

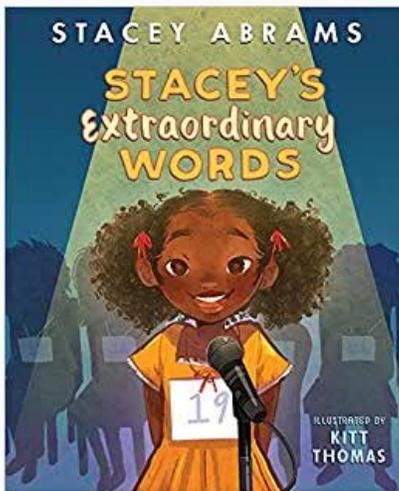
Dr. Toughlove's Book Club Selections

February 2022

Happy Black History Month!

Since February is Black History Month, I thought it was the perfect opportunity to highlight some books that I believe are wonderful examples of children's literature that put a spotlight on African-Americans. The purpose of Black History month is to showcase the accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans, and what better way than through literature? There are literally thousands of books that exist that could be listed as books to read during February, but below is my (or should I say Dr. Toughlove's) **Top Ten List**:

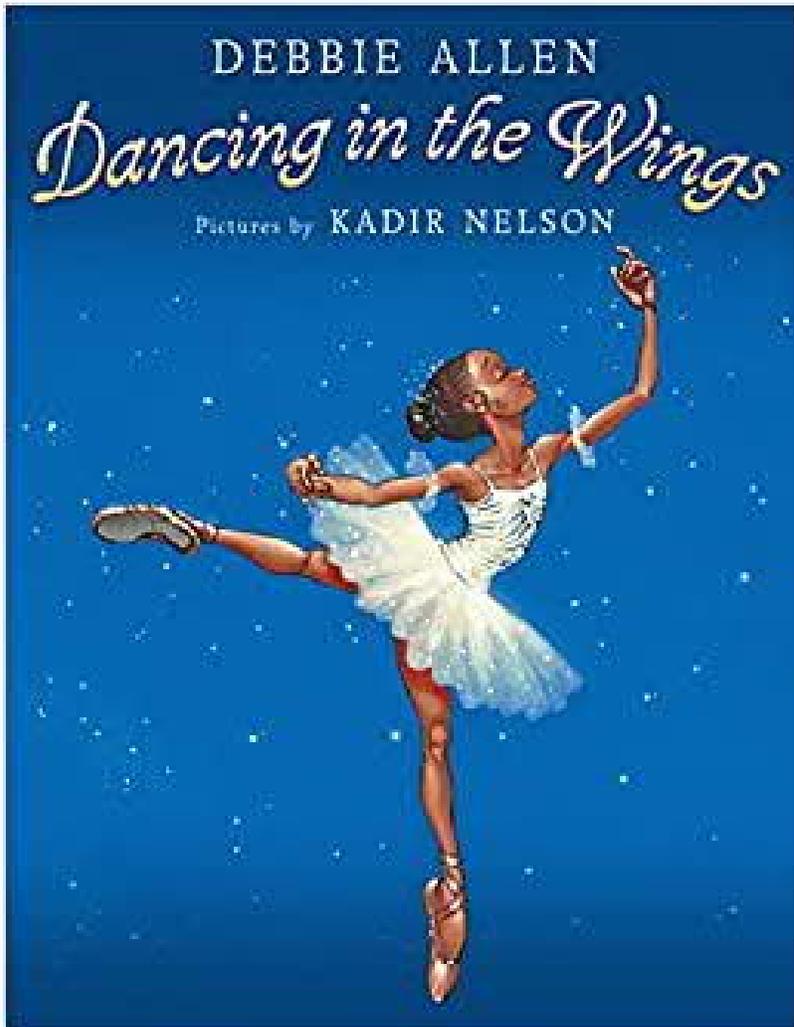
***Stacey's Extraordinary Words* by Stacey Abrams**



Stacey's Extraordinary Words, is new picture book by Stacey Abrams, that is based on her childhood. Stacey always (and still does) love words and even as a youngster understood their power. A delightful book, is

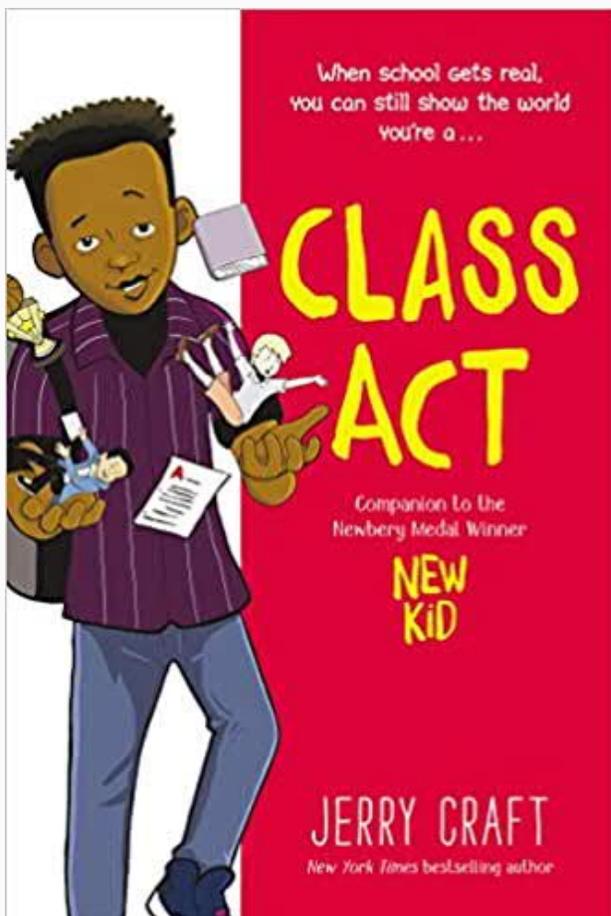
aimed at children 4-8 years old, but can certainly be enjoyed by all elementary-aged students.

***Dancing in the Wings* by Debbie Allen**



World renowned dancer, actress, choreographer, singer, songwriter, director and producer Debbie Allen, wrote this book about an appropriately named girl called Sassy who dreamed about becoming a ballerina. ***Dancing with Wings*** is loosely based on Debbie Allen's early experiences as a dancer. This beautifully illustrated book is ideal for readers aged 4-8.

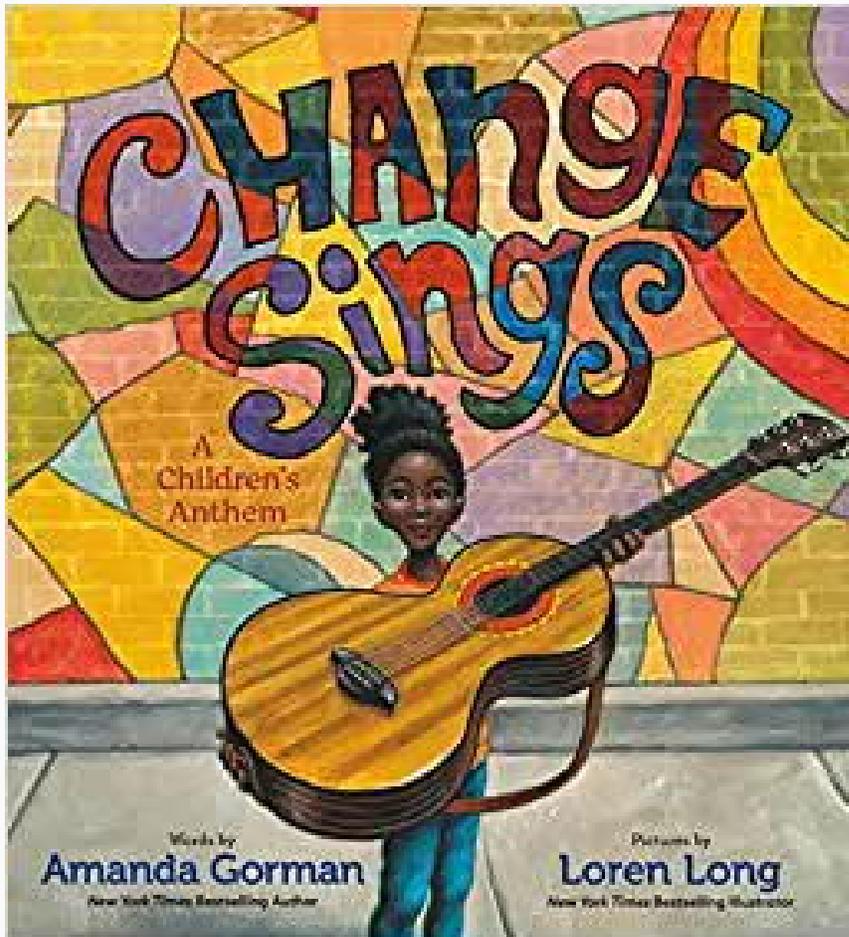
***Class Act* by Jerry Craft**



Class Act is a companion book to ***New Kid***, which I recommended on my February 2021 Black History Month Book List. This time Drew, a friend of the protagonist from ***New Kid*** relates his experiences as a black boy in a well-to-do private school. This graphic novel is aimed at kids

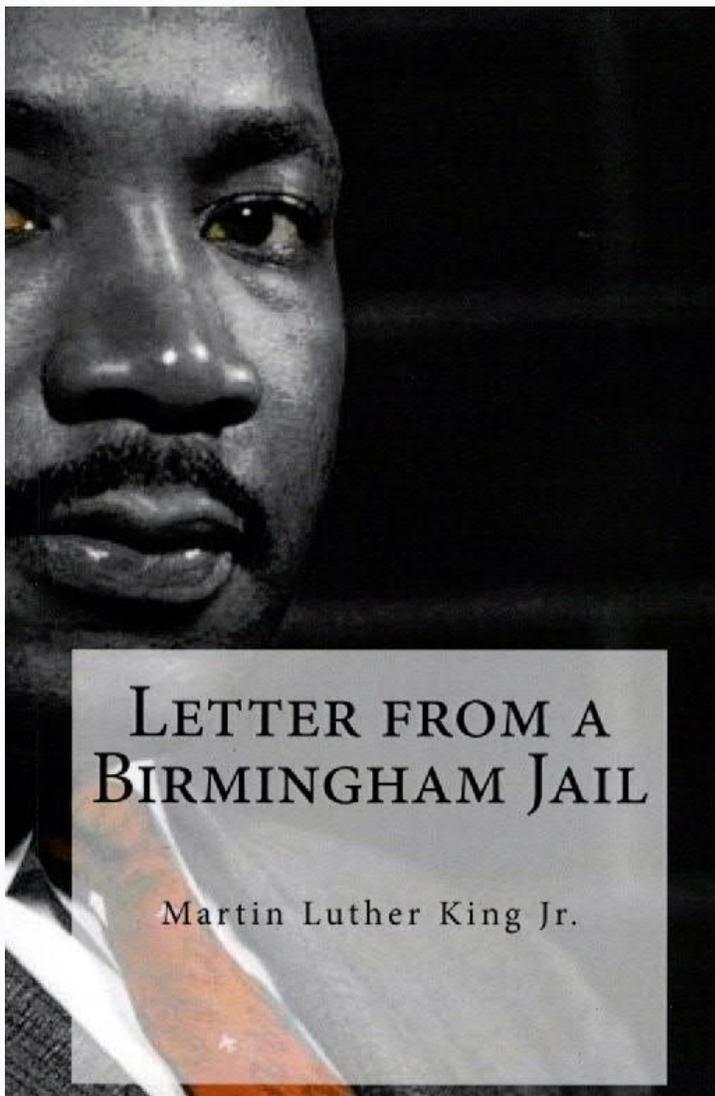
aged 8-12

Change Sings by Amanda Gordon



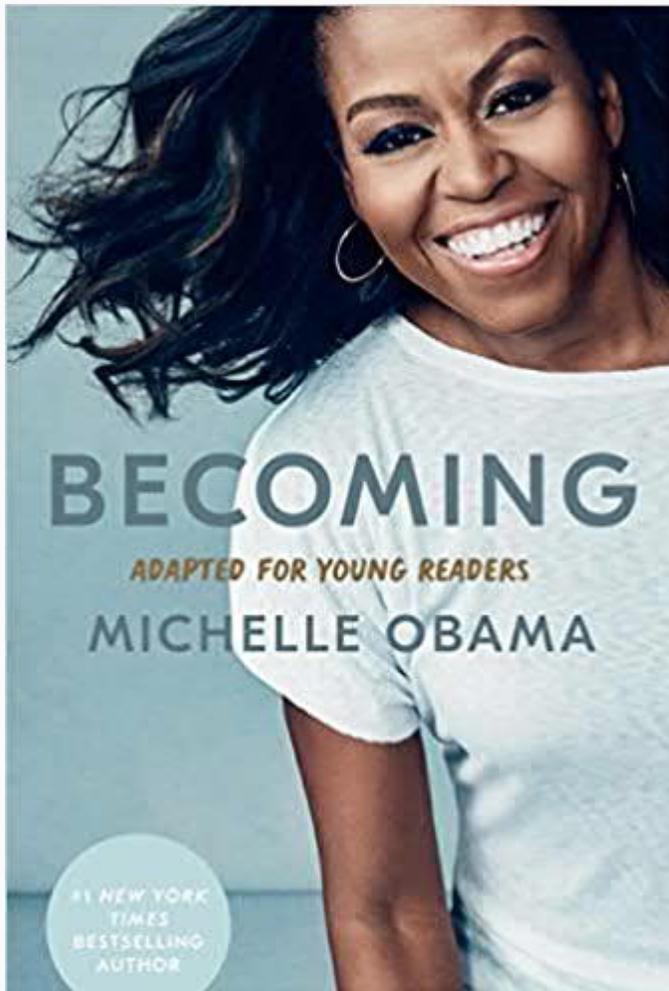
Amanda Gorman captured the hearts and minds of many while reading her inaugural poem at President Biden's ceremony in January 2021. Her children's book, ***Change Sings*** has the same rhythmic quality and profound message, beautifully executed by Ms. Gorman, with exquisite illustrations by award winning illustrator, Loren Long.

Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963 by Martin Luther King, Jr.



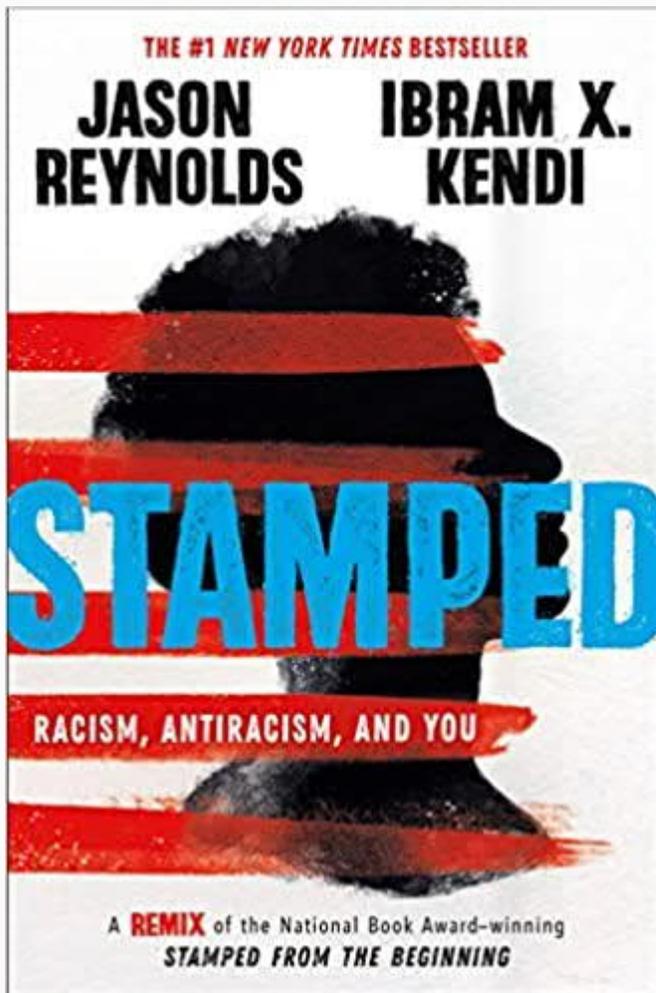
Letter from a Birmingham Jail by Martin Luther King Jr. is a must-read for young people who want to be steeped in the history of the Civil Rights movement in our country. Dr. King's eloquent prose is just as relevant today as it was in 1963. Appropriate for ages 10 and up (a little help from an adult might be needed for young ones).

***Becoming for Young Readers* by Michelle Obama**



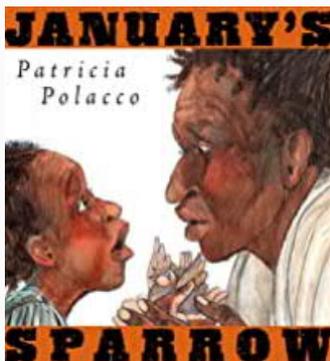
Michelle Obama's groundbreaking memoir ***Becoming*** has been adapted for young readers. Her heartwarming story is written with humility and humor and is sure to inspire readers young and old. It is recommended for readers aged 10-17 years.

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You: A Remix of the National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi



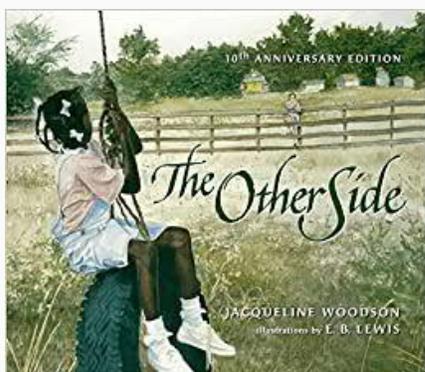
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You is a wonderful book that takes the principles and ideas from the original ***Stamped from the Beginning*** book by Dr. Kendi and relates them to today's youth. Jason Reynolds, a renowned writer who targets young adults and middle-grade audiences, does a masterful job making this book relevant for readers aged 12 and up.

***January Sparrow* by Patricia Polacco**



January's Sparrow is a powerful book based on a family who flees via boat and Underground Railroad from a Kentucky plantation to Indiana and then Michigan in the 1850's. This engaging story about the Crosswhite family is touching and inspirational with beautiful illustrations by Patricia Polacco. A must read for 8-12 year olds.

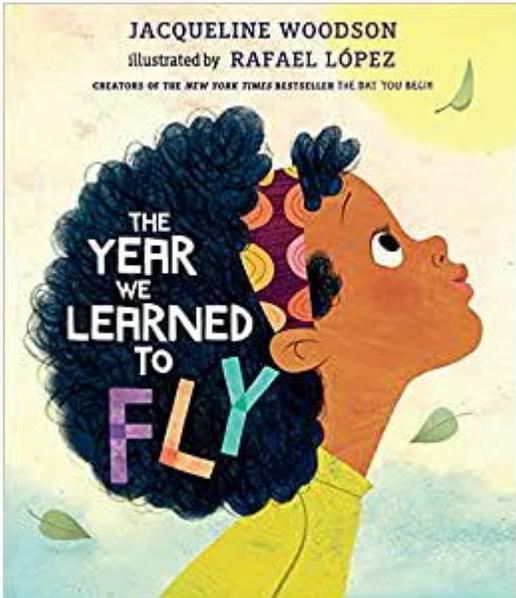
***The Other Side* by Jacqueline Woodson**



The Other Side is an oldie but goodie (2001), written by Jacqueline Woodson and illustrated by E.B. Lewis. This is a touching story about a white girl and a black girl who become friends across a fence. This

charming book about acceptance and friendship is recommended for readers aged 5-8 years.

***The Year We Learned to Fly* by Jacqueline Woodson**



This engaging book written by Jacqueline Woodson and illustrated by Rafael Lopez is about a boy and a girl who are out of sorts and need some joy, positivity and inspiration. This recently published, beautifully illustrated book is recommended for 5-8 year olds.

Happy Reading!
