

The New York Public Library
**Best Books
of 2021**

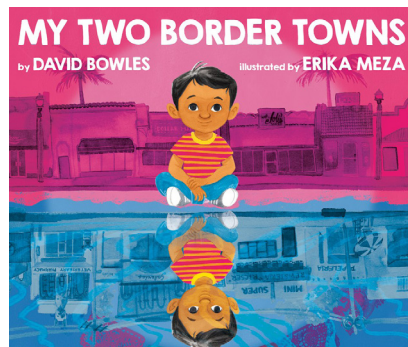
KIDS

Librarians and staff experts from across The New York Public Library have compiled this list of the best books of 2021 for kids, including picture books, graphic novels, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Explore the list—and more for readers of all ages: nypl.org/bestbooks

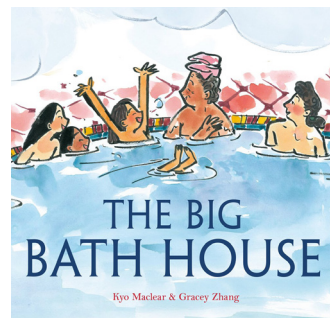
PICTURE BOOKS

- Anita and the Dragons**
Hannah Carmona, illustrated by Anna Cunha
- The Big Bath House**
Kyo Maclear, illustrated by Gracey Zhang
- The Capybaras**
Alfredo Soderguit, translated by Elisa Amado
- Dad Bakes**
Katie Yamasaki
- I Dream of Popo**
Livia Blackburne, illustrated by Julia Kuo
- The Longest Storm**
Dan Yaccarino
- Magic Candies**
Heena Baek, translated by Sophie Bowman
- The Midnight Fair**
Gideon Sterer, illustrated by Mariachiara Di Giorgio
- Mii maanda ezhi-gkendmaanh / This Is How I Know**
Brittany Luby, illustrated by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley
- Milo Imagines the World**
Matt de la Peña, illustrated by Christian Robinson

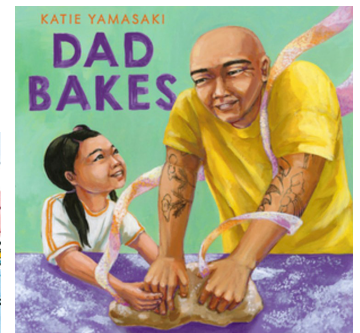
- Mole in a Black and White Hole**
Tereza Sediva
- My Day with the Panye**
Tami Charles, illustrated by Sara Palacios
- My First Day**
Phùng Nguyễn Quang and Huỳnh Kim Liên
- My Two Border Towns**
David Bowles, illustrated by Erika Meza
- Nathan's Song**
Leda Schubert, illustrated by Maya Ish-Shalom
- The Night Is Deep and Wide**
Gillian Sze, illustrated by Sue Todd
- The Night Walk**
Marie Dorléans, translated by Polly Lawson



- The Old Boat**
Jarrett Pumphrey and Jerome Pumphrey
- On the Trapline**
David A. Robertson, illustrated by Julie Flett
- Over the Shop**
JonArno Lawson, illustrated by Qin Leng
- Time Is a Flower**
Julie Morstad
- Watercress**
Andrea Wang, illustrated by Jason Chin
- We All Play**
Julie Flett



- When Lola Visits**
Michelle Sterling, illustrated by Aaron Asis
- When My Cousins Come to Town**
Angela Shanté, illustrated by Keisha Morris
- Wishes**
Mượn Thị Văn, illustrated by Victo Ngai
- Wonder Walkers**
Micha Archer



YOUNG READERS

- Ben Yokoyama and the Cookie of Doom**
Matthew Swanson, illustrated by Robbi Behr
- J.D. and the Great Barber Battle**
J. Dillard, illustrated by Akeem S. Roberts
- Maybe Maybe Marisol Rainey**
Erin Entrada Kelly
- Simon B. Rhymin'**
Dwayne Reed

- Stuntboy, in the Meantime**
Jason Reynolds, illustrated by Raúl the Third
- Tag Team**
Raúl the Third
- Too Small Tola**
Atinuke, illustrated by Onyinye Iwu

- Black Boy Joy: 17 Stories Celebrating Black Boyhood**
Kwame Mbalia (editor)
- Burying the Moon**
Andrée Poulin, illustrated by Sonali Zohra
- Cece Rios and the Desert of Souls**
Kaela Rivera

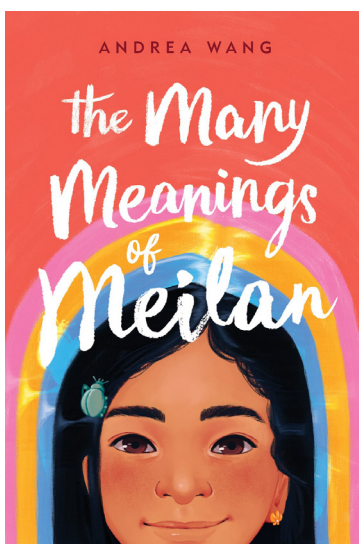
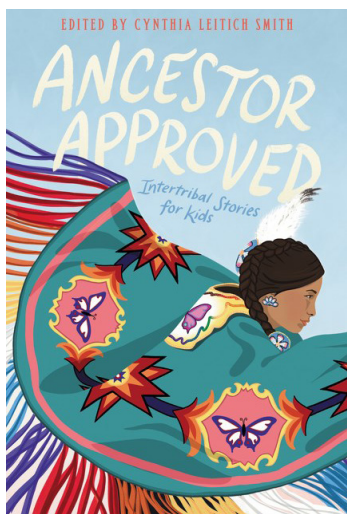
- The Mysterious Disappearance of Aidan S. (as Told to His Brother)**
David Levithan
- Ophie's Ghosts**
Justina Ireland
- Pencilvania**
Stephanie Watson, illustrated by Sofia Moore

MIDDLE GRADE FICTION

- Amari and the Night Brothers**
B.B. Alston
- Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids**
Cynthia Leitich Smith (editor)
- Barakah Beats**
Maleeha Siddiqui
- Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna**
Alda P. Dobbs

- The Dreamweavers**
G.Z. Schmidt
- The Last Cuentista**
Donna Barba Higuera
- The Magical Imperfect**
Chris Baron
- The Many Meanings of Meilan**
Andrea Wang
- Maya and the Robot**
Eve L. Ewing, illustrated by Christine Almeda
- The Monsters of Rookhaven**
Pádraig Kenny, illustrated by Edward Bettison

- A Place to Hang the Moon**
Kate Albus
- Red, White, and Whole**
Rajani LaRocca
- Root Magic**
Eden Royce
- Starfish**
Lisa Fipps
- Thanks a Lot, Universe**
Chad Lucas
- Too Bright to See**
Kyle Lukoff



GRAPHIC NOVELS

- Allergic**
Megan Wagner Lloyd, illustrated by Michelle Mee Nutter
- Another Kind**
Trevor Bream and Cait May
- Artie and the Wolf Moon**
Olivia Stephens

- Garlic and the Vampire**
Bree Paulsen
- The Girl From the Sea**
Molly Knox Ostertag
- The Golden Hour**
Niki Smith
- Living with Viola**
Rosena Fung
- No One Returns from the Enchanted Forest**
Robin Robinson
- Pawcasso**
Remy Lai
- Power Up**
Sam Nisson, illustrated by Darnell Johnson
- Tiny Tales: Shell Quest**
Steph Waldo

POETRY

- Dear Treefrog**
Joyce Sidman, illustrated by Diana Sudyka
- The Dirt Book: Poems About Animals that Live Beneath Our Feet**
David L. Harrison, illustrated by Kate Cosgrove
- Infinity**
Pablo Bernasconi
- Legacy: Women Poets of the Harlem Renaissance**
Nikki Grimes

- Niños: Poems for the Lost Children of Chile**
María José Ferrada, translated by Lawrence Schimel, illustrated by María Elena Valdez

- The People Remember**
Ibi Zoboi, illustrated by Loveis Wise

NONFICTION

- African Icons: Ten People Who Shaped History**
Tracey Baptiste
- Bartali's Bicycle: The True Story of Gino Bartali, Italy's Secret Hero**
Megan Hoyt, illustrated by Iacopo Bruno
- Black Hole Chasers: The Amazing True Story of an Astronomical Breakthrough**
Anna Crowley Redding

- The Boy Whose Head Was Filled with Stars: A Life of Edwin Hubble**
Isabelle Marinov

- The Bug Club**
Elise Gravel

- Chasing Bats and Tracking Rats: Urban Ecology, Community Science, and How We Share Our Cities**
Cylita Guy, illustrated by Cornelia Li

- Escape at 10,000 Feet: D.B. Cooper and the Missing Money**
Tom Sullivan

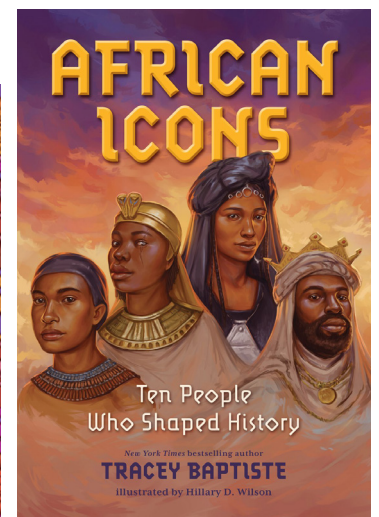
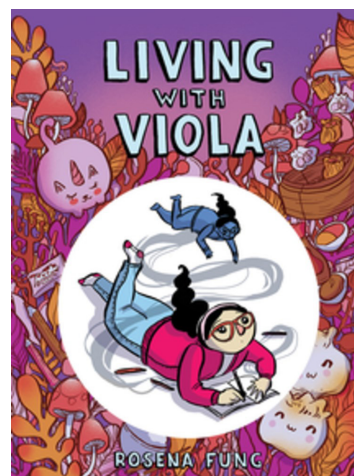
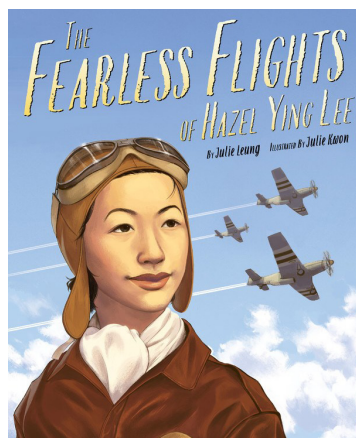
- The Fearless Flights of Hazel Ying Lee**
Julie Leung, illustrated by Julie Kwon

- From the Tops of the Trees**
Kao Kalia Yang, illustrated by Rachel Wada

- Hear My Voice / Escucha mi voz: The Testimonies of Children Detained at the Southern Border of the United States**
compiled by Warren Binford for Project Amplify

- I Am Smoke**
Henry Herz, illustrated by Mercè López

- King of Ragtime: The Story of Scott Joplin**
Stephen Costanza



Living Ghosts and Mischievous Monsters: Chilling American Indian Stories

Dan SaSuWeh Jones, illustrated by Weshoyot Alvitre

Nano: The Spectacular Science of the Very (Very) Small

Jess Wade, illustrated by Melissa Castrillón

Nina: A Story of Nina Simone

Traci N. Todd, illustrated by Christian Robinson

One Million Oysters On Top of the Mountain

Alex Nogués, translated by Lawrence Schimel, illustrated by Miren Asiain Lora

Opening the Road: Victor Hugo Green and His Green Book

Keila V. Dawson, illustrated by Alleanna Harris

The People's Painter: How Ben Shahn Fought for Justice with Art

Cynthia Levinson, illustrated by Evan Turk

The 1619 Project: Born on the Water

Nikole Hannah-Jones and Renée Watson, illustrated by Nikkolas Smith

Stamped (for Kids): Racism, Antiracism, and You

Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi, adapted by Sonja Cherry-Paul, illustrated by Rachelle Baker

Summertime Sleepers: Animals that Estivate

Melissa Stewart, illustrated by Sarah Brannen

Ten Animals in Antarctica: A Counting Book

Moira Court

Two Grooms on a Cake: The Story of America's First Gay Wedding

Rob Sanders, illustrated by Robbie Cathro

Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre

Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Floyd Cooper

Welcome to Your Period!

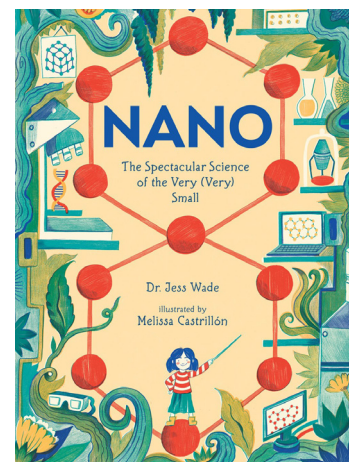
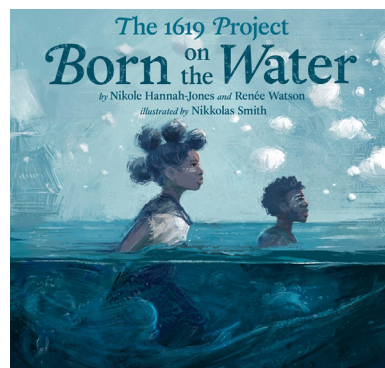
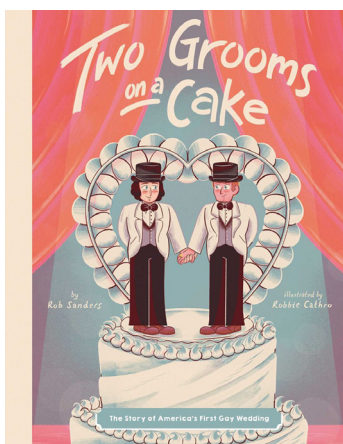
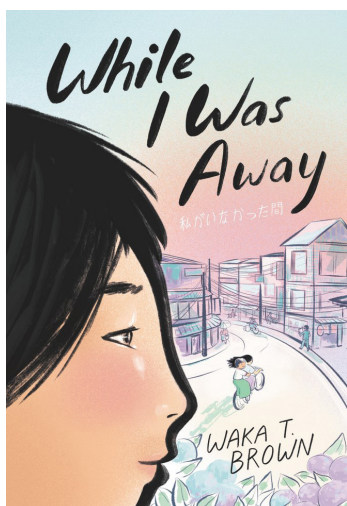
Yumi Stynes and Dr. Melissa Kang, illustrated by Jenny Latham

While I Was Away

Waka T. Brown

The Wisdom of Trees: How Trees Work Together to Form a Natural Kingdom

Lita Judge



About Best Books

Every year our librarians and staff select noteworthy new books for readers of all ages. These lists have always sought to reflect the diversity of New York City's readership. Special thanks to our Best Books committees, the members of which have read thousands of books to bring readers these recommendations. Learn more: nypl.org/bestbooks

About The New York Public Library

Founded in 1895, The New York Public Library is the nation's largest public library system, with neighborhood branches throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island, and scholarly research centers. Serving millions of patrons a year both in-person and online, the Library offers free materials, classes, and programs for users of all ages.



Follow @nypl



nypl.org/bestbooks | 4