



BUILDING INVESTMENT IN YOUR CURRICULUM: BOOK RESPONSE RESOURCE

WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT FOR? Quality, engaging texts are the heart of a strong literacy program. Use this overview to help communicate about and build investment around beloved books that have been read for generations. This guide will be a helpful tool to share with your communications team, curriculum and instruction leads, and curriculum coordinators.

STEP ONE: PROACTIVELY SHARE THE VALUE OF YOUR TEXTS¹

Parents and caregivers will often recognize the stories, facts, and life lessons in texts from their own schooling, but as you build investment for your district's curriculum, we encourage you to also share:

- The many awards particular texts have won (ex. Newbery and Caldecott medals and other awards and honors)
- Any titles in the curriculum that are published by familiar, household names, such as Scholastic and National Geographic.
- If/how particular books have been the mainstay of many school curriculums and local and home libraries for years, often decades.

Parents and caregivers may have questions about the books their children read in school and if they are appropriate for students' ages and maturity levels. As you build investment around your curriculum. It will be important to share the value of these texts, including but not limited to:

- How and why the books in the curriculum were chosen for their ability to appropriately engage students.
- How the books align with the age range recommended by the publishers.
- How complex stories challenge students to reach their full potential and prepare for the real world.

STEP TWO: DEVELOP MESSAGING

As you communicate with stakeholders about your district curriculum, particular books and texts, we encourage you to focus on three main aspects about the books students read:

- The publisher
- Awards and honors
- Education value

For example, see a few sample messages about well-known books below:

¹ This resource has been adapted from our friends at Great Minds- Wit & Wisdom. To learn more or contact Wit & Wisdom directly, visit <https://greatminds.org/english>



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Rap a Tap Tap

By Leo and Diane Dillon (2002)

Published by:

Scholastic Inc.; recommended for ages 4–8

Awards and Honors:

Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Book (2003),
American Library Association (ALA) Notable Children's Book (2003), Booklist
starred review, Kirkus starred review

Educational Value: This book features gorgeous, limited-color paintings paired with verse that evoke the legendary talent and spirit of Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. A well-composed urban landscape shows delighted faces wherever the dancer passes by, bringing pleasure, elegance, and culture wherever he goes. Repeated language allows early readers to participate in telling, lending a feeling of ownership over the story. Students learn how their senses of sight and hearing help them experience a text and learn from the illustrations and words.

The Rough-Face Girl

By Rafe Martin and David Shannon (1992)

Published by:

Penguin Random House / Puffin Books, which recommends it for ages 4–8

Awards and Honors:

International Literacy Association (ILA) Teacher's Choice
Award; Rated a “Teachers’ Pick” on Amazon; Numerous additional local, state,
and national awards, lists, and honors

Educational Value: This Algonquin Cinderella story features some traditional elements of a Cinderella story while providing a unique variation that emphasizes the strong presence of nature and the power of one's inner beauty. The heroine takes a more active role in her transformation and reinforces the message that goodness lies within. Cultures worldwide tell their own versions of the Cinderella story. Each share similar plots and themes but differ as they convey unique elements from diverse cultures. When they compare and contrast different versions of stories, students build important critical thinking and literary analysis skills.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION? To see more book overviews and key information about well-known texts, access the [Book Responses Overview](#) provided by our friends at *Great Minds*.