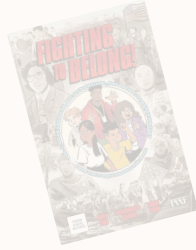




AAPI History Hub

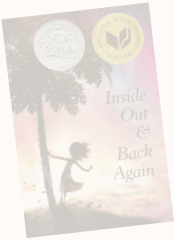


★ FAMILY CORNER · 2026 EDITION



Summer

Reading List



AAPI books as mirrors & windows — curated for every grade, every family

Belonging starts at home.

Learning AAPI history sparks curiosity, confidence, and capability. The books in this summer reading list draw from the [AAPI History Hub's](#) vetted K–12 [resource directory](#) to bring Asian American and Pacific Islander stories into your home all summer long.

Each book is labeled as a “**Mirror**” or “**Window**”:

- Mirror: Reflects AAPI readers' own experiences
- Window: Builds understanding for all readers

Each book is linked to a Hub lesson plan teachers can use. Visit the [Hub's Family Corner](#) for more tips on how to share these resources and encourage their integration into your child's school.

Conversation Starters

Notice which questions offer a “mirror” and which open a “window.”

“What did you have in common with this character?”

“What did you learn about a culture new to you?”

“What part of this story stays with you?”

“Whose story is missing from this book?”

“How does history in this book connect to today's news?”

“If you could talk to this author, what would you ask?”

Stories for every reader — find yours below.

Grades K–2

Grades 3–5

Grades 6–8

Grades 9–12

Grades K–2

Stories of identity, belonging, names, and community — perfect for reading aloud and sparking big conversations about who we are.

Grades K–2

Grades 3–5

Grades 6–8

Grades 9–12

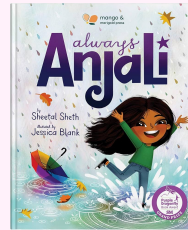
MIRRORS — SEE YOURSELF IN THESE STORIES



Eyes That Kiss in the Corners

Joanna Ho · illus. Dung Ho

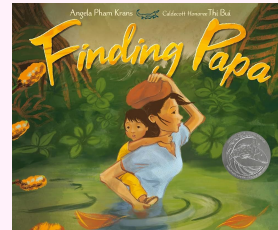
A lyrical, body-positive ode to Asian eyes — a girl sees beauty in herself that mirrors her mother, grandmother, and little sister.



Always Anjali

Sheetal Sheth, Jessica Blank

A warm, affirming story about a girl determined to keep her full name — Anjali learns that her identity is something to celebrate, not shorten.



Finding Papa

Angela Pham Krans, Thi Bui

A tender story of love across distance — a young girl copes with missing her father while holding close the memories and traditions that connect them.

HUB CONNECTIONS

Identity, Belonging & Community

Eyes That Kiss in the Corners · *'Ohana Means Family*

Culture, Family & Traditions

'Ohana Means Family · *Bilal Cooks Daal*

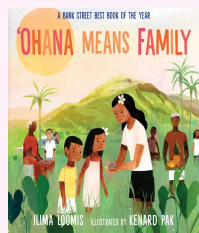
Self-Expression & the Arts

Eyes That Kiss in the Corners · *Drawn Together*

People, Places & Communities

Finding Papa · *'Ohana Means Family*

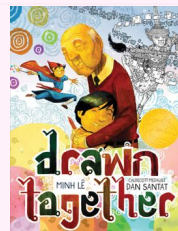
WINDOWS — DISCOVER NEW WORLDS



'Ohana Means Family

Ilima Loomis, Kenard Pak

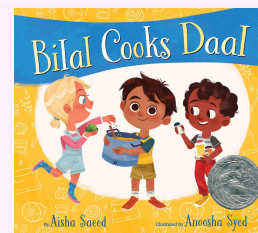
A lyrical celebration of Hawaiian tradition — a family honors their connection to the land and heritage while preparing for a traditional lū'au.



Drawn Together

Minh Lê, Dan Santat

A heartfelt story about bridging generations — a boy and his grandfather discover connection and understanding through art when words fall short.



Bilal Cooks Daal

Aisha Saeed, Anoosha Syed

A cozy, joyful celebration of food and family — Bilal shares his favorite daal recipe with friends and learns that patience brings people together.

Reading Together Tips for K–2

- Ask: "What do you have in common with this character?"
- Explore names together — what does yours mean? Where does it come from?
- Connect books to your own family traditions: foods, celebrations, or languages at home.
- Find more K–2 resources and lesson plans to share with your teacher at aapihistoryhub.org/explore/k-2nd-grade

Grades 3-5

Chapter books and illustrated titles exploring immigrant labor, incarceration, refugee experiences, and South Asian history — stories about resilience, migration, and belonging.

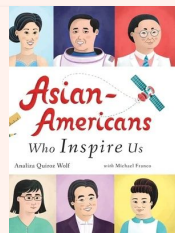
Grades K-2

Grades 3-5

Grades 6-8

Grades 9-12

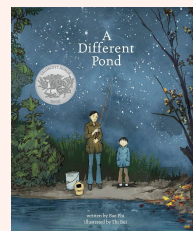
MIRRORS — AAPI STORIES AT THE CENTER



Asian Americans Who Inspire Us

Analiza Quiroz Wolf

Profiles of AAPI activists, scientists, athletes, and artists — highlighting how immigrant labor and justice have shaped American history.



A Different Pond

Bao Phi · illus. Thi Bui

A Vietnamese American father and son fish together at dawn — a quiet, tender story of refugee family life, sacrifice, and love across generations.



Coolies

Yin · illus. Chris Soentpiet

Two brothers leave China to help build the transcontinental railroad — a powerful story of Chinese immigrant labor, hardship, and determination that built the American West.

HUB CONNECTIONS

Identity, Belonging & Community

Asian Americans Who Inspire Us · *A Different Pond*

Labor, Migration & Justice

Coolies · *Bengali Harlem* · *Baseball Saved Us*

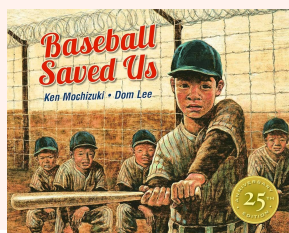
Refugees, War & Displacement

A Different Pond · *Inside Out & Back Again*

South Asian History & Immigration

Bengali Harlem · *Asian Americans Who Inspire Us*

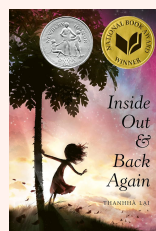
WINDOWS — HISTORY, MIGRATION & JUSTICE



Baseball Saved Us

Ken Mochizuki · illus. Dom Lee

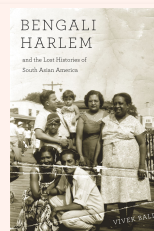
A young Japanese American boy builds a baseball field in an incarceration camp during WWII — a story of resilience, dignity, and community under injustice.



Inside Out & Back Again

Thanhha Lai

A Vietnamese girl's year-in-poems as her family flees Saigon and rebuilds in Alabama — a National Book Award winner exploring the refugee experience with honesty and hope.



Bengali Harlem

Vivek Bald

The hidden history of South Asian immigrants in early 20th-century America — Bengali and Indian workers who built community in Harlem, New Orleans, and beyond.

Reading Together Tips for Grades 3-5

- Ask: "What was hardest for this character, and how did they keep going?"
- Talk about a time your family moved, traveled, or started over somewhere new.
- Look up one place or event from the book together — what else can you find out about it?
- Find more 3rd–5th grade resources and lesson plans to share with your teacher at aapihistoryhub.org/explore/3rd-5th-grade

Grades 6–8

Titles that help students examine civil liberties, racism, WWII, and identity formation in U.S. and global contexts — engaging with systems of power, activism, and policy.

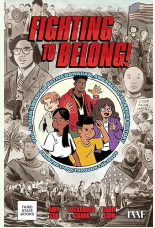
Grades K–2

Grades 3–5

Grades 6–8

Grades 9–12

MIRRORS — IDENTITY UNDER PRESSURE



Fighting to Belong

Amy Chu & Alexander Chang · illus. Louie Chin

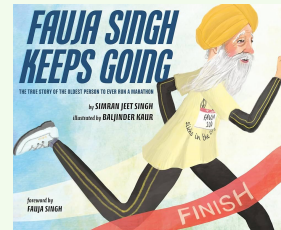
The untold history of Asian Americans fighting for legal recognition — from exclusion laws to landmark court cases that shaped citizenship rights.



The Most Beautiful Thing

Kao Kalia Yang · illus. Khoa Le

A Hmong family arrives in Minnesota with nothing but each other — a tender story of immigration, poverty, and finding beauty and belonging in a new land.



Fauja Singh Keeps Going

Simran Jeet Singh · illus. Baljinder Kaur

The inspiring true story of Fauja Singh, who overcame hardship and became the world's oldest marathon runner at 100 — a portrait of Sikh resilience and determination.

HUB CONNECTIONS

Civil Rights & Legal Resistance

Fred Korematsu Speaks Up · Fighting to Belong · Who Belongs?

Identity, Immigration & Culture

The Most Beautiful Thing · We Are Not Free · Fauja Singh Keeps Going

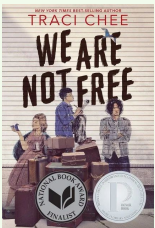
War, Incarceration & Resistance

We Are Not Free · Fred Korematsu Speaks Up

Sikh Culture & Overcoming Adversity

Fauja Singh Keeps Going · Fighting to Belong

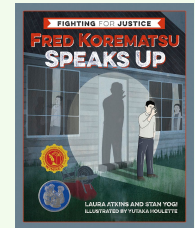
WINDOWS — CIVIL RIGHTS, WAR & RESISTANCE



We Are Not Free

Traci Chee

Fourteen interconnected stories of Japanese American teenagers living through WWII incarceration — a mosaic of youth perspectives on loss, loyalty, and resistance.



Fred Korematsu Speaks Up

Laura Atkins & Stan Yogi · illus. Yutaka Houlette

The story of Fred Korematsu, who refused to report to a WWII incarceration camp and took his legal fight for civil rights all the way to the Supreme Court.



Who Belongs?

Greg Pak

An exploration of citizenship, civil rights, and racism through interconnected stories of Asian Americans navigating belonging and exclusion in America.

Reading Together Tips for Grades 6–8

- Ask: "What does this story reveal about fairness, power, or injustice?"
- Talk about how the events in this book connect to laws or rights we have today.
- Research one real person, law, or event from the book — what was its lasting impact?
- Find more 6th–8th grade resources and lesson plans to share with your teacher at aapihistoryhub.org/explore/6th-8th-grade

Grades 9–12

Books and films supporting deeper inquiry in ethnic studies, U.S. history, literature, and civics — examining race, law, migration, and identity.

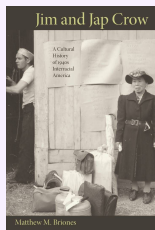
Grades K–2

Grades 3–5

Grades 6–8

Grades 9–12

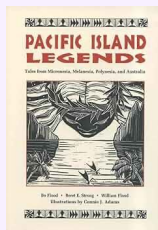
MIRRORS — WHOSE STORY GETS TOLD?



Jim and Jap Crow

Matthew M. Briones

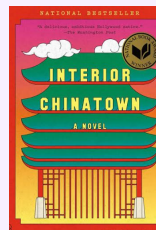
A groundbreaking history of Black and Asian solidarity and shared experience under Jim Crow segregation — examining race, alliance, and resistance in America.



Pacific Island Legends

Beret E. Strong, Bo Flood & William Flood

Traditional tales from Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, and Australia — illuminating Pacific Islander and multiracial identity through the lens of imperialism and colonialism.



Interior Chinatown

Charles Yu

A satirical novel structured as a screenplay, following an actor typecast as “Generic Asian Man” — examining racial stereotypes, media representation, and the roles Asian Americans are assigned in American life.

HUB CONNECTIONS

Race, Law & Civil Rights

Jim and Jap Crow · They Called Us Enemy

Identity, Diaspora & Immigration

The Namesake · Interior Chinatown

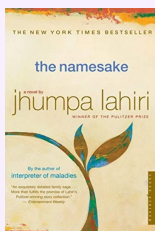
Cross-Racial Solidarity & Activism

Living for Change · Jim and Jap Crow

Pacific Islander & Multiracial Identity

Pacific Island Legends

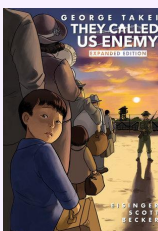
WINDOWS — POWER, POLICY & DIASPORA



The Namesake

Jhumpa Lahiri

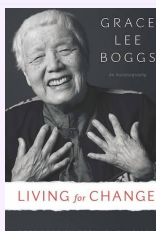
A multigenerational novel following a Bengali immigrant family navigating identity, assimilation, and the distance between cultures across two continents.



They Called Us Enemy

George Takei · illus. Harmony Becker

A graphic memoir of George Takei's childhood spent in WWII incarceration camps — a personal account of citizenship, civil rights, and resilience.



Living for Change

Grace Lee Boggs

The autobiography of Grace Lee Boggs, a Chinese American activist and philosopher whose decades of organizing in Detroit bridged labor, civil rights, and Black Power movements.

Reading Together Tips for Grades 9–12

- Ask: “Whose perspective is centered here, and whose might be missing?”
- Discuss: how does this book or film connect to a policy debate happening today?
- Compare this story to a current news event — what has changed, and what hasn't?
- Find more 9th–12th grade resources and lesson plans to share with your teacher at apihistoryhub.org/explore/9th-12th-grade

Go Further with AAPI History Hub

Want these books taught at school? Share this list (or a favorite title) with your child's teacher or librarian — many Hub books come with classroom-ready lesson plans, so teachers can pick them up with minimal extra work. Check out [Hub's Family Corner](#) for tips on encouraging their wider use in your child's school.

EXPLORE BY GRADE BAND

- [K–2nd Grade Resources](#)
- [3rd–5th Grade Resources](#)
- [6th–8th Grade Resources](#)
- [9th–12th Grade Resources](#)

FOR FAMILIES, EDUCATORS & ADVOCATES

- [Family Corner](#)— Books, films, and community experiences
- [Hub Starter Kit](#)— For teachers new to AAPI history
- [Professional Learning](#) — In-person, virtual, hybrid trainings
- [Education Landscape](#)— AAPI policy in your state

AAPI history is all around us. Visit these spaces to bring the stories in this reading list to life — and explore the full [AAPI History Hub In Action](#) map for cultural sites near you.

SEATTLE, WA

Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience

NEW YORK, NY

Asian American Arts Centre

BERKELEY, CA

Berkeley South Asian Radical History Walking Tour

LOS ANGELES, CA

Little Tokyo Historic District



AAPI History Hub



The AAPI History Hub is a free, educator-vetted resource with lesson plans, primary sources, and curated book lists for every grade — built to bring Asian American and Pacific Islander history into classrooms and homes across the country.

Create a free MyHub account to save resources, build custom collections, and get updates on new content as it's added.

[Explore the Hub →](#)