

NIKKI GRIMES: BOOK LIST

110 books, presented in chronological order

Trade Books

Stronger Than, co-authored by Stacy Wells, illustrated by E.B. Lewis, Heartdrum, 2026.

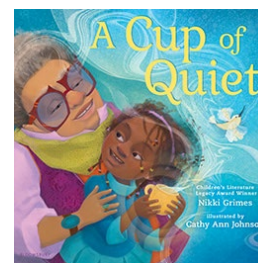
A Black Choctaw boy finds strength in the example and history of his ancestors. When Dante struggles with nightmares, his mother believes learning his family's history will help him cope. Taking discovering his heritage into his own hands, Dante finds out hard truths — but also a love that shines through generations and, finally, a strength to sleep through the night.

Loser: A Dyamonde Daniel Book, illustrated by Uzo Njoku, Reycraft Books, 2025.

Dyamonde and her best friend Free compete over everything, but when Dyamonde goes on a winning (and bragging) streak, things turn rocky. Free stops coming over and soon, he won't even return her calls. With their friendship at risk, Dyamonde must work to follow her mother's advice: "Sorry is good, but sorry can't fix everything." But what can? Finding the answer proves to be Dyamonde's biggest challenge, yet.

A Cup of Quiet, illustrated by Cathy Ann Johnson, Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2025

By slowing down and appreciating the gentler sounds of nature, Grandma and her granddaughter step away from the hubbub of daily life and refresh. Their time together is made more special by sharing a cup of quiet.



Glory, Too: Poems, Paraclete Books, 2025

In a marriage of poetry, faith, and worship, Ms. Grimes' poems for adults and teens illuminate the Scriptures that grace every Sunday of the year. Her inimitable voice and imagination offer glimpses of glory we might not otherwise see, throughout the seasons of the year.

Garvey's Choice: The Graphic Novel, WordSong, 2023

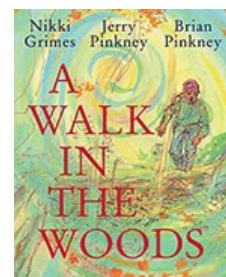
Garvey's father has always wanted Garvey to be athletic, but Garvey is interested in astronomy, science fiction, reading — anything but sports. Feeling like a failure, he comforts himself with food. Garvey is kind, funny, smart, a loyal friend, and he is also overweight, teased by bullies, and lonely.

Lullaby for the King, illustrated by Michelle Carlos, Beaming Books, 2023.

With glittering poetry and stunning watercolor artwork, *Lullaby for the King* ushers readers into the awe and wonder of the Christmas story.

A Walk in the Woods, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney and Brian Pinkney, Neal Porter Books, 2023

In this moving account of loss, a boy takes a walk in the woods and makes a discovery that changes his understanding of his father.



Garvey in the Dark, WordSong, 2022

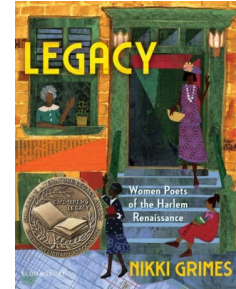
Capturing the shock and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through the eyes of Garvey, a beloved character, Nikki Grimes's novel in verse shows readers how to find hope in difficult times.

Playtime for Practical Rascals, illustrated by Elizabeth Zenon, Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2022

Mom needs to wake up her child whose job is to play. From dancing in puddles to jumping in leaves, and swinging high enough to almost reach the sun, there's so much to do in a fun-filled day.

Legacy: Women Poets of the Harlem Renaissance, Bloomsbury, 2021, with illustrations by today's most exciting female African American illustrators

For centuries, accomplished women – of all races – have fallen out of the historical records. The same is true for gifted, prolific, women poets of the Harlem Renaissance who are little known, especially as compared to their male counterparts. In this poetry collection, bestselling author Nikki Grimes uses “The Golden Shovel” poetic method to create wholly original poems based on the works of these groundbreaking women – and to introduce readers to their work.



Off to See the Sea, Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2021

The faucet flows like a waterfall, the bathroom floor is a distant shore, toy boats sail against the waves. An imagination-fueled, high seas adventure is just what it takes to get little one clean.

Glory in the Margins: Sunday Poems, Paraclete Press, 2021, for adults

These devotional poems, written a little left of center by one who lives in the margins, bridge the secular and the sacred to bring a fresh perspective to God's word by amplifying truths in scripture that are as relevant as today's news.

Kamala Harris: Rooted in Justice, illustrated by Laura Freeman, Atheneum, 2020

Told in Nikki Grimes's stunning verse and featuring gorgeous illustrations by Laura Freeman, this picture book biography brings to life a story that shows all young people that the American dream can belong to all of us if we fight for one another.



Southwest Sunrise, illustrated by Wendell Minor, Bloomsbury 2020

A picture book celebrating the beauty of the natural world and finding a new place to call home.

Bedtime for Sweet Creatures, illus. by Elizabeth Zunon, Sourcebooks Jabberwocky, 2020

It's bedtime. But Mommy's little girl is not sleepy. She growls like a bear, she questions like an owl, she tosses her mane like a lion. How can Mommy tuck her in now?

Ordinary Hazards, Wordsong, 2019

Nikki Grimes writes her memoir, in verse, for young adult and adult readers.

The Watcher, illustrated by Bryan Collier, Eerdmans, 2017

Jordan lives in fear of Tanya, the class bully. But Tanya has worries of her own, no matter how much she tries to ignore them. It seems impossible that Jordan and Tanya could be anything other than enemies, but the Lord is watching over them, guiding each of them along a path that might just help them to understand one another.

One Last Word: Wisdom from the Harlem Renaissance,

illustrated by a number of talented artists, Bloomsbury, 2017

In this collection of poetry, Nikki Grimes looks afresh at the poets of the Harlem Renaissance – including voices like Langston Hughes, Georgia Douglas Johnson, and many more writers of importance and resonance from this era – by combining their work with her own original poetry. Using "The Golden Shovel" poetic method, Grimes has written a collection of poetry that is as gorgeous as it is thought-provoking.



Garvey's Choice, WordSong, 2016

Expected to be interested in sports, Garvey likes astronomy, science fiction, read, and singing. But he's overweight and has trouble getting his father to accept him. A novel-in-verse that speaks to contemporary readers.

Poems in the Attic, illus by Elizabeth Zunon, Lee & Low Books, 2015

A girl discovers poems written by her mother, chronicling her travels as a military brat. The paired poems, written in free verse and tanka, bring mother and daughter closer together.

Chasing Freedom, illustrated by Michele Wood, Orchard, 2015

In this work of historical fiction, Harriet Tubman and Susan B. Anthony share their remarkable lives over a cup of tea.

Words with Wings, WordSong, 2013

In a verse-novel that celebrates the power of words and imagination, a teacher helps Gabriella learn that there's a place in the world for daydreamers like herself.

Halfway to Perfect, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie, Putnam's Sons, 2012

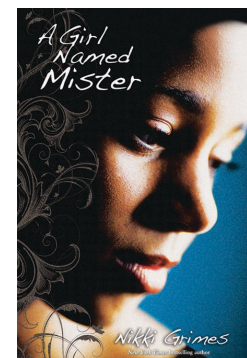
Dyamonde helps best friend Damaris discover that, tall or short, skinny or not, it's what's on the inside that counts.

Planet Middle School, Bloomsbury, 2011

Girl jock Joylin Johnson hits puberty and discovers boys. Hilarity ensues as she struggles to hold onto who she is even while caught in a whirlwind of change.

A Girl Named Mister, Zonderkidz, 2010

This novel-in-verse explores a teen's crisis in faith and the pregnancy that forces her to discover how important her faith truly is.



Dark Sons, reissue Zonderkidz, 2010

Sam and Ishmael were born thousands of years, and miles, apart. Yet both struggle with feelings of betrayal by their fathers, as they seek to find their own way in the world.

Almost Zero, illus by R. Gregory Christie, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2010

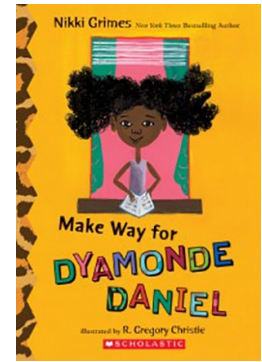
In this tale about entitlement, Dyamonde learns the vast difference between want and need, and the importance of sharing what we have with others.

Voices of Christmas, illustrated by Eric Vazquez, Zonderkidz, 2009

From the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, to the shepherds in the field, this book explores the Christmas story from the perspectives of those who were part of it.

Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2009

The first title in this urban chapter-book series, this story introduces the upbeat, take-charge character Dyamonde who wastes no time carving out a place for herself.



Rich, illustrated by Gregory Christie, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2009

Dyamonde knows there are all kinds of ways to be rich, and her new friend Damaris, a girl from a shelter, reminds Dyamonde that some people are rich in talent.

Out of the Dark, Richard C. Owens Publishers, 2009

An Author-at-Work autobiography series.

Oh, Brother! illustrated by Mike Benny, Greenwillow, 2008

Xavier is not too wild about new stepbrother, Chris. In fact, blending a family is a lot harder than either boy imagined.

Barack Obama: Son of Promise, Child of Hope, illus. by Bryan Collier, S & S, 2008

A picture-book biography of our 44th president, from his childhood to his inauguration.

When Gorilla Goes Walking, illustrated by Shane Evans, Orchard, 2007

Gorilla is a feisty cat who rules all in her domain. If you don't believe that, just ask Cecilia, her human! A loving tribute in poetry to the cats who let us love them.

The Road to Paris, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006

Being in foster care is hard enough when you're with your brother. But what happens when the two of you are sent to separate homes? Paris learns the answer in this novel.

Welcome Precious, illustrated by Bryan Collier, Orchard, 2006

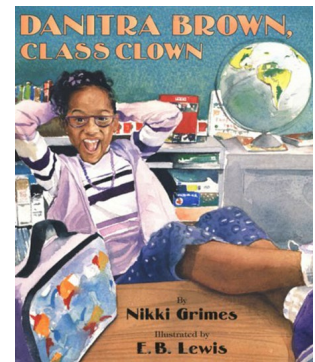
Every baby is precious, but how would you introduce the wonders of the senses to your precious one? This poem offers a lyrical welcome to the world of the senses.

Thanks a Million, illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera, Greenwillow, 2006

The attitude of gratitude is an important seed to plant early. These poems celebrate ways, and reasons, to express gratitude every day.

Danitra Brown, Class Clown, illus by E. B. Lewis, HarperCollins, 2005

It's back to school for best friends Zuri Jackson and Danitra Brown, and though Zuri's facing trouble with math, she needn't worry. Her friend is there, as always, to help her.



At Jerusalem's Gate, illustrated by David Frampton, Eerdmans, 2005

The Easter story comes to life in a new series of poems, exploring the story from multiple perspectives of those who were part of the Biblical account.

It's Raining Laughter, photos by Myles Pinkney, Boyds Mills, 2005

Joy is the emotion that connects these brilliantly colorful, effervescent images of African American children, paired with the poems they inspired.

Tai Chi Morning: Snapshots of China, illustrated by Ed Young, Cricket Books, 2004

Designed as a travel journal, these poems give a glimpse of modern China from an outsider's perspective.

A Day with Daddy, illustrated by Nicole Tadgell, Scholastic, May 2004

Living in two homes is always a challenge for a child of divorce, but there are special memories of time spent alone with dad that are worth celebrating, too.

What Is Goodbye?, illustrated by Raul Colon, Hyperion Books for Children, 2004

A novella-in-verse, this story, written in two voices, chronicles the grief process of a brother and sister following the death of their sibling.

Danitra Brown Leaves Town, illus Floyd Cooper, HarperCollins, 2002

Best friends Zuri and Danitra are separated for a summer. Both learn lessons they never would have together, but look forward to their reunion.

Under the Christmas Tree, illus by Kadir Nelson, HarperCollins, 2002

Poems about the Christmas traditions of an African American family.

Talkin' About Bessie, illustrated by E. B. Lewis, Orchard, 2002

A biography in verse, this multi-voiced story follows the life of the first African American female pilot, Bessie Coleman, who carved her own place in the history of aviation.



Bronx Masquerade, Dial Books 2002

A novel written in 18 voices, this book celebrates the power of poetry, both as a means of self expression, and as a vehicle for shaping a more cohesive community.

When Daddy Prays, illustrated by Tim Ladwig, Eerdmans, 2002

A story in poems, this book demonstrates a father's love for his children, and devotion to God, as witnessed through the eyes of his son.

Stepping Out with Grandma Mac, illus. by Angelo, Orchard 2001; Star Walk Media, 2014

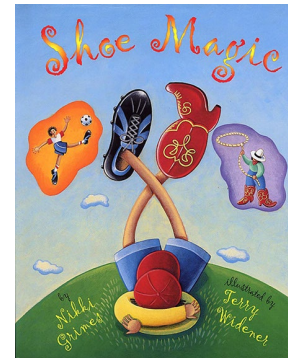
A series of poems explore the loving relationship between a feisty young girl and her one-of-a-kind saucy grandmother.

A Pocketful of Poems, illustrated by Javaka Steptoe, Clarion, 2001

Haiku often call Japanese cherry blossoms to mind, but here, free verse poems are paired with urban-themed haiku as a young character introduces readers to this ancient form of poetry in a way that is playful, and accessible.

Shoe Magic, illustrated by Terry Widener Orchard 2000;
Star Walk Media, 2014

This cycle of poems imagines children wearing shoes that represent their dreams for the future. Toe shoes for one, cleats for another, hiking boots for a third – each child can fantasize about the shoe, and the future, that fits them best.



Is It Far to Zanzibar?, illustrated by Betsy Lewin,
Lothrop/HarperCollins, 2000

Linking poems about life in Tanzania, East Africa.

At Break of Day, illustrated by Paul Morin, Eerdmans, 1999

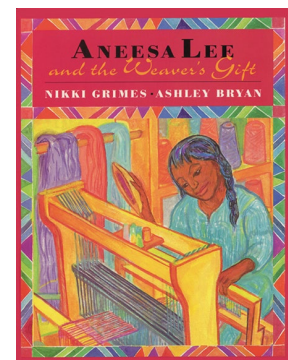
A fresh retelling of the biblical creation story, portrayed as a joint act of Father and Son.

Hopscotch Love, illustrated by Melodye Benson Rosales, Lothrop/HarperCollins, 1999

A collection of poems celebrating family.

Aneesa Lee & The Weaver's Gift, illus by Ashley Bryan, Lothrop, 1999

Interlocking poems about a young weaver chronicle the process of weaving, itself, while exploring the world of a girl who is, herself, a cultural weave of Japanese and African American.



My Man Blue, illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue, Dial, 1999

These linked poems tell the story of a fatherless boy named Damon, and the trustworthy friend of his mother's named Blue, who takes the boy under his wing.

A Dime a Dozen, illustrated by Angelo, Dial, 1998

An autobiographical series of poems chronicling my early struggles to find my voice as a writer.

Jazmin's Notebook, Dial, 1998

In this novel, a black teen in the 1960's, pushing against the limits of her environment, determines to forge a hopeful future, using intelligence, and her gift as a budding writer.



Wild, Wild Hair, illustrated by George Ford, Scholastic, 1997

A humorous story in rhyming couplets about a young girl who'd rather do almost anything rather than sit to get her hair braided. Of course, she loves it in the end.

Come Sunday, illustrated by Michael Bryant, Eerdmans, 1996

LaTasha loves Sundays at Paradise Baptist Church. This series of poems celebrates a black church experience shared by many.

C Is for City, illustrated by Pat Cummings, Lothrop, Lee & Shepherd, 1995

An urban alphabet book, written in verse.

Meet Danitra Brown, illustrated by Floyd Cooper, Lothrop/HarperCollins, 1994

This story in verse was the first of many. Here, the dynamic friendship of Danitra Brown and Zuri Jackson takes shape.

Portrait of Mary, Harcourt Brace & Co., 1994, for adults

The story of Christ, through the eyes of his mother, Mary.

From a Child's Heart, illustrated by Brenda Joysmith, Just Us Books, 1993

This series of poems reflect the everyday fears and longings that fill the hearts of so many children, and that filled mine. Here are the prayers I prayed in response.

Malcolm X: A Force For Change, Fawcett/Ballantine, 1992

A creative biography about Malcolm X, for middle grade.

Something On My Mind, art by Tom Feelings, The Dial Press, 1978

A cycle of poems that reflect the thoughts and feelings of the children captured in a series of portraits by the artist.

Growin', a novel, illustrated by Charles Lilly, The Dial Press, 1977

Pump, short for Pumpkin, reels after the death of her father, then finds healing in a new neighborhood, with a new best friend named Jim Jim, in Washington Heights, New York.

Anthologies to Which I've Contributed

Banned Together: Our Fight for Readers' Rights, Holiday House, 2025

This is the Honey: An Anthology of Contemporary Black Poets, Little, Brown & Company, 2024

Ab(solutely) Normal: Short Stories that Smash Mental Health Stereotypes, Candlewick Press, 2023

Calling the Moon: 16 Period Stories from BIPOC Authors, Candlewick Press, 2023

The Talk: Conversations about Race, Love & Truth, Crown Books, 2020

No Voice Too Small: Fourteen Young Americans Making History, Charlesbridge, 2020

Night Wishes, Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2020

Proper Way to Meet a Hedgehog and Other How-To Poems, Candlewick Press, 2019

Amazing Places, Lee & Low Books, 2018

Necessary Noise: Stories about Our Families as They Really Are, HarperTeen, 2018

Golden Shovel Anthology: New Poems Honoring Gwendolyn Brooks, University of Arkansas Press, 2017

Poems are Teachers: How Studying Poetry Strengthens Writing in All Genres, Heineman, 2017

One Minute Till Bedtime: 60-Second Poems to Send You Off to Sleep, Little Brown, 2016

Amazing Faces, Lee & Low Books, 2015

Dear Tomato: An International Crop of Food and Agriculture Poems, CreateSpace, 2015

Jumping Off Library Shelves: A Book of Poems, WordSong, 2015

National Geographic Book of Nature Poetry: More Than 200 Poems with Photographs That Float, Zoom, and Bloom! National Geographic Kids, 2015

Poetry Friday Anthology for Celebrations, Pomelo Books, 2015

Poetry Break: An Annotated Anthology with Ideas for Introducing Children to Poetry, Caroline Feller Bauer, 2014

Poems to Learn by Heart, Little Brown, 2013

Forget-Me-Nots: Poems to Learn by Heart, Little Brown, 2012

Family Storybook Treasury: Tales of Laughter, Curiosity, and Fun, Clarion Books, 2011

Another Jar of Tiny Stars: Poems by More NCTE Award-Winning Poets, WordSong, 2010

Julie Andrews' Collection of Poems, Songs, and Lullabies, Little, Brown, 2009

First Kiss (Then Tell): A Collection of True Lip-Locked Moments, Bloomsbury, 2008

Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out, Candlewick Press, 2008

Days to Celebrate: A Full Year of Poetry, People, Holidays, History, Fascinating Facts, and More, Greenwillow Books, 2004

Memories of Sun: Stories of Africa and America, Amistad Press, 2004

Rush Hour: Sin, Delacorte Press, 2004

Kingfisher Book of Family Poems, Kingfisher, 2003

Children's Literature: An Invitation to the World, Allyn & Bacon, 2002

Stone Bench in an Empty Park, Scholastic, 2000

Lives: Poems about Famous Americans, HarperCollins, 1999

Sports! Sports! Sports! A Poetry Collection, HarperCollins, 1999

All God's Children: A Book of Prayers, Houghton Mifflin, 1998

Me, Myself, and I: Poems Selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins, 1998

Food Fight: Poets Join the Fight Against Hunger with Poems about Their Favorite Foods, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1996

Hold Christmas in Your Heart: African American Songs, Poems, and Stories for the Holiday, Scholastic, 1995

On the Wings of Peace: Writers and Illustrators Speak Out for Peace, in Memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Clarion Books, 1995

Families: Poems Celebrating the African American Experience, WordSong, 1994

Bubbles: Poetry for Fun and Meaning, Gazelle Publications, 1988

Mass Market Books published prior to 1977 ...

Essence Board Books / Golden Books

Baby's Bedtime, illustrated by Sylvia Walker

Busy Baby

Good Night

Books for Disney

Batteries Not Included (Rescue Rangers series), Twin Books

Cinderella, Golden Books

Disney Babies Bedtime Stories, Twin Books

Eeyore's Tail Tale, Twin Books

Fake Me To Your Leader (Rescue Rangers series), Twin Books

Fast Friends, Twin Books

Golden Books, Winnie the Pooh Helping Hand Series

The Great Castle Contest, Golden Books

The Little Mermaid, Running Press

Mickey Mouse Tales, Running Press

Minnie 'n Me: My Favorite Book, Twin Books

Minnie's New Friend, Golden Books

Oh, Bother! Someone's Babysitting

Oh, Bother! Someone's Fighting

Pinocchio, Golden Books

Rabbit Marks the Spot, Twin Books

Sky Island (Mickey Mouse Adventures) Twin Books

Tale Spin: Her Chance to Dream, Twin Books

The Viking's Eye (Mickey Mouse Adventures), Twin Books

Winnie the Pooh, Twin Books