

BLACK STORIES MATTER: YA Reading List

The Revolution of Birdie Randolph by
Brandy Colbert

Sixteen-year-old Dove "Birdie" Randolph's close bond with her parents is threatened by a family secret, and by hiding her relationship with Booker, who has been in juvenile detention.

On the Come Up by Angie Thomas

Sixteen-year-old Bri hopes to become a great rapper, and after her first song goes viral for all the wrong reasons, must decide whether to sell out or face eviction with her widowed mother.

Solo by Kwame Alexander

Seventeen-year-old Blade, who endeavors to resolve painful issues from his past to navigate the challenges of his former rockstar father's addictions, scathing tabloid rumors, and a protected secret that threatens his own identity.

Anger is a Gift by Mark Oshiro

A young adult debut by the popular social media personality and critic reflects the racial and economic struggles of today's teens in the story of high school junior Moss, who in the face of a racist school administration decides to organize a protest that escalates into violence.

March: Book One by John Lewis

The first in an award-winning trilogy, this engaging graphic novel tells the story on how Congressman John Lewis became an activist for the civil rights movement.

Black Enough: Stories of Being Young and Black in America edited by Ibi Zoboi

Edited by National Book Award finalist Ibi Zoboi, and featuring some of the most acclaimed bestselling Black authors writing for teens today—Black Enough is an essential collection of captivating stories about what it's like to be young and Black in America.

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Tyler Johnson Was Here by Jay Coles

When Marvin Johnson's twin brother, Tyler, is shot and killed by a police officer, Marvin must fight injustice to learn the true meaning of freedom.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.

The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore

Unable to celebrate the holidays in the wake of his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting, 12-year-old Lolly Rachpaul struggles to avoid being forced into a gang himself while constructing a fantastically creative LEGO city at the Harlem community center.

The Usual Suspects by Maurice Broaddus

Thelonius Mitchell is tired of being labeled. He's in special ed, separated from the "normal" kids at school who don't have any "issues." That's enough to make all the teachers and students look at him and his friends with a constant side-eye. (Although his disruptive antics and pranks have given him a rep too.) When a gun is found at a neighborhood hangout, Thelonius and his pals become instant suspects. Thelonius may be guilty of pulling crazy stunts at school, but a criminal? T isn't about to let that label stick.

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March by Lynda Blackmon Lowery

Shares the story of the youngest person to complete the Selma to Montgomery March, describing her frequent imprisonments for her participation in nonviolent demonstrations and how she felt about her involvement in Civil Rights events.

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Need more recommendations? Ask a librarian!