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## Recommended Children's Books and Other Resources

### Organized by Subject

Tanenbaum Center staff are always available to help you find additional sources or to answer questions. Please let us know of any resources that you would like to see added to the list. You can contact us at [education@tanenbaum.org](mailto:education@tanenbaum.org).

### Families and Communities

#### Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman

Grace, an African American girl, loves to act out stories with exciting parts. When classmates tell her she can't play Peter Pan in a play because she's a girl and because she's black, Grace's family tells her she can be anything she wants to be if she puts her mind to it.

#### Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki

Story about a Japanese-American boy in an internment camp during WW II.

#### Black is Brown is Tan by Arnold Adoff

A loving poem about an interracial family.

#### Boundless Grace by Mary Hoffman (Sequel to Amazing Grace)

Grace's parents divorced when she was very young, and her father now lives in Gambia with his wife and children. Grace feels very strange when she goes to visit him, but she learns that families are what you make of them.

#### Dear Juno by Soyung Pak

Juno discovers that communication and love can transcend the language barrier between his grandmother and himself.

#### Families by Susan Kuklin

This book presents the interviews of fifteen different families, each unique and from different racial, cultural, social, single, divorced (and the list goes on!) families. The interviews focus about children's feelings about being a part of these families.

### Family Pictures and

#### In My Family by Carmen Lomas Garza

Beautifully rendered paintings capture the artist's memories of her childhood – her home, family and traditions – growing up in rural Mexican community in Texas.

#### Grandfather Counts by Andrea Cheng and Ange Zhang

Characters discover that communication and feelings can transcend language barriers.

#### Grandmother's Dreamcatcher by Becky Ray McCain

When Kimmy's parents leave her with her grandmother for a week, Kimmy has nightmares. But her grandmother shows her how to make a dreamcatcher for good dreams.

#### Heroes by Ken Mochizuki

When a Japanese-American boy's friends call him a "Jap" and say that "Japs" can't be war heroes, the narrator's father and uncle help dispel this idea.

#### Honoring Our Ancestors Ed. Harriet Rohmer

Famous artists paint their ancestors – including both family members and historical inspirations and role models.

#### How My Family Lives in America by Susan Kuklin

Three children whose parent(s) are from another country talk about their lives in America.

#### I Love My Hair by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

Keyana, an African-American girl, connects with her mother and grandmother through her hair, which she can wear any way she chooses.

#### I Love You Like Crazy Cakes by Rose Lewis

Based on the author's own experience, this heartfelt story follows a woman on her journey to adopt a baby girl from China (book jacket).

In My Momma's Kitchen by Jerdine Nolan

Loving vignettes of an African-American family.

Keeping Quilt, The by Patricia Polacco

The story of a quilt that has been handed down to the author by her Russian Jewish great-grandmother.

Kingfisher Book of Family Poems Ed. Belinda Hollyer

Something Beautiful by Sharon Dennis Wyeth

This moving picture book offers a shining testament to the ability of human beings to find "something beautiful" in even the most unlikely places. An African American girl initially sees only the ugliness of her neighborhood. Searching for something beautiful - "something that when you have it, your heart is happy" - she polls various neighbors. Wyeth's restrained text is thoughtful without being didactic. She creates a city landscape that is neither too dark nor too sweet; and her ending is just right (Publisher's Weekly).

Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry by Bebe Moore Campbell

The story of a girl whose mother is battling depression.

Subway Sparrow by Leyla Torres

Characters discover that communication can transcend language barriers

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold

Quilt paintings illustrate a Depression era girl's imaginative foray to heights from which she can see and therefore claim her world. Picnicking on the roof of her family's Harlem apartment building--a "tar beach" to which they bring fried chicken and roasted peanuts, watermelon and beer, and, not least, friends and laughter--Cassie pictures herself soaring above New York City: above the George Washington Bridge, which her father helped build; above the headquarters of the union that has denied him membership, because he's black; above the rooms in which they live. (Publisher's Weekly).

Trees of the Dancing Goats by Patricia Polacco

A story about Trisha, a Jewish girl, whose Christian neighbors become sick one year at Christmastime. Trisha helps them celebrate with an act of sharing that is rewarded in kind.

Welcoming Babies by Margy Burns Knight

Families around the world celebrate the birth of a baby in different ways

Working Cotton by Sherley Anne Williams

The story of a migrant family working on cotton plantations. The narrator, Shelan, describes how her parents, brothers and sisters arrive at the cottonfields before dawn and toil till night to fill sacks with the fluffy white harvest. At times both gritty and poetic, Williams's text is written completely in Shelan's dialect. Though the phrasing may require careful reading, it adds a necessary authenticity to the story while presenting a difficult way of life. However, the author does not pass a negative judgment here: her characters play, sing and admire nature--when they have the chance. Though some may object to the portrayal of African Americans picking cotton, Shelan's family is to be respected for embracing life and doing whatever it takes to make their way in the world (Publisher's Weekly).

When This World was New by D.H. Figueredo

Danilito is nervous about his first day at school in a new country, but his family helps him adjust.

When You Were Born by Diana Hutts Aston

The birth of a baby brings forth poetry. As family, friends and neighbors gather around to share in the joy of a new baby, they emerge changed (book jacket).

## Home and Immigration

### 97, Orchard Street, New York by Arlene Alda and Linda Granfield

A book by the Lower East Side Tenement Museum about this historic building and the people who lived there.

### Aekyung's Dream by Min Paek

Aekyung, a young Korean girl, struggles to adjust to life in the United States. This book is bilingual (English-Korean).

### Annushka's Voyage by Edith Tarbescu

Annushka's voyage, with her sister, from Russia to the United States

### Amelia's Road by Linda Jacobs

Amelia's parents are migrant farm workers who must move every few months. Amelia has no place to call home, until she finds a special place of her own.

### A Place where Sunflowers Grow by Amy Lee-Tai

Story about a Japanese-American girl in an internment camp during WW II.

### Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky by Faith Ringgold

Story about the underground railroad for young children.

### Closet Ghosts by Uma Krishnaswami

The story of Anu and how she drives away the ghosts she encounters in her new house with laughter and a little help.

### Color of Home, The by Mary Hoffman

A story about Hassan, a refugee from Somalia, and his first day at school. Though Hassan doesn't speak English, he finds a way to share his story and make friends in their new home.

### Coming to America: A Muslim Family's Story by Bernard Wolf

### Coming to America: The Story of Immigration by Betsy Maestro

An overview of the history of immigration in the United States for children

Dia and the Story Cloth by Dia Cha, Chiie Thao Cha, and Nhia Thao Cha

Using a traditional Hmong story cloth, the author retells the experiences of her family as refugees fleeing violence in their homeland of Laos.

Encounter by Jane Yolen

The story of Columbus' encounter with the Taino, told from the perspective of a young Taino boy.

Ellis Island: Doorway to Freedom by Steven Kroll

Addresses the experiences of immigrants at Ellis Island.

Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting

A story about a boy and his father who live in an airport while his father searches for a job and their bond with each other and the other people who live there.

Follow the Drinking Gourd by Jeanette Winters

Story about the underground railroad for young children.

Gleam and Glow by Eve Bunting

The story of a family of refugees fleeing violence in their homes. When they return to scenes of destruction, they find the two goldfish that they were forced to leave behind alive and thriving.

Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say

Themes of home and belonging are beautifully explored in this book. The narrator's grandfather moves from Japan to California and back again, finding that he cannot forget his memories of either place. The narrator, who follows in his grandfather's footsteps, understands this struggle acutely: "The funny thing is, the moment I am in one country, I am homesick for the other."

Houses and Homes by Ann Morris

A look at houses and homes around the world

How Many Days to America? by Eve Bunting and Beth Peck

A story about refugees who are forced to leave their homes due to war. Though the protagonists often don't speak English, they find a way to share their stories and make friends in their new home.

If your name was changed at Ellis Island by Ellen Levine and Wayne Parmenter

Addresses the experiences of immigrants at Ellis Island.

I Hate English! by Ellen Levine and Steve Bjorkman

Mei Mei, a young girl from Hong Kong is having trouble adjusting to a new language in the United States.

Immigrants: A Library of Congress book by Martin W. Sandler

In the Time of the Drums by Kim L. Siegelson

Gullah legend of an Ibo woman who was brought to America as a slave and who escapes along with others back to Africa.

Island of Hope: The story of Ellis Island and the journey to America by Martin Sandler

Addresses the experiences of immigrants at Ellis Island.

For a look at the experiences of immigrants at Angel Island, an immigration station on the West Coast, see <http://www.aiisf.org/>

I was Dreaming to Come to America by Veronica Lawlor

The voices of immigrants from Ellis Island.

Kurdish Family, A by Karen O' Connor

Letters to Grandma Grace by Victoria Francis

Letters to Grandma Grace is a story of a refugee family in Africa. The family's experiences in their country of asylum are told through letters from the children to their Grandma Grace. The letters illustrate the difficulties and hardships they face in adapting to their new home.

Lost Children, The by Sibylla Martin

Ibuka is separated from her family when fleeing her home and comes to find herself, along with her younger brother, at a centre for lost children.

Marianthe's Story: Spoken Words, Painted Memories by Alike

A story about Marianthe, whose family is forced to leave their homes due to war. Though Marianthe doesn't speak English, she finds a way to share their stories and make friends in her new home.

My Brother's a Soldier by Clare MG Kemp

My Brother is a Soldier tells the story of the return of a child soldier to his village in Africa and the problems he faces in trying to reintegrate and lead a normal life.

My Name is Celia by Monica Brown

The life of Celia Cruz.

My Name is Yoon by Helen Recorvits

The story of Yoon's difficult adjustment from life in Korea to life in the United States. Yoon thinks her name looks happier in Korean than in English. As she comes to understand her new life, she knows that no matter how her name is spelled, she is still Yoon.

My Diary from Here to There by Amada Irma Perez

A young girl keeps a diary of her journey and experiences in a new country.

Movie in my Pillow, A by Jorge Argueta

A beautiful collection of children's poems from the point of view of a boy who has moved to San Francisco from El Salvador.

Oranges on Golden Mountain by Elizabeth Partridge

In 19<sup>th</sup> century California, Jo Lee learns to adjust to life in California while his dream spirit travels back to China to be with his family.

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson

Clara creates a quilt that shows her the way North to freedom from slavery.

Sumi's First Day of School Ever by Soyung Pak

A story about a young Korean girl on her first day of school.

Tallchief: America's Prima Ballerina by Maria Tallchief and Rosemary Wells

The story of America's internationally renowned ballerina, who is of Osage Indian and Scots-Irish descent.

Under the Quilt of the Night by Deborah Hopkinson

Simply and beautifully tells the story of a group of former slaves on their journey to freedom on the underground railroad.

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest

The story of Jessie's journey from Eastern Europe to the United States

Whispering Cloth, The by Pegi Deitz Shea, Anita Riggio, and You Yang

A story about Mai, a young Hmong refugee in a Thai refugee camp. Mai retells her story through a p'andau, a traditional story cloth.

Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by

Kathleen Krull

When Wilma Rudolph was a child she suffered from polio, yet she grew up to become the first American woman to win three gold medals at the same Olympics.

## Friendship and Belonging

### Cry Baby by Lynn Kramer

A young refugee girl who finds herself in a new home after fleeing from war. has difficulty making new friends because the other children see her as being different. She overcomes this by demonstrating through a heroic act that she is really no different from the other children.

### First Day in Grapes by L. King Perez

Chico's family are migrant farm workers. Because Chico changes schools a lot as his family moves, he is nervous about starting third grade in a new school. But as Chico uses his strong math skills, makes new friends, and stands up to two bullies in his class he finds his feet in a new place.

### Halmoni and the Picnic by Sook Nyul Choi

Yunmi's grandmother stays at home alone all day and doesn't speak English. Yunmi and her friends are worried that Halmoni (Korean for grandmother) will leave for Korea and come up with a plan to help her feel more at home. But what if the other students make fun of Halmoni's unfamiliar dress and food?

### Kiki's Journey by Kristy Orona-Ramirez

The story of Kiki, a Tiwa Indian girl who is born and brought up in Los Angeles. When she visits her family on the reservation she feels like she doesn't belong. This heartwarming story depicts the complexity of the lives of Native Americans today but speaks of universal themes of home, family, traditions and belonging.

### My Name is Bilal by Asma Mobin-Uddin

Bilal, a young Muslim boy, transfers to a new school. Trying to fit in with his new classmates, Bilal pretends that his name is Bill and ignores the situation when his sister is teased by some other students for wearing a head scarf. With the help of an understanding teacher, Bilal reconnects to his faith and makes new friends at school.

Name Jar, The by Yangsook Choi

When Unhei gets teased about her name on her first day at school, she tells her classmates that she doesn't have a name.

Oliver Button is a Sissy by Tomie DePaola

Oliver Button likes to dance, but his classmates call him a sissy. When Oliver competes in a dance competition, everyone can see that he is a star!

Other Side, The by Jacqueline Woodson

A story of friendship across a racial divide. Clover, the young African-American narrator, lives beside a fence that segregates her town. Her mother instructs her never to climb over to the other side because it isn't safe. But one summer morning, Clover notices a girl on the other side. Both children are curious about one another, and as the summer stretches on, Clover and Annie work up the nerve to introduce themselves. They dodge the injunction against crossing the fence by sitting on top of it together, and Clover pretends not to care when her friends react strangely at the sight of her sitting side by side with a white girl. Eventually, it's the fence that's out of place, not the friendship (School Library Journal).

Smoky Night by Eve Bunting

An African-American boy and his Korean neighbor discover that they have a lot more in common than they thought during a crisis.

Who Belongs Here? By Margy Burns Knight and Thomas V. Chan

When Nary's classmates tell him to "go back where he came from", Nary's teacher helps the class understand that almost everybody in the United States comes from somewhere else or has ancestors who come from somewhere else.

Yoko by Rosemary Wells

The story of a Yoko, a young Japanese American girl whose classmates make fun of her for eating sushi.

Molly's Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen

Molly's mother, a Russian Jewish immigrant makes a doll of a pilgrim that looks like her. When Molly's classmates make fun of her, Molly's teacher

explains that pilgrims came to America to escape religious persecution and Molly's mother is a pilgrim too.

## Holidays and Traditions

1620: A New Look at the Mayflower by Catherine O'Neill Grace, Peter Arenstam, John Kemp, Plimoth Plantation

1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving by Catherine O'Neill Grace

These books explore these topics with new research and reenactments.

Autumn Equinox: Celebrating the Harvest

Summer Solstice

Winter Solstice

The Spring Equinox: Celebrating the Greeting of Earth by Ellen Jackson

Beautifully illustrated books detailing seasonal celebrations by cultures around the world in different historical eras.

All Kinds of Beliefs by Emma Damon

An engaging pop-up book for children that provides a broad overview of the world's major religions. The book is Bilingual (Chinese and English).

Celebrate! It's Cinco de Mayo/ Celebremos Es El Cinco de Mayo by Janice Levy

A very simple history of the holiday interspersed with the story of a young boy celebrating Cinco de Mayo with his family.

Celebrating the Great Mother: A handbook of Earth-Honoring Activities for Parents and Children by Cait Johnson and Maura D. Shaw.

A guidebook of the history and activities of earth-based spirituality, with a focus on family togetherness. The book runs the course of the year through earth-centered festivals.

Children Just Like Me by Barnabas and Anabel Kindersley

A look into the lives of children around the world.

Children Just Like Me (Series): Celebrations! By Barnabas and Anabel Kindersley

A look into the different cultural and religious celebrations in the lives of children across the world, organized by seasons.

Everybody Bakes Bread and

Everybody Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley

A girl visits several families in her neighborhood and enjoys different kinds of bread and rice.

Festivals Together by Sue Fitzjohn, Minda Weston, Judy Large

A resource guide to the many multi-faith celebrations around the world. The book includes a variety of stories, histories, recipes and activities.

Harvest by Polly Goodman

A look at harvest festivals around the world.

I see the Rhythm by Michele Wood

A book about music in African-American communities, including spirituals, Blues, and Jazz.

Kids Around the World Celebrate!: The Best Feasts and Festivals from Many Lands

by Linda Jones

Everyone loves a reason to have a good time, and although cultures around the world have their own unique feasts and festivals, we all share many of the same reasons to celebrate. Now you can learn about the many ways people from around the globe celebrate their special days, and join in the fun! (sleve).

My First Kwanzaa Book by Deborah M. Newton Chocolate

My first Kwanzaa Book introduces young children to the joyous celebration of this original African-American holiday! (from sleeve).

Now we can have a Wedding! by Judy Cox

Squanto's Journey: The Story of the First Thanksgiving by Joseph Bruchac

The story of Squanto, the last member of the Patuxet people and the story of the first Thanksgiving.

Wake Up, World! by Belinda Hollyer

A look into the lives of children around the world.

Recommended Websites:

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/>

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/>

<http://pulseplanet.nationalgeographic.com/>

<http://www.silkroadproject.org/>

## Religion and the Environment

### 50 Simple things kids can do to save the Earth by Andrews and McMeel.

Explains how specific things in a child's environment are connected to the rest of the world, how using them affects everything around it.

### Between Earth and Sky by Joseph Bruchac and Thomas Locker

Describes eight sacred Native American places with an emphasis on the interconnectedness of nature.

### Brother Eagle, Sister Sky by Chief Seattle

Chief's Seattle's declaration of the unity of all things and the importance of taking care of nature, this illustrated book demonstrates the part we play in the world through the eyes of Native American culture.

### Global Change by Theodore Snow

Describes the causes, effects and some solutions to global change.

### Global Warming by Jennifer Tesar

Describes the gradual warming of our planet, its causes and effects and ways in which we can all help.

### Going Green: A kid's handbook to saving the planet by Elkington, John; Hailes, Julia; Hill, Douglass; Makower, Joel.

Activities, long and short-term projects, background and history on environmental issues.

### In A Nutshell by Joseph Anthony

"Who we are. Why we re here. Where we come from and where we go. Every child ponders life's greatest questions. Here, in a nutshell, is a tale about life." Demonstrates the interconnectedness of life through the life of a nutshell.

### Keepers of the earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children by Michael Caduto, and Joseph Bruachac

Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding  
<http://www.tanenbaum.org>

A selection of traditional tales from various Indian peoples each accompanied by instructions for related activities dealing with aspects of the environment.

Recycling by Rohda Donald

Speaks to the necessity of recycling and teaches different ways in which it can be done.

Save the Earth. by Betty Miles

A useful guide to environmental problems which are divided into the following topics: land, atmosphere, water, energy, plants and animals, and people (including population issues, poverty and hunger, income distribution). Provides background and activities.

Shrinking Forests by Jennifer Tesar

Explores the crucial role of the forest ecosystem and how its invaluable resources are endangered by pollution, development and lack of careful conservation.

Taking Care of the Earth; Kids in Action. by Laurence Pringle

Presents earth-saving activities appropriate for young students, with an emphasis on making a difference in helping the Earth's environment.

## Readings on Multicultural Education

A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America by Ronald Takaki

Anti-Bias Curriculum. Tools for Empowering Young Children by Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Taskforce.

A People's History of the United States: 1492 – Present by Howard Zinn

Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Multicultural, Anti-Racist Education and Staff Development by Enid Lee, Deborah Menkart, and Margo Okazawa-Rey

Black Ants and Buddhists: Thinking Critically and Teaching Differently in the Primary Grades by Mary Cowhey

Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education by James Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks

Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong by James W. Lowen

Rethinking Schools Publications (<http://www.rethinkingschools.org>)

Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin

That's Not Fair! A Teacher's Guide To Activism with Young Children by Ann Pelo and Fran Davidson

The Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American Children by Gloria Ladson-Billings

## Selected Websites

Multifaith Calendar:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/index.shtml>

Overview of religious/spiritual beliefs and practices around the world:

(Note: The information on these websites may not represent the full range of religious beliefs and practices in the world or within each faith tradition. Make sure to consulting multiple sources and perspectives in order to more accurately represent the diversity of views both within and between traditions.)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/>

<http://www.beliefnet.org>

Guidelines on Addressing Religion in Public Schools and Lesson Plans on Freedom of Religion:

<http://www.firstamendmentschools.org>