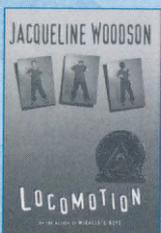
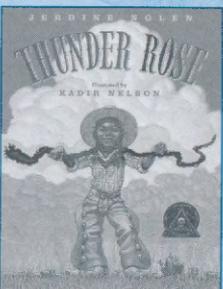
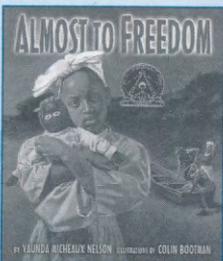
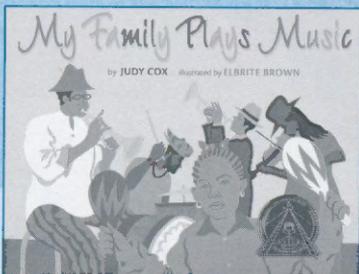
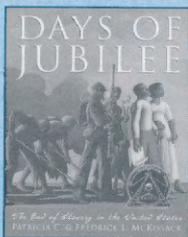
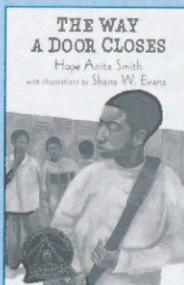
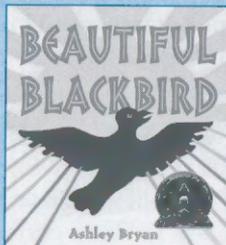


# Coretta Scott King Book Award 2004



Coretta Scott King Awards Committee  
of the Ethnic and Multicultural  
Information Exchange Round Table

American Library Association

<http://www.ala.org/srrt/csking>

## Discussion Guide

**THE CORETTA SCOTT KING BOOK AWARD 2004 DISCUSSION GUIDE**

was prepared by members of the 2004 CSK Book Award Jury: Deborah Burns, Patricia Carleton, Loretta Dowell, Darwin Henderson, Veronica Stevenson-Moudamane, Idella Washington. It was edited by Chrystal Carr Jeter, CSK Book Award Jury Chair; Fran Ware, CSK Book Award Committee Chair; and Barbara McClayton.

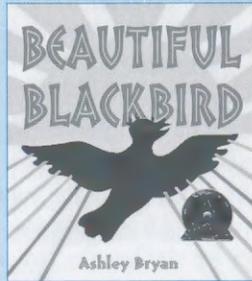
**THE CORETTA SCOTT KING BOOK AWARD SEAL** was designed by internationally renowned artist Lev Mills in 1974. The symbolism used in designing the seal centers on Dr. King's teachings and doctrines, the purpose for which the award was founded. The basic circle represents continuity in movement, revolving from one idea to another. Within the circle is the image of a black child reading a book. The five main religious symbols below the image of the child represent nonsectarianism. The superimposed pyramid symbolizes both strength and Atlanta University, where the award was headquartered at the time the seal was designed. At the apex of the pyramid is the dove, symbolic of peace, one of Dr. King's doctrines. The rays shine toward peace and brotherhood.

**THE CORETTA SCOTT KING BOOK AWARD: A LIVING LEGEND**

For more than thirty years, books by African American writers and artists have been honored by receiving the Coretta Scott King Book Award. The award promotes understanding and appreciation of the culture of all peoples and their contributions to the realization of the American dream. The award is designed to commemorate the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and to honor Mrs. Coretta Scott King for her courage and determination to continue the work for peace and world brotherhood. The multidimensional characteristics of the authors' and illustrators' works reflect the African American experience from both the historical and contemporary perspectives. Opportunities to celebrate the rich and powerful experiences through these books lie in the hands of the adults in children's and young adults' lives. This discussion guide is, therefore, dedicated to those teachers, parents, librarians, booksellers, and caregivers who are committed to enriching the lives of children and young adults with quality literature. Three broad thematic categories characterize this year's winners: "Freedom Coming," "Celebrate," and "Today's Struggles."

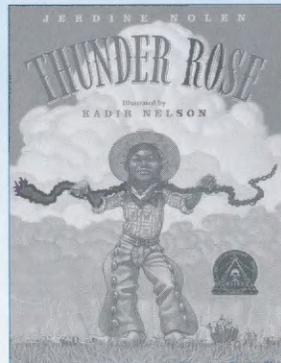
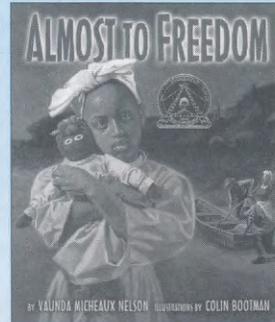


## Coretta Scott King Illustrator Awards



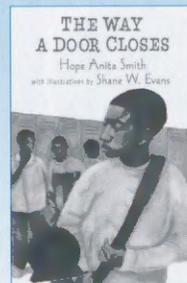
King Illustrator Award  
**Beautiful Blackbird**  
 Ashley Bryan  
 Antheneum Books for Young Readers

King Illustrator Honor Book  
**Almost to Freedom**  
 Vaunda Micheaux Nelson  
 Illustrated by Colin Bootman  
 Carolrhoda Books, Inc.,  
 Lerner Publishing Group



King Illustrator Honor Book  
**Thunder Rose**  
 Jerdine Nolen  
 Illustrated by Kadir Nelson  
 Silver Whistle/Harcourt, Inc.

## John Steptoe Award for New Talent

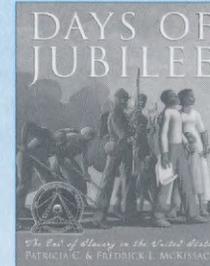


John Steptoe New Talent  
 Author Book Award  
**The Way a Door Closes**  
 Hope Anita Smith  
 Illustrated by Shane W. Evans  
 Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

## Coretta Scott King Author Awards



King Author Award  
**The First Part Last**  
 Angela Johnson  
 Simon & Schuster  
 Books for Young Readers



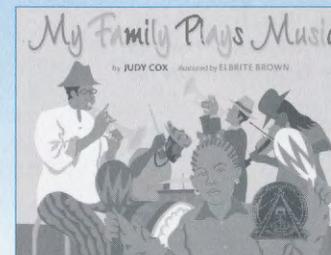
King Author Honor Award  
**Days of Jubilee:  
 The End of Slavery  
 in the United States**  
 Patricia C. and  
 Fredrick L. McKissack  
 Scholastic Press



King Author Honor Award  
**Locomotion**  
 Jacqueline Woodson  
 G. P. Putnam's Sons,  
 Penguin Young Readers Group



King Author Honor Award  
**The Battle of Jericho**  
 Sharon M. Draper  
 Antheneum  
 Books for Young Readers



John Steptoe New Talent  
 Illustrator Book Award  
**My Family Plays Music**  
 Judy Cox  
 Illustrated by Elbrite Brown  
 Holiday House

**Almost to Freedom**Vaundra Micheaux Nelson • Illustrated by Colin Bootman  
Carolrhoda Books, Inc., a division of Lerner Publishing Group

The story of Lindy and her family's escape to freedom by way of the Underground Railroad is told through the eyes of Lindy's doll, Sally. Their relationship and experiences are vividly portrayed throughout the book. When Lindy's family escapes to freedom during the night, Sally is left behind. She encounters many emotional moments until she is found by Willa, the daughter of a family also on its way to freedom.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- Define the "historical words and phrases" at the end of the book — *big house, dear, make water, Massa, overseer, privy, skiff, slave catchers, and steal away.*
- Use each of the following words or terms in a sentence, drawing from the book as a reference: *doll, freedom, Underground Railroad, author, illustrator, and loneliness.*
- Create a room display or bulletin board using many of the words and phrases from the story (incorporate pictures, postcards, etc.).
- After reading the book aloud, give an oral interpretation of each of the illustrations.
- Compare and connect, in essay form, the main idea in the story and its impact on life in contemporary society.
- Discuss the different relationships within the story, such as: Lindy and her doll, Lindy and her parents, etc.
- Role-play a scene from the book with two or more students.

**Related CSK Titles**

<i>Freedom River</i> Doreen Rappaport Illustrated by Bryan Collier Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children	<i>Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman</i> Alan Schroeder Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney Dial Books for Young Readers
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<i>Only Passing Through: The Story of Sojourner Truth</i> Anne Rockwell Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie Knopf Books for Young Readers/Random House	<i>I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl</i> Joyce Hansen Scholastic
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**Days of Jubilee:****The End of Slavery in the United States**Patricia C. and Fredrick L. McKissack  
Scholastic Press

By focusing on just one aspect of the slave experience—emancipation—Patricia and Fredrick McKissack have painstakingly illustrated their thesis: Emancipation was not a one-time event but a celebratory process over many years. Liberally quoting primary sources, they allow readers to review their research and, as they did, discover the truth. This inspiring tool for middle readers has set the historical record straight.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- List twenty words that are synonymous with *freedom* and/or *jubilee*. Create a word search using those words.
- Research the African American celebration called Juneteenth. What is significant about its origins and why does the celebration reinforce the McKissacks' theories?
- Prepare a time line of emancipation events according to the facts detailed by the McKissacks.

**Related CSK Titles**

<i>The Land</i> Mildred D. Taylor Phyllis Fogelman Books/Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers	<i>Goin' Someplace Special</i> Patricia C. McKissack Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney Anne Schwartz Books/Atheneum Books for Young Readers
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<i>The People Could Fly: The Picture Book</i> Virginia Hamilton Illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon Knopf Books for Young Readers/Random House	<i>I Thought My Soul Would Rise and Fly: The Diary of Patsy, a Freed Girl</i> Joyce Hansen Scholastic
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**Thunder Rose**Jerdine Nolen • Illustrated by Kadir Nelson  
Silver Whistle/Harcourt, Inc.

In the author's note, Jerdine Nolen explains that former slaves settled the West after the Civil War. "Bold, brave and adventurous spirits heroically took the opportunity to set themselves down in those wide-open spaces to live free." Nelson expertly uses oil, watercolor, and pencil to depict the larger-than-life exploits of Thunder Rose, a tall-tale heroine cast in the tradition of John Henry and Paul Bunyan. Nolen portrays this sassy, smart, and stronger-than-a-bull Texas gal in a humorous tale that is both fanciful and formidable.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- Research American black cowboys. Explain how their lives were alike or different from that of Thunder Rose.
- Obtain a piece of barbed wire for display purposes only. Using a plastic-coated telephone wire for demonstration, create your own version of Thunder Rose's Cole.
- Write and illustrate a tall tale in the style of *Thunder Rose*.
- Make a hurricane in a bottle:  
Fill a two-liter bottle with water. Invert an empty bottle on the mouth of the first bottle; seal together securely. Invert the two bottles and watch the water swirl like a hurricane.
- Thunder Rose does many chores. List the chores you do at home or school.

**Related CSK Titles**

<i>I Have Heard of a Land</i> Joyce Carol Thomas Illustrated by Floyd Cooper HarperCollins Publishers	<i>The People Could Fly</i> Virginia Hamilton Illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon Knopf Books for Young Readers/Random House
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<i>Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World</i> Mildred Pitts Walter Lothrop, Lee & Shepard	<i>The Land</i> Mildred D. Taylor Phyllis Fogelman Books/Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers
<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale</i> John Steptoe Lothrop, Lee & Shepard	



**Beautiful Blackbird**

Ashley Bryan  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers

This story was adapted from a folktale from the Ila-speaking people of Zambia. Ringdove and all the forest birds proclaim Blackbird the most beautiful of them all. In keeping with Ringdove's request, Blackbird adorns his fellow birds with touches of his blackening brew. His task complete, Blackbird advises, "Color on the outside is not what's on the inside . . . Whatever I do, I'll be me and you'll be you." Bryan's message of self-acceptance and tolerance—and the often repeated "Black is beautiful, uh-huh!"—emphasizes that beauty comes from within.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- Research how to fold origami paper cranes. Describe the custom of making paper cranes and its significance.
- Construct, from art or craft papers, a "wishing bird." Use a template cut from heavy cardboard in the shape of a bird and trace it onto your papers. Once you've cut your "wishing bird," write your wish for the world—or for the future—on the body or wings of the bird. The "wishing bird" can be hung from a string on a tree outdoors, or it can be hung with other birds in the classroom on a special occasion.
- Write and illustrate an original story. Create the pictures in the story using the cut-paper collage technique Ashley Bryan used to illustrate *Beautiful Blackbird*. Develop a plan showing the various paint colors you'll use, examples of pictures from catalogs and magazines, and other materials you will need to create the collage.
- Identify other artists who have illustrated books using collage. How are their illustrations similar to those in *Beautiful Blackbird*? How are they different? Who are your favorites among the artists? Why?

**Related CSK Titles**

*In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall:  
African Americans Celebrating Fathers*  
Illustrated by Javaka Steptoe  
Lee & Low Books

*Martin's Big Words:  
The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
Doreen Rappaport  
Illustrated by Bryan Collier  
Jump at the Sun/Hyperion Books for Children

*I See the Rhythm*  
Toyomi Igus  
Illustrated by Michele Wood  
Children's Book Press

*Soul Looks Back in Wonder*  
Various African American poets;  
Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, et al.  
Illustrated by Tom Feelings  
Phyllis Fogelman Books/Dial Books for Young Readers

*Tar Beach*  
Faith Ringgold  
Crown Publishers

*Uptown*  
Bryan Collier  
Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

*Visiting Langston*  
Willie Perdomo  
Illustrated by Bryan Collier  
Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

**My Family Plays Music**

Judy Cox • Illustrated by Elbrite Brown  
Holiday House

A contemporary young African American girl and members of her family celebrate various musical styles in this lively and colorful picture book. Bright cut-paper illustrations enhance the festive mood as family members share their love for music and musical performance. Brown's pictures break the stereotypical depictions of African American family life as he introduces readers to harmonies and the soulful beat in music from jazz to rock 'n' roll. The text is supplemented by a pictorial glossary.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- Make musical instruments for use in the percussion and woodwind sections of a big band or symphony orchestra.
- Trace the history of jazz and the blues and their origins in African rhythms.
- Explore the origins of various musical instruments. Which ones can be traced to Africa?

**Related CSK Titles**

*Rap a Tap Tap: Here's Bojangles—Think of That*  
Leo & Diane Dillon  
Blue Sky Press/Scholastic, Inc.

*I See the Rhythm*  
Toyomi Igus  
Illustrated by Michele Wood  
Children's Book Press

*Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*  
Retold and illustrated by Ashley Bryan  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers

*Ray Charles*  
Sharon Bell Mathis  
Illustrated by George Ford  
Thomas Y. Crowell Company



**Locomotion**

Jacqueline Woodson

G. P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin Young Readers Group

"People are poems," Lonnie Collins Motion proclaims in the opening lines of Jacqueline Woodson's poetic novel *Locomotion*. In sixty carefully crafted poems, Woodson slowly reveals the events and people in Lonnie's life: the fire that killed his parents; his foster mother; and his efforts to maintain a relationship with his adopted younger sister, Lili.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- Lonnie is named after the song "The Locomotion" by Little Eva. For what song could you be named? Perform *your* dance.
- Woodson's poems explain how Lonnie got his name. Interview your parents and ask them how you got your name. Write a poem to explain the story behind your name.
- Write a list poem, similar to Lonnie's on page 33 of the book.
- Lonnie describes a new boy in school. Have you ever made friends with a "new kid"? Have you ever *been* "the new kid"? Write a poem that describes how it feels to be "the new kid."

**Related CSK Titles**

*Bronx Masquerade*  
Nikki Grimes  
Dial Books for Young Readers

*Jazmin's Notebook*  
Nikki Grimes  
Dial Books for Young Readers

*Carver: A Life in Poems*  
Marilyn Nelson  
Front Street Press

*Visiting Langston*  
Willie Perdomo  
Illustrated by Bryan Collier  
Henry Holt Books for  
Young Readers

*Talkin' About Bessie:  
Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman*  
Nikki Grimes  
Illustrated by E. B. Lewis  
Orchard Books/Scholastic, Inc.

**The Way a Door Closes**

Hope Anita Smith • Illustrated by Shane W. Evans

Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

Thirty-four gentle poems slowly reveal the details of thirteen-year-old C.J.'s life. At first his contemporary family is "just like the sun / and we are all / golden." But when his father leaves abruptly, everything changes, and Smith's poems show C.J.'s anger and confusion. The eventual happy ending is a hopeful blessing.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- In *The Way a Door Closes*, the author shows how C.J. turns toward writing poetry to express his emotions. Think of one of the most significant periods in your life and write a poem that expresses how you felt at that time. What words would you use for happiness? For pain?
- *The Way a Door Closes* is a collection of thirty-four poems that creates a literary portrait of the members of a close-knit family living and loving one another. Write a collection of poems to highlight individual members of your family.
- Many well-known African American authors express themselves through their poetry. Identify and discuss other African American authors who use poetry in their books.

**Related CSK Titles**

*Black Troubadour: Langston Hughes*  
Charlemae Rollins  
Rand McNally & Company

*Jazmin's Notebook*  
Nikki Grimes  
Dial Books for Young Readers

*Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*  
Retold and illustrated by Ashley Bryan  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers

*Bronx Masquerade*  
Nikki Grimes  
Dial Books for Young Readers

*Locomotion*  
Jacqueline Woodson  
G. P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin  
Young Readers Group

**The Battle of Jericho**

Sharon M. Draper

Atheneum Books for Young Readers

Jericho knows his future is bright when he is chosen to pledge for an exclusive high school club. Arielle, the most popular girl in the school, becomes very attentive toward him. Jericho is determined to achieve his goal at any cost, even if he has to compromise and give up his dream of attending Juilliard. The author vividly captures the voices of contemporary youth while addressing important issues including peer pressure, pledging, social acceptance, popularity, and the conflicts between right and wrong.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- What would you have done differently than Jericho? Why?
- Discuss how peer pressure can suddenly influence your life.
- How is the process different—Or is it different?—for joining a club, a sorority, a fraternity, or a gang?
- Have you ever been asked to do something you know is wrong? Describe the situation. What effort would you make to do the right thing?

**Related CSK Titles**

*Slam*  
Walter Dean Myers  
Scholastic Press

*Miracle's Boys*  
Jacqueline Woodson  
G. P. Putnam's Sons/Penguin  
Young Readers Group

*Tears of a Tiger*  
Sharon M. Draper  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers

*I Hadn't Meant to Tell You*  
Jacqueline Woodson  
Delacorte Press

*The Skin I'm In*  
Sharon Flake  
Jump at the Sun/Hyperion  
Books for Children

*Forged by Fire*  
Sharon M. Draper  
Atheneum Books for Young Readers

**The First Part Last**

Angela Johnson

Simon &amp; Schuster Books for Young Readers

*The First Part Last* takes place in urban New York and tells the story of Bobby, a sixteen-year-old African American artist and single parent raising his daughter alone. In short chapters that alternate between "now" and "then," Bobby details his struggles with the rigors of fatherhood in the absence of Nia, his baby Feather's mother.

**Activities and Discussion Topics**

- In *The First Part Last* the author highlights the struggles Bobby faces as a teenage father. How would your life change if you suddenly became a teenage parent? Would you be ready for the changes? If not, tell why?
- Bobby's mother loves her grandchild, Feather, but she insists on not taking over Bobby's parenting duties. Why?
- Based on this book, what do you think it might be like to be Bobby?
- What value do books like *The First Part Last* have in contemporary society? Can books make a difference in people's lives? How?

**Related CSK Titles**

*Heaven*  
Angela Johnson  
Simon & Schuster  
Books for Young Readers

*Like Sisters on the Homefront*  
Rita Williams-Garcia  
Lodestar Books

*Chill Wind*  
Janet McDonald  
Frances Foster Books/Farrar,  
Straus and Giroux

*In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall:  
African Americans Celebrating Fathers*  
Illustrated by Javaka Steptoe  
Lee & Low Books

## ABOUT THE AWARD

The Coretta Scott King Book Award has grown since its conception in the late 1960s. At its humble inception at the May 1970 dinner gala of the New Jersey Library Association, Lillie Patterson was honored for her biography *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Man of Peace*. In 1972 the CSK Task Force held its first breakfast at an ALA conference site (but without ALA recognition). Official affiliation with the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) came in 1980, and in 1982 the American Library Association recognized the Coretta Scott King Award as an association award. During the 2003 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the CSK Task Force affiliated with the Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT). The affiliation with EMIERT gave the group a new name: the Coretta Scott King Book Award Committee. The success of the CSK committee can be attributed to the work of tireless volunteers and visionary founders. For a more complete history, consult three works, all edited by Henrietta M. Smith: *The Coretta Scott King Awards Book: From Vision to Reality*, American Library Association, 1994; *The Coretta Scott King Awards Book, 1970–1999*, American Library Association, 1999; and a newly released third edition, *The Coretta Scott King Awards Book, 1970–2004*, American Library Association, 2004. Among their many other functions, book awards provide a simple means to help casual browsers in bookstores and in libraries find material that is engaging, well crafted, and satisfying, both emotionally and intellectually. The Coretta Scott King Book Award, particularly, introduces the best in African American literature to all children. The award now graces dozens of titles, from picture books for the youngest children to novels and nonfiction for teenagers. In this guide we have examined some of those titles from different perspectives.

