a young woman who needed to borrow just twenty-two cents for her crafts business. Since banks wouldn't lend such a small amount, she had to pay loan sharks high interest. Yunus realized he could make a positive impact in the lives of the poor if he developed a system that allows people to borrow small amounts of money at low interest rates. This book tells the true story of an enterprising man who changed the lives of millions.

Ghosts by: Raina Telgemeier, illustrated by: Raina Telgemeier

(GRAPHIX, 2016) 256 pages.

When Catrina's new neighbor, Carolos, says there are ghosts in their new town, her little sister, Maya, is excited to meet one. But Cat is frightened. Cat's family has just moved to Bahía de la Luna, a coastal town in Northern California, because Maya has an incurable lung disease and her parents hope the sea air will help her breathe better. As Day of the Dead approaches, Cat faces her fears for her sister's sake. This fantastic graphic novel deals with complex, real-life issues of fear and loss in an engaging comic-book style.

One Crazy Summer by: Rita Williams-Garcia

(Amistad, 2010) 218 pages.

Delphine, 11, and her two younger sisters don't know what to expect when their dad puts them on plane to visit their mother, who abandoned the family years ago. It is 1968 and their mother is active in Oakland's Black Power movement. The girls hope to visit Disneyland, but instead, their mother sends them to a camp run by the Black Panthers. As the summer wears on, the sisters learn about themselves, their mother, and their country during a pivotal moment in African American history. Delphine both blames and longs for her mother, and in the end these two strong characters find a measure of reconciliation. If this is your child's first exposure to historical fiction, she may be hooked.

The Invention of Hugo Cabret by: Brian Selznick

(Scholastic, Inc., 2007) 544 pages.

Hugo is an orphan who tends the clocks in a Paris train station. He lives a lonely existence in the shadows of the station, stealing food and dodging the Station Inspector. One day he encounters a flinty old man who has even more secrets than he does. With the support of his friend, Isabelle, Hugo discovers the key to his past and the old man's — and both find a measure of happiness. This powerful story is beautifully illustrated to create the pace and visual effects of a movie.

Bridge to Terabithia by: Katherine Paterson

(HarperCollins, 1977) 176 pages.

Terabithia is a secret kingdom that Jess creates with his friend Leslie in the woods outside her house. The two retreat there to vanquish giants and zombies, and to escape the tedium of school and the cruelty of classmates. In Terabithia, it doesn't matter that Jess's family is very poor, or that he and Leslie are considered losers at school. But one day an accident changes everything and Jess has to deal with the pain and permanence of loss.

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by: Bette Bao Lord

(Harper & Row, 1984) 176 pages.

Shirley Temple Wong is excited to come to Brooklyn from her native China and eager to fit in. But she doesn't know any English, so her first weeks in her new country are lonely and sad. Then she discovers the Brooklyn Dodgers, and Jackie Robinson, the first black man to play in America's major leagues — and Shirley slowly begins to feel at home in her new country. A humorous, touching look at the immigrant experience.

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret by: Judy Blume

(Bradbury Press, 1970) 192 pages.

It's not easy to be a tween, as Margaret finds out when she moves to a new town and has to start all over again. She's happy to join a secret club organized by some of her new friends, but uneasy when the subjects include embarrassing topics like bras and periods. Margaret finds some comfort in her frank and frequent conversations with God. In this brave, honest character, Blume deftly captures the worries and self-consciousness of a girl on the brink of adulthood.

Farmer Boy by: Laura Ingalls Wilder

(Harper & Bros., 1953) 384 pages.

Almanzo Wilder wants a horse, but his father believes he is too young to train and care for such a delicate creature. He's thrilled and eager to prove himself when he gets two calves to train — but managing these stubborn creatures turns out to be more tricky than he expects. The book, based on the childhood of Wilder's husband, provides a close up look at the hard work and simple joys of life on a family farm in early America.

The Lemonade War by: Jacqueline Davies

(Houghton Mifflin, 2007) 192 pages.

School is about to start when Evan gets news no kid wants to hear: his younger sister, Jessie, is going to be in his class this year. Jessie is such a good student she's skipping a grade, while Evan struggles as a student. But Evan has his own strengths: he is better at feelings and understanding people. The two channel their competition into a savvy and hard-nosed struggle over who can create the most successful lemonade stand. A refreshing look at sibling rivalry — with a marketing twist.

Chains by: Laurie Halse Anderson

(Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2008) 316 pages.

The Revolutionary War is breaking out when 13-year-old Isabel and her sister Ruth, who are slaves, are sold to new owners: a cruel couple who sympathize with the British. When Isabel is approached by rebels and asked to spy on her owners, she decides to take this risky step to gain freedom and to find Ruth, who has been sent away. The book underscores the complex social forces that sustained the cruel system of slavery — even as the American colonies fought for freedom.

The Secret Garden by: Frances Hodgson Burnett

(J.B. Lippincott Company, 1911) 288 pages.

Mary is an orphan who is angry at the world when she arrives at a forsaken mansion on the British moors. As she slowly discovers the secrets of the mansion, including an invalid cousin, an abandoned garden, and a family's sad history, she begins to hesitantly open her heart. She shows her cousin the garden and his ecstatic encounter with nature is as healing for him as it has been for Mary. The young people flourish along with the garden, as the lonely mansion becomes a loving home.

Lions of Little Rock by: Kristin Levine

(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2012) 320 pages.

It's 1958 in Little Rock, Arkansas, when two girls form a friendship that places them at the center of the battle over school desegregation. Marlee is terrified to speak in public, until she meets Lizzie, who encourages her to find her voice. But local officials have refused to comply with federal desegregation orders, and Lizzie is suddenly forced to leave school because she is part black. The girls cling to their friendship, despite threats and simmering violence, and Marlee learns the importance of speaking up for what you believe even in the face of her own terror.

Tuck Everlasting by: Natalie Babbitt

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975) 139 pages.

When Winnie Foster is kidnapped she's terrified at first, but she soon realizes her kidnappers, the Tuck family, are kind people with an astonishing secret. The Tucks will never die, which turns out to be less of a blessing than one might think. The situation — and Winnie's choices — grows complicated when a stranger shows up, hoping to profit off of the spring water that made the Tucks immortal. A gentle but powerful reflection on mortality, and on what constitutes a meaningful life.
