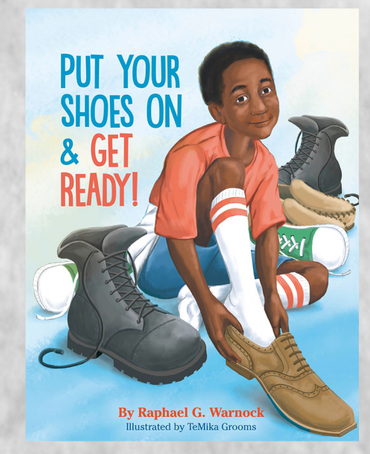
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Books Celebrating Black Culture and Achievements



Put Your Shoes On & Get Ready!

by Raphael Warnock, illustrated by TeMika Grooms
(ages: 4 - 8)

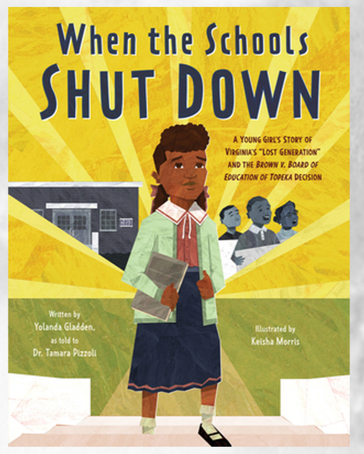
Written by Georgia's first Black Senator, this inspiring true story encourages young readers to believe in themselves, find their dreams, and make a difference in the world.



Off the Wall

by Theodore Taylor III
(ages: 4 - 8)

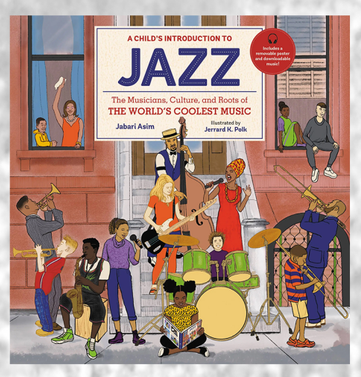
In this ode to street art, a young girl finds vibrant graffiti within her neighborhood. The themes of beauty and belonging weave in and out of the book's colorful and bright illustrations.



When the Schools Shut Down

by Yolanda Gladden, illustrated by Keisha Morris
(ages: 5 - 9)

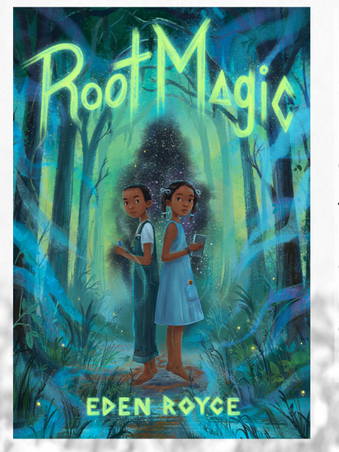
In this autobiographical picture book, a young girl experiences the shutdown of public schools in Farmville, Virginia, following the landmark civil rights case Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka.



A Child's Introduction to Jazz: The Musicians, Culture, and Roots of the World's Coolest Music

by Jabari Asim, illustrated by Jerrard K. Polk
(ages: 8 - 12)

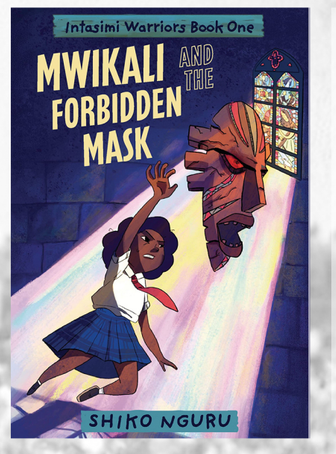
This interactive book follows the history of jazz music around the world, as well as its styles and changes over time. QR codes allow the reader access to significant songs, albums, and performances.



Root Magic

by Eden Royce
(ages: 8 - 12)

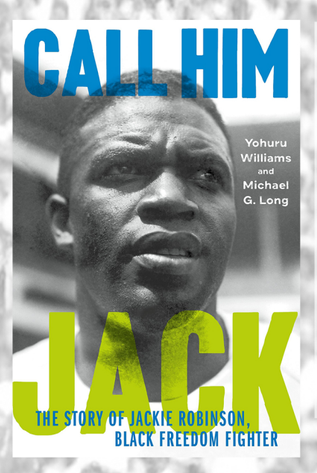
It's the summer of 1963 when Gran dies, leaving Jezebel and her brother, Jay, to learn the family trade—working roots. A practice of healing, protecting, and conjuring magic. Root Magic brings to life the history and culture of the Gullah people in the United States.



Mwikali and the Forbidden Mask

by Shiko Nguru
(ages: 9 - 13)

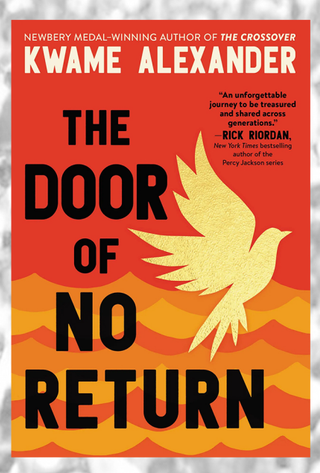
Mwikali moves to a new school in Kenya and learns that she is descended from an ancient bloodline of legendary Kenyan warriors. Soon, she finds herself diving into her ancestry in a race against time to save the village.



Call Him Jack: The Story of Jackie Robinson, Black Freedom Fighter

by Yohuru Williams and Michael G. Long
(ages: 10 and up)

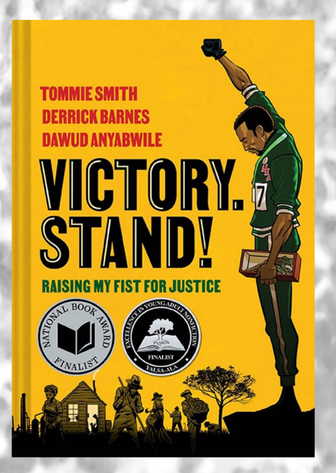
An enthralling, eye-opening portrayal of this barrier-breaking American hero as a lifelong, relentlessly proud fighter for Black justice and civil rights.



The Door of No Return

by Kwame Alexander
(ages: 10 and up)

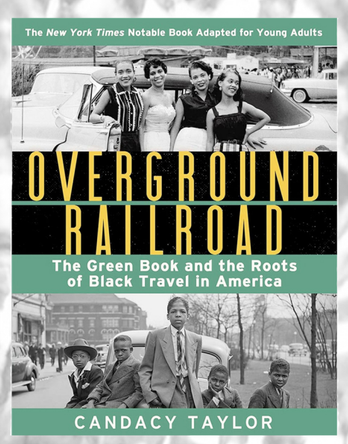
When his brother represents Upper Kwanta in a wrestling contest, resulting in the unthinkable, 11 year-old Kofi finds himself fighting for his life, which sends him on a dangerous journey across land and sea, and away from everything he loves.



Victory. Stand!: Raising My Fist for Justice

by Tommie Smith, Derrick Barnes, and Dawud Anyabwile
(ages: 12 and up)

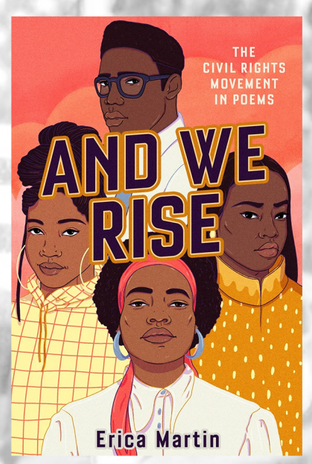
In his first-ever memoir for young readers, Tommie Smith looks back on his childhood growing up in rural Texas through to his stellar athletic career, culminating in his historic victory and Olympic podium protest.



Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America

by CandacyTaylor
(ages: 12 and up)

The history of the Green Book; a "Black travel guide to America." From 1936 to 1966, Green Books listed hotels, restaurants, recreational destinations, and other businesses that were safe for Black travelers.



And We Rise: The Civil Rights Movement in Poems

by Erica Martin
(ages: 12 - 17)

A powerful, impactful, eye-opening journey that explores through the Civil Rights Movement in 1950s-1960s America in spare and evocative verse, with historical photos interspersed throughout.



Black Birds in the Sky: The Story and Legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

by Brandy Colbert
(ages: 14 - 17)

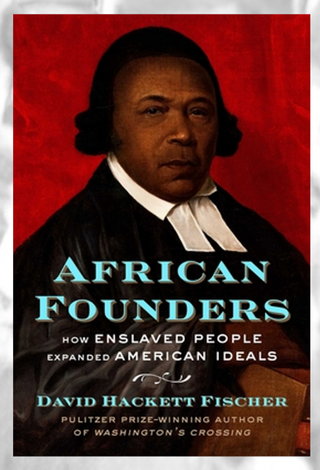
A searing new work of nonfiction about the history and legacy of one of the most deadly and destructive acts of racial violence in American history: the Tulsa Race Massacre.



We Deserve Monuments

by Jas Hammonds
(ages: 14 - 18)

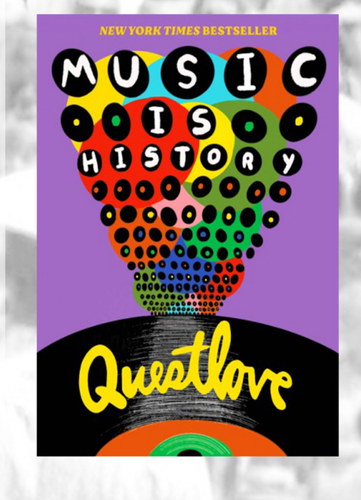
Family secrets, a swoon-worthy romance, and a slow-burn mystery collide in *We Deserve Monuments*, a YA debut from Jas Hammonds that explores how racial violence can ripple down through generations.



African Founders: How Enslaved People Expanded American Freedom

by David Hackett Fischer
(ages: Adult)

The story of how enslaved Africans and their descendants enlarged American ideas of freedom in varying ways in different regions of the early United States.



Music is History

by Questlove with Ben Greenman
(ages: Adult)

Focusing on the years 1971 to the present, Questlove finds the hidden connections in the American tapestry, whether investigating how the blaxploitation era reshaped Black identity or considering the way disco took an assembly-line approach to Black genius.

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* All books are available in the Gilman Libraries