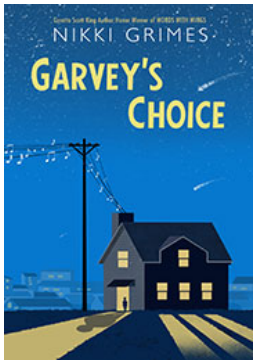
NIKKI GRIMES: BOOK List

presented in chronological order

Trade Books



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.

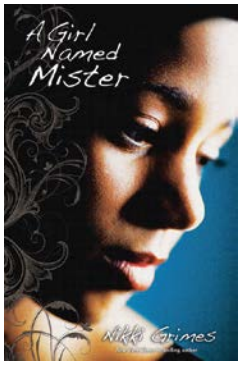
Poems in the Attic, illus by Elizabeth Zunon, Lee & Low Books, 2015
A girl discovers poems written by her mother, chronicling her travels as a military brat. The paired poems, written in free verse and tanka, bring mother and daughter closer together.

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.



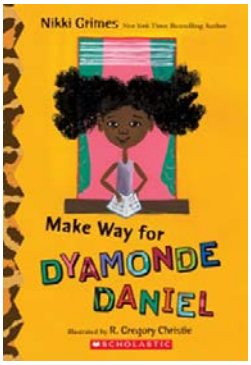
A Girl Named Mister, Zonderkidz, 2010
This novel-in-verse explores a teen's crisis in faith and the pregnancy that forces her to discover how important her faith truly is.

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.

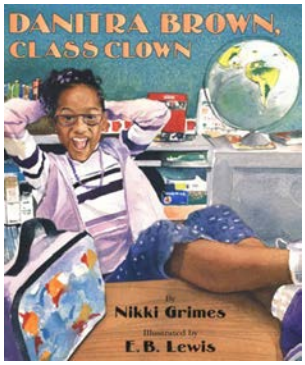
When Gorilla Goes Walking, illustrated by Shane Evans, Orchard, 2007
Gorilla is a feisty cat who rules all in her domain. If you don't believe that, just ask Cecilia, her human! A loving tribute in poetry to the cats who let us love them.

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.



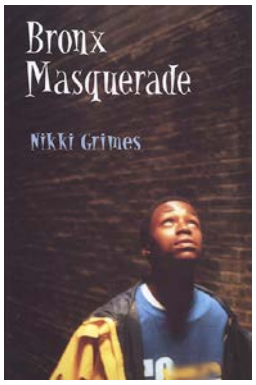
At Jerusalem's Gate, illustrated by David Frampton, Eerdmans, 2005
The Easter story comes to life in a new series of poems, exploring the story from multiple perspectives of those who were part of the Biblical account.

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.

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.

C Is For City, illustrated by Pat Cummings, Boyds Mills Press, 2002
An urban alphabet book, written in verse.

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.

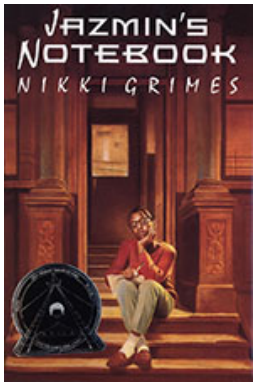
A Pocketful of Poems, illustrated by Javaka Steptoe, Clarion, 2001
Haiku often call Japanese cherry blossoms to mind, but here, free verse poems are paired with urban-themed haiku as a young character introduces readers to this ancient form of poetry in a way that is playful, and accessible.

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.

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.

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.

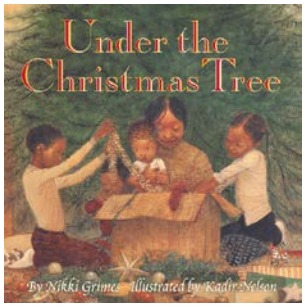
Come Sunday, illustrated by Michael Bryant, Eerdmans, 1996
LaTasha loves Sundays at Paradise Baptist Church. This series of poems celebrates a black church experience shared by many.

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.

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.

And in your library ...

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.

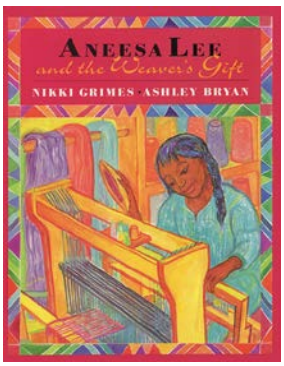


Danitra Brown Leaves Town, illus Floyd Cooper, HarperCollins, 2002
Best friends Zuri and Danitra are separated for a summer. Both learn lessons they never would have together, but look forward to their reunion.

Under the Christmas Tree, illus by Kadir Nelson, HarperCollins, 2002
Poems about the Christmas traditions of an African American family.

Is It Far to Zanzibar?, illustrated by Betsy Lewin, Lothrop/HarperCollins, 2000
Linking poems about life in Tanzania, East Africa.

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.

Portrait of Mary, Harcourt Brace & Co., 1994
The story of Christ, through the eyes of his mother, Mary. A novel for adults.

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.