African American women writers have helped bring the black woman's experience to life for millions of readers. They've written of what it was like to live in slavery, what Jim Crow America was like, and what 20th and 21st century America has been like for black women. On the following paragraphs, you'll meet novelists, poets, journalists, playwrights, essayists, social commentators, and feminist theorists. They're listed from the earliest to the latest.
Whether you're traveling on vacation, sunbathing on the beach, or simply lounging in the park, nothing beats a good book in the summertime. Still, with so many options at one's disposal, deciding on a title can prove difficult.

Huffington Post BlackVoices has compiled an extensive book list, featuring a range of genres including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, science-fiction and the autobiography. From Ralph Ellison to Jesmyn Ward, many of the authors have been heralded with national awards in the United States. Others, such as Zadie Smith and Tsitsi Dangarembga, have broken literary ground abroad in countries such as Zimbabwe, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Uganda. Stemming back to 1789 with Olaudah Equiano's "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano," these 50 titles have heavily contributed to contemporary narratives about the black experience across the globe.

100 Must Read African American Books
How many have you read?

Black Drama

Black Drama : African, African American, & Diaspora 1850 to Present  This edition of Black Drama, Second Edition contains approximately 1,462 plays by 233 playwrights, together with detailed, fielded information on related productions, theaters, production companies, and more. The database also includes selected playbills, production photographs and other ephemera related to the plays. Some 600 of the plays are published here for the first time, including a number by major authors. The plays themselves have been selected using leading bibliographies and with the editorial advice of James V. Hatch, co-author with Errol G. Hill of A History of African American Theatre and a leading expert in this area.

For more specialized online collections, be sure to scroll down the middle column of this page for Specialized Online Collections.

Slave Narratives

Slave narratives are an important part of American literature. Writers like Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs helped to dispel many of the misconceptions of slavery, as they revealed personal experiences. These books tell their stories... Article by Esther Lombardi from ThoughtCo.com

Selected Covers

100 Most Popular African American Authors : Biographical Sketches and Bibliographies .

African American dramatists : an A-to-Z guide
Reference Books

100 Most Popular African American Authors: Biographical Sketches and Bibliographies. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. 361pp. Main Library PS153.N5 D74 2007: Of interest to high school readers and older, this volume consists of profiles of 100 popular, contemporary African American authors, mostly those who have become prominent in the past 25 years, but with some seminal figures such as Alex Haley, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston. The profiles, which are presented alphabetically, provide brief biographies and discussions of their works, along with complete lists of their publications. Authors were chosen with an emphasis on popular fiction, durability, and US orientation in mind. A sampling of those profiled: Octavia Butler, Walter Moseley, Omar Tyree, Zane, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Bebe Moore Campbell, Edwidge Danticat, Terry McMillan, and Alice Walker. The book is indexed by author/title and genre. Profiles are based on sources such as existing reference works, periodicals, and author web sites. Drew is a freelance writer and editor.

African American dramatists: an A-to-Z guide. Edited by Emmanuel S. Nelson. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004. 527pp. Main Library PS338.N4 A69 2004: In addition to offering biocritical sketches for 61 writers from the last 150 years, this title has a selected bibliography for further research and an index (primarily author and title). Signed entries follow a general format: biographical information, overview of major works and themes, description of the critical reception, and bibliographies of dramatic works by the artist and studies of those dramatic works. The average length of each entry is about 8 pages, but the length ranges from 4 to 21 pages. The usual names are present—James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Richard Wright—as well as writers who are commanding more attention, among them Pearl Cleage, Angelina Weld Grimke, and Suzan Lori-Parks. The essays are generally clear and readable. Although there are other competing sets, African American Dramatists includes some writers who are seldom covered elsewhere. Among other sources for African American dramatists are Early Black American Playwrights and Dramatic Writers (Greenwood, 1990) and its companion, Contemporary Black American Playwrights and Their Plays (Greenwood, 1988); this pair has the greatest overlap with African American Dramatists, with 54 shared entries. The Dictionary of Literary Biography (Gale, 2005) and Contemporary Authors (Gale, 2005) combine to provide 49 shared entries. Greenwood's set American Playwrights, 1880-1945 (1994) and its companion, American Playwrights since 1945 (1989), though, share only 8 persons with African American Dramatists.

The Cambridge History of African American Literature (online). Cambridge University press, 2011. 860pp. The first major twenty-first century history of four hundred years of black writing, The Cambridge History of African American Literature presents a comprehensive overview of the literary traditions, oral and print, of African-descended peoples in the United States. Expert contributors, drawn from the United States and beyond, emphasize the dual nature of each text discussed as a work of art created by an individual and as a response to unfolding events in American cultural, political, and social history. Unprecedented in scope, sophistication and accessibility, the volume draws together current scholarship in the field. It also looks ahead to suggest new approaches, new areas of study, and as yet undervalued writers and works. The Cambridge History of African American Literature is a major achievement both as a work of reference and as a compelling narrative and will remain essential reading for scholars and students in years to come.


Contemporary Black American playwrights and their plays: a biographical directory and dramatic index. Bernard L. Peterson, Jr. New York: Greenwood Press, c1988. 625pp. Main Library PS153.N5 P43 1988: This major reference work lists over 700 black Americans who have written for the theater, film, television, and radio from 1950 to the present. Coverage, which includes brief biographical data and an annotated list of plays, ranges from such national figures as Lorraine Hansbury and Amiri Baraka (Leroy Jones) to those whose work has been produced by local, nonprofessional groups. A particularly helpful feature is a mailing address for each writer. . . A comprehensive bibliography completes this essential purchase for drama and black studies collections.

Early Black American playwrights and dramatic writers: a biographical directory and catalog of plays, films, and broadcasting scripts. Bernard L. Peterson, Jr. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990. 298pp. Main Library PS153.N5 P44 1990: Early Black American Playwrights and Dramatic Writers: A Biographical Directory and Catalog of Plays, Films and Broadcasting Scripts addresses an often overlooked area in the history of the American theater, the contributions of early black playwrights and dramatic writers. It covers authors who were active from the antebellum period to World War II, and although primarily theatrical in scope, it does include useful bibliographic entries on African-American screenwriters, such as Oscar Micheaux, Carlton Moss and Clarence Muse. Useful chronological and title indexes.

Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance/Aberjhani and Sandra L. West; foreword by Clement Alexander Price. New York: Facts On File, Inc.; c2003. 424pp. Main Library PS153.N5 A24 2003: Contains approximately 370 alphabetically arranged entries covering the emergence of new ideas in literature, political thought, civil rights, racial pride, and the arts during New York City's Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s. The book includes an A-to-Z entries; a chronology, a glossary of slang; a bibliography and lists of sources for further reading, listening, and viewing; a subject index; a general index; 12 maps; and more than 105 black-and-white photographs.

Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance/Cary D. Wintz, Paul Finkelman, editors. New York: Routledge, 2004. 2 volumes. Fine Arts, Art Reference (4 West) NX512.3.A35 E53 2004: The Harlem Renaissance, of great interest as the most creative period in African American cultural life, illustrates how African Americans functioned in the first half of the 20th century culturally, socially, artistically, economically. Wintz and Finkelman's encyclopedia exceeds in power and scholarship all other reference works on the Harlem Renaissance. Coverage, described in the preface, is broad, deep, and scholarly. Besides a seven-page alphabetical list of entries, the editors include an introduction in each section, and the articles are arranged thematically. The book is a fine addition to all academic collections, especially those in social studies and urban studies.
understanding African American experience, US and hemispheric histories of slavery, and early human rights philosophies. These multilingual collections contribute to an
historical, social, and political climate in which it took root. Accordingly, these alphabetically arranged and extensively cross-referenced entries focus on subjects
of African American life -- slave and free -- throughout the Americas; and slavery and race in fiction and drama.

Also featured are printed works of African American individuals and organizations. It encompasses slave narratives, lectures, travel accounts, political tracts, prose fiction, poetry, drama, religious and philosophical literature, compendia, journals, manifestoes and children's literature. There is a complex and contradictory range of voices, from journalistic reportage to sentimental poetry, from racial
writers of diverse racial origins. It encompasses slave narratives, lectures, travel accounts, political tracts, prose fiction, poetry, drama, religious and philosophical literature,
and Brer Rabbit. Icons of black culture are addressed, including Muhammad Ali, John Coltrane, Marcus Garvey, Jackie Robinson, John Brown, and Harriet Tubman. There are
awards and honors given to African American authors. Long overdue, Hazel Arnett Ervin's accessible handbook fills a void in literary arts and letters, a tribute to the rich vernacular tradition that has evolved from African American oral and written expression. Hazel Arnett Ervin is associate professor of English and linguistics at Morehouse College.


Oxford Companion to African American Literature(2001). Presents more than 400 biographies of authors, critics, literary characters, and historical figures, and 150 plot summaries of major works. A breathtaking achievement, it covers an enormous range of writers - from Sojourner Truth to Frederick Douglass, Ralph Ellison to Toni Morrison. It contains entries on major works (including synopses of novels) and also incorporates information on literary characters, as well as on character types such as Aunt Jemima and Brer Rabbit. Icons of black culture are addressed, including Muhammad Ali, John Coltrane, Marcus Garvey, Jackie Robinson, John Brown, and Harriet Tubman. There are general articles on poetry, fiction, and drama; on autobiography, slave narratives, Sunday School literature, and oratory; as well as on a wide spectrum of related topics.

For more reference works on African American Art and Culture, visit the Reference Tools tab.

Specialized Online Collections

African American Perspectives: Pamphlets from the Daniel A.P. Murray Collection, 1818-1907 - The Daniel A. P. Murray Pamphlet Collection presents a panoramic and eclectic review of African-American history and culture, spanning almost one hundred years from the early nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries, with the bulk of the material published between 1875 and 1900. Among the authors represented are Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Benjamin W. Arnett, Alexander Crummel, and Emanuel Love. Courtesy of the Library of Congress American Memory Project.

African American Poetry Database, 1760-1900. Covering a wide range of topics from slavery and abolition to love and death, this collection provides a unique portrait of early America through the reflections of African-American poets during the 18th and 19th centuries. It contains a variety of poetic styles and types including elegies, odes, ditties, hymns, and sonnets.

African American Thought and Culture, see Black Thought and Culture.

African American Women Writers of the 19th Century. A digital collection of some 52 published works by 19th century black women writers. A part of the Digital Schomburg, this collection provides access to the thought, perspectives and creative abilities of black women as captured in books and pamphlets published prior to 1920.

Afro-American Imprints, 1535 - 1922: From the Library Company of Philadelphia. Created from the Library Company of Philadelphia's acclaimed Afro-American Collection - an accumulation that began with Benjamin Franklin and steadily increased throughout its entire history - this unique online resource provides researchers with more than 12,000 printed works. These essential books, pamphlets and broadsides, including many lesser-known imprints, hold an unparalleled record of African American history, literature and culture. This collection spans nearly 400 years, from the early 16th to the early 20th century. Critically important subjects covered include the West's discovery and exploitation of Africa; the rise of slavery in the New World along with the growth and success of abolitionist movements; the development of racial thought, including political protest and resistance to racism; descriptions of African American life -- slave and free -- throughout the Americas; and slavery and race in fiction and drama. Also featured are printed works of African American individuals and organizations.

Antislavery Literary Project. Antislavery literature represents the origins of multicultural literature in the United States. It is the first body of American literature produced by writers of diverse racial origins. It encompasses slave narratives, lectures, travel accounts, political tracts, prose fiction, poetry, drama, religious and philosophical literature, compendia, journals, manifestoes and children's literature. There is a complex and contradictory range of voices, from journalistic reportage to sentimental poetry, from racial paternalism and stereotyping to advocacy of interracial equality, from religious disputation to militant antislavery calls. In its whole, this literature is inseparable from an understanding of democratic development in US society. The goal of the Antislavery Literature Project is to increase public access to a body of literature crucial to understanding African American experience, US and hemispheric histories of slavery, and early human rights philosophies. These multilingual collections contribute to an

Black Drama (2nd edition) contains approximately 1,462 plays by 233 playwrights, together with detailed, fielded information on related productions, theaters, production companies, and more. The database also includes selected playbills, production photographs and other ephemera related to the plays. Some 600 of the plays are published here for the first time, including a number by major authors. The plays themselves have been selected using leading bibliographies and with the editorial advice of James V. Hatch, co-author with Errol G. Hill of A History of African American Theatre and a leading expert in this area.

Black Thought and Culture contains 1,297 sources with 1,098 authors, covering the non-fiction published works of leading African Americans. Particular care has been taken to index this material so that it can be searched more thoroughly than ever before. Where possible the complete published non-fiction works are included, as well as interviews, journal articles, speeches, essays, pamphlets, letters and other fugitive material.

A Celebration of Women Writers: African American Writers. The Celebration of Women Writers recognizes the contributions of women writers throughout history. Women have written almost every imaginable type of work: novels, poems, letters, biographies, travel books, religious commentaries, histories, economic and scientific works. Our goal is to promote awareness of the breadth and variety of women's writing. All too often, works by women, and resources about women writers, are hard to find. We attempt to provide easy access to available on-line information. The Celebration provides a comprehensive listing of links to biographical and bibliographical information about women writers, and complete published books written by women. A compilation of web sites compiled by the University of Pennsylvania Libraries.

Twentieth Century African American Poetry. A database of modern and contemporary African American poetry, featuring almost 9,000 poems by 62 of the most important African American poets of the last century, including Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, Imamu Amiri Baraka, Audre Lorde and Rita Dove.

Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture. This website from the University of Virginia presents a vast multimedia archive of primary material, 1830 to 1930, organized around Harriet Beecher Stowe's seminal work. Educators should preview the material, particularly the various representations of race and slavery in the archive, to determine what is appropriate for use in their own classroom discussion.

VГ/ Voices from the Gaps. A website based in the English Department at the University of Minnesota and dedicated to bringing together marginalized resources and knowledge about women artists of color to serve secondary and college education across the world. This link highlights African-American women. For additional categories, click here.

Children's Literature: Recommended Reads from the Civil Rights Era

Popular Books Taking Place in the Civil Rights Era. Possible orders for MSU Children' and UA Literature Collection

A Chair for My Mother: a novel by Vera B. Williams. 2007. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon. After a fire destroys their home and possessions, Rosa, her mother, and grandmother must save money until they can afford to buy one big, comfortable chair that all three of them can enjoy. "A superbly conceived picture book expressing the joyful spirit of a loving family.

The Colored Car / Jean Alicia Elster. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013. 207pp. MSU Children' and UA Literature Collection PS3605.L77 C6 2013: In The Colored Car, Jean Alicia Elster, author of the award-winning Who's Jim Hines?, follows another member of the Ford family coming of age in Depression-era Detroit. In the hot summer of 1937, twelve-year-old Patsy takes care of her three younger sisters and helps her mother put up fresh fruits and vegetables in the family's summer kitchen, adjacent to the wood yard that her father, Douglas Ford, owns. Times are tough, and Patsy's mother, May Ford, helps neighborhood families by sharing the food that she preserves. But May's decision to take a break from canning to take her daughters for a visit to their grandmother's home in Clarksville, Tennessee, sets in motion a series of events that prove to be life-changing for Patsy. After boarding the first-class train car at Michigan Central Station in Detroit and riding comfortably to Cincinnati, Patsy is shocked when her family is led from their seats to change cars. In the dirty, cramped "colored car," Patsy finds that the life she has known in Detroit is very different from life down south, and she can hardly get the experience out of her mind when she returns home. "I like the soot stain on her finely made dress or the smear on the quilt squares her grandmother taught her to sew. As summer wears on, Patsy must find a way to understand her experience in the colored car and also deal with the more subtle injustices that her family faces in Detroit. By the end of the story, Patsy will never see the world in the same way that she did before. Elster's engaging narrative illustrates the personal impact of segregation and discrimination and reveals powerful glimpses of everyday life in 1930s Detroit. For young readers interested in American history, The Colored Car is engaging and informative reading.

Darkest Child: a novel by Delores Phillips. 2004. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon. Phillips's searing debut reveals the poverty, injustices and
**The Help**: a novel by Kathryn Stockett. 2010. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon. 

Three ordinary women are about to take one extraordinary step....Twenty-two-year-old Skeeter has just returned home after graduating from Ole Miss. She may have a degree, but it is 1962, Mississippi, and her mother will not be happy till Skeeter has a ring on her finger. Skeeter would normally find solace with her beloved maid Constantine, the woman who raised her, but Constantine has disappeared and no one will tell Skeeter where she has gone....Abilene is a black maid, a wise, regal woman raising her seventeenth white child. Something has shifted inside her after the loss of her own son, who died while his bosses looked the other way. She is devoted to the little girl she looks after, though she knows both their hearts may be broken....Minny, Abilene's best friend, is short, fat, and perhaps the sassiest woman in Mississippi. She can cook like nobody's business, but she can't mind her tongue, so she's lost yet another job. Minny finally finds a position working for someone too new to town to know her reputation. But her new boss has secrets of her own....Seemingly as different from one another as can be, these women will nonetheless come together for a clandestine project that will put them all at risk. And why? Because they are suffocating within the lines that define their town and their times. And sometimes lines are made to be crossed....In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women—mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends—view each other. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope, *The Help* is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't. The book has also been made into a movie which is available in the MSU Library Digital and Multimedia Collection.

**Martin's Big Words**: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Doreen Rappaport. 2007. 30pp. MSU Children' and UA Literature Collection picture PZ7.W868 Mi 2000 : For Lafayette and his brothers, the challenges of growing up in New York City are compounded by the facts that they've lost their parents and it's up to eldest brother Ty'ree to support the boys, and middle brother Charlie has just returned home from a correctional facility....Lafayette loves his brothers and would do anything if they could face the world as a team. But even though Ty'ree cares, he's just so busy with work and responsibility. And Charlie's changed so much that his former affection for his little brother has turned to open hostility....Now, as Lafayette approaches 13, he needs the guidance and answers only his brothers can give him. The events of one dramatic weekend force the boys to make the choice to be there for each other—tightly real to see each other—or to give in to the pain and problems of every day.

**No Laughing Here** by Rita Williams-Garcia. 2003. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon: Even though they were born in different countries, Akilah and Victoria are true best friends. But Victoria has been acting strange ever since she returned from her summer in Nigeria, where she had a special coming-of-age ceremony. Why does proud Victoria, named for a queen, slouch at her desk and answer the teacher's questions in a whisper? And why won't she laugh with Akilah anymore?....Akilah's name means "intelligent," and she is determined to find out what's wrong, no matter how much detective work she has to do. But when she learns the terrible secret Victoria is hiding, she suddenly has even more questions. The only problem is, they might not be the kind that have answers....In this groundbreaking novel, Coretta Scott King Honor winner Rita Williams-Garcia uses her vividly realistic voice to explore an often taboo practice that affects millions of girls around the world every year. Readers will identify with headstrong, outspoken Akilah, whose struggle to understand what's happened to Victoria reveals a painful truth in an honest and accessible way.

**One Crazy Summer** by Rita Williams-Garcia. New York, NY : Amistad, [2010] 218pp. Children' and UA Literature Collection PZ7.W6713 On 2010 : In this Newbery Honor novel, *New York Times* bestselling author Rita Williams-Garcia tells the story of three sisters who travel to Oakland, California, in 1968 to meet the mother who abandoned them....Eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since her mother, Cécile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. When they arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with her, Cécile is nothing like they imagined. While the girls hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers. Unexpectedly, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern learn much about their family, their country, and themselves during one truly crazy summer....This moving, funny novel won the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction and the Coretta Scott King Award and was a National Book Award Finalist.

**Pudd'nehead Wilson** by Mark Twain. 1893. Various versions are available in the MSU Libraries. Some are online, some in Special Collections, etc. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon: Switched at birth by a young slave woman attempting to protect her son from the horrors of slavery, a light-skinned infant changes places with the master's white son. This simple premise is the basis of *Pudd'nehead Wilson*, a compelling drama that contains all the elements of a classic 19th-century mystery: reversed identities, a ghastly crime, an eccentric detective, and a tense courtroom scene....First published in 1894, *Twain's* novel bristles with suspense. David "Pudd'nhead" Wilson, a wise but unorthodox lawyer who collects fingerprints as a hobby, wins back the respect of his townspeople when he solves a local murder in which two foreigners are falsely accused. Witty and absorbing, this novel features a literary first—the use of fingerprinting to solve a crime. This gem was Twain's last novel about the antebellum

**The Help**: A true story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine. 2007. 40pp. MSU Children' and UA Literature Collection picture PZ7.L57833 Hen 2007 : A stirring, dramatic story of a slave who mails himself to freedom by a Jane Addams Peace Award-winning author and a Coretta Scott King Award-winning artist....Henry Brown doesn't know how old he is. Nobody keeps records of slaves' birthdays. All the time he dreams about freedom, but that dream seems farther away than ever when he is torn from his family and put to work in a warehouse. Henry grows up and marries, but he is again devastated when his family is sold at the slave market. Then one day, as he lifts a crate at the warehouse, he knows exactly what he must do: He will mail himself to the North. After an arduous journey in the crate, Henry finally has a birthday—his first day of freedom.

**The Letter Writer** by Ann Rinaldi. 2010. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon. *Eleven-year-old Harriet Whitehead is an outsider in her own family. She feels accepted and important only when she is entrusted to write letters for her blind stepmother. Then Nat Turner, a slave preacher, arrives on her family's plantation and Harriet befriends him, entranced by his gentle manner and eloquent sermons about an all-forgiving God. When Nat asks Harriet for a map of the county to help him spread the word, she draws it for him—wanting to be part of something important. But the map turns out to be the missing piece that sets Nat's secret plan in motion and makes Harriet an unwitting accomplice to the bloodiest slave uprising in U.S. history....Award-winning historical novelist Ann Rinaldi has created a bold portrait of an ordinary young girl thrust in to a situation beyond her control.

**Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad** by Doreen Rappaport. 2007. MSU Children' and UA Literature Collection picture PZ7.L57833 Hen 2007 : A true story of a slave who mails himself to freedom by a Jane Addams Peace Award-winning author and a Coretta Scott King Award-winning artist....Henry Brown doesn't know how old he is. Nobody keeps records of slaves' birthdays. All the time he dreams about freedom, but that dream seems farther away than ever when he is torn from his family and put to work in a warehouse. Henry grows up and marries, but he is again devastated when his family is sold at the slave market. Then one day, as he lifts a crate at the warehouse, he knows exactly what he must do: He will mail himself to the North. After an arduous journey in the crate, Henry finally has a birthday—his first day of freedom.
falsely accused. Witty and absorbing, this novel features a literary first — the use of fingerprinting to solve a crime. This gem was Twain’s last novel about the antebellum South; and despite its frequent injections of humor, it offers a fierce condemnation of racial prejudice and a society that condoned slavery.

The Secret Life of Bees: a novel by Sue Monk Kidd. 2008. Available via interlibrary loan or for purchase from Amazon. Fans of Kathryn Stockett's The Help and Beth Hoffman's Saving CeeCee Honeycutt will love Sue Monk Kidd’s Southern coming of age tale. The Secret Life of Bees was a New York Times bestseller for more than 125 weeks, a Good Morning America “Read This” Book Club pick and was made into an award-winning film starring Dakota Fanning, Queen Latifah, Jennifer Hudson and Alicia Keys. Set in South Carolina in 1964, The Secret Life of Bees tells the story of Lily Owens, whose life has been shaped around the blurred memory of the afternoon her mother was killed. When Lily's fierce-hearted black “stand-in mother,” Rosaleen, insults three of the town's most vicious racists, Lily decides they should both escape to Tiburon, South Carolina—a town that holds the secret to her mother's past. There they are taken in by an eccentric trio of black beekeeping sisters who introduce Lily to a mesmerizing world of bees, honey, and the Black Madonna who presides over their household. This is a remarkable story about divine female power and the transforming power of love—a story that women will share and pass on to their daughters for years to come.

Smoky Night by Eve Bunting / illustrated by David Diaz. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1999, c1994. MSU Children's and UA Literature Collection picture PZ7.B91527 Sm 1999: In a night of rioting, Daniel and his mother are forced to leave their apartment for the safety of a shelter. “Diaz has not been afraid to take risks in illustrating the story with thickly textured paintings against a background of torn-paper and found-object collage. Without becoming cluttered or gimmicky, these pictures manage to capture a calamitous atmosphere that finally calms. . . . Both author and artist have managed to portray a politically charged event without pretense or preaching.


Be sure to check out the Literature, Juvenile tab for more recommendations.
Since African American Studies is interdisciplinary and covers various subjects, consider searching across disciplines. Additional databases can be located at All Research Databases. See also, Research Guides, such as African American Studies, and History. Academic Search Complete. This database indexes scholarly articles in the social sciences, business, humanities, general science, multi-cultural studies, and education. Accessible Archives. Provides abstracts of scholarly literature on the history of the United States and Canada from prehistoric times to the present. (See Historical Abstracts for non-North American coverage). ArchiveGrid. Resource lists & research guides (LibGuides). Conducting research: A selection of Inforum resources | Resource list A comprehensive listing of Inforum holdings on research methodologies, organized into categories such as: Quantitative Research; Qualitative Research; Statistics, Focus Groups, etc. Links to catalogue records included. Critical Information Policy Studies | LibGuide Recommended databases in CIPS subject areas and search tips; journals, current news and issues links; organizations and other web resources; suggested subject headings for finding books on CIPS topics. Searching the literature: A guide to comprehensive searching the health sciences