

# CHILDREN'S LITERATURE SUPPORTING PEACE EDUCATION

## **Making Peace**

**Matthew and Tilly** by Rebecca C. Jones, Publisher: Puffin Unicorn (1991). Urban setting. Best friends experience the emotional ups and downs of relationship as they quarrel and then reconcile.

**The Knight and the Dragon**, by Tomie De Paola, Publisher: G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, (1980). A knight who has never fought a dragon and an equally inexperienced dragon prepare to meet each other in battle. The ultimate result is a delightful cooperative enterprise.

**Best Day of the Week**, by Nancy Carlsson-Paige, Publisher: Redleaf Press, Minneapolis, MN, (1998). Calvin and Angela are best friends, but find themselves in a conflict situation that escalates to name calling and putdowns. They discover a way to resolve their conflict so that both of them are happy. This book can be used as a curriculum guide for elementary school grades for conflict resolution.

**The Peace Book** by Todd Parr Little Brown & Co (2004)  
A very simple, brightly illustrated book defining "peace".

**Old Turtle** by Douglas Wood, Scholastic Press (1992)  
This powerful and beautifully illustrated book tells the story of the world in argument over the definition of God until Old Turtle speaks and offers a plea for peace.

**A Little Peace** by Barbara Kerley, National Geographic Children's Books (2007)  
The lovely book juxtaposes photographs from around the world with a simple, reflective message about our responsibilities for finding and keeping peace on the planet.

**Six Crows** by Leo Lionni, Publisher: Scholastic Inc. (1988). Crows and a farmer quarrel over a wheat field. Their conflict nearly causes the demise of the wheat until a wise owl helps them make peace. This is a fun book to act out - the children love to make the scarecrows!

**The Lotus Seed** by Tatsuro Kiuchi, Publisher: Harcourt Brace & Co (1993)  
A beautifully illustrated book set in the time of the Vietnam War. A child's grandmother leaves her troubled land and immigrates to the U.S. She brings a lotus seed from her homeland. She explains, "It is the flower of life and hope".

**The Owl and the Woodpecker** by Brian Wildsmith. Publisher: Oxford University Press (1971)  
Seemingly irreconcilable differences – the owl's need to sleep and the woodpecker's need to work during the day leads to a conflict that involves the entire woodland community.

**Enemy Pie** by Derek Munson, Publisher: Chronicle Books (2000)  
A new boy in the neighborhood becomes Jeremy Ross's Enemy Number One. His Dad has a surefire way to get rid of enemies – Enemy Pie...but one of the ingredients is spending an entire day with the enemy.

**Maggie and the Pirate** by Ezra Jack Keats, Publisher: Scholastic (1979)  
A "pirate" steals Maggie's cricket! Maggie and her friends search until they find the pirate's hideout but when the hideout disintegrates under her, her cricket drowns. The pirate, who is a new child in the neighborhood, meets with the children and brings a new cricket to Maggie. This is a dramatically illustrated story of conflict and transformation.

**Swimmy** by Leo Leoni, Publisher Dragonfly Books (1973)  
As is many of Leo Leoni's books, this book shows how children can be themselves and care about others at the same time. In this book little fish band together to protect themselves from their natural enemies.

**It's Mine** by Leo Leoni, Publisher, Dragonfly Books (1996)  
Three frogs bicker all day long, but when a storm arrives, they realize that they need to share to survive.

**Mole Music** by David McPhal  
A lovely book about a mole who teaches himself how to play a violin. As he practices, a tree grows above his tunnel, people come and go, and eventually armies arrive to fight. The sound of his music, however, makes the soldiers relax and stop fighting. A lovely allegory.

**Somewhere Today** by Shelley Moore Thomas, Albert Whitman & Co (2002)

A simple, full-color book of photographs of multiethnic children and adults all over the world, helping one another, and in doing so, are bringing about peace:

### **Board Books for Toddlers**

**Pat the Bunny** by Dorothy Kunhardt, Publisher, Golden Books ( published 1940, reissue 2001)

Reinforces the concept of "gentle touch" and self concept.

**Toes, Ears, Nose!** by Marion Dane Bauer, publisher Little Simon (2003)

A multicultural selection of children dressed colorfully. Each page has a sentence, the first part is on the page and the last part is on the cardboard flap when you lift it. For example, "In my boots I've got" is written on the page. You lift up the cardboard boot flap and it says, "toes"

**Friends** by Rachel Isadora (1990) Trumpet

This is a lovely short book for toddlers about being friends.

**Feet are not for Kicking, Tails are not for Pulling** by Verdick

**The Carrot Seed** by Ruth Krauss, publisher Harper Festival 1940's (board book 1993)

A child ignores the pessimistic remarks about his carrot seed coming up. Instead, he tends the seed by watering and weeding it and trusts in his dream...and the carrot comes up!

### **Diversity**

Any and all of Ann Morris's *Around the World Series* books! They all have magnificent photographs accompanied by simple sentences. Diversity is her focus. Children peruse these books again and again!

**Houses and Homes** (1995), **Families** (2000), **Loving** (1994) [if I *had* to choose a favorite, this would be it]

**Bread, Bread Bread** (1993), **Teamwork** (1999), **Work** (1998)

**Faces** (1994) by Shelley Rotner & Ken Kreisler

This is a book filled with wonderful, delightful photos of children. I believe it was created for infants and toddlers, but all ages enjoy looking at the different feelings, facial features, thinking and sleeping faces, "each special in its own way."

**All the Colors We Are** (1994) {in Spanish and English}

Using outstanding full-color photographs, "All the colors We Are" illustrates the beautiful diversity of human skin color. This special book offers young children a simple scientifically accurate explanation for how we get our skin color, thus freeing children from the myths and stereotypes associated with skin color. A great book for anti-bias curriculum.

**The Color of Us** by Karen Katz

Bold illustrations celebrate diversity with a child's open-hearted sensibility and a mother's love. The book's heartfelt theme: "Love the skin you're in."

**Two Eyes, A Nose, and a Mouth** (1995) by Roberta Grobel Intrater

Another book for very young children that appeals to 2, 3, 4 + year old children. Lovely photographs of all kinds of faces ("noses can be short and wide, or turn out long and bumpy, Some are small and curve up and some are kind of lumpy.") A wonderful point is made by having a two-page spread of multiple images of the same face "Imagine how dull the world would be if everyone looked like you or me."

**We are all Alike...We are all Different** (1991) by The Cheltenham Elementary School Kindergarteners

This is a delightful book, which was written and illustrated by kindergarten children! I'm charmed every time I look through it.

**Hats off to Hair!** By Virginia Kroll

Lovely paintings of real children from many cultures show us the beauty, the wonder and the diversity of our hair.

**All the Colors of the Earth** (1994) by Sheila Hamanaka

This is one of the most beautifully illustrated books in my collection. A biracial couple lovingly gaze at their infant "Love is amber and ivory and ginger and sweet"....The author/illustrator, Sheila Hamanaka was inspired by the multiethnic heritage of her own children and by the richness of all the colors children bring to the world. She won a Jane Addams Peace Award for her book "The Journey: Japanese Americans, Racism, and Renewal".

**Whoever You Are** (2001) Mem Fox

Fox has composed a simple refrain to celebrate human connections in this lovely picture book. "Little one, whoever you are," she explains, there are children all over the world who may look different, live in different homes and different climates, go to different schools, and speak in different tongues but all children love, smile, laugh, and cry. Their joys, pain, and blood are the same, "whoever they are, wherever they are, all over the world. The illustrations are just amazing.

**The World Turns Round and Round** (2000)

"What was sent to the brown-eyed boy/From his abuela in Mexico? From Tapalpa came a sombrero of straw./Oh, he never saw/Such a sombrero of straw/From rural Mexico." So begins this charming book that describes various items of clothing sent from relatives around the world to the children in one class. Weiss's cheerful, colored-pencil drawings accompany the verses for each child. The phrase "The world turns round and round" repeats throughout the book - the children spontaneously begin chant (read) the phrase as one reads.

**From Here to There** (1999) by Margery Cuyler.

Beautifully illustrated by Yu Cha Pak giving a feeling of a grandma Moses painting. A delightful child, Maria Mendoza describes where she lives - and each description is accompanied by outstanding illustrations. She lives in a home, on a street, in the town of Splendora, in the county of Liberty, in the state of Texas, in the country of the United States, on the continent of North America, in the Western Hemisphere, on the planet earth, in the solar system, in the Milky Way Galaxy, in the universe and beyond. I always get a thrill reading and looking at this book.

**Elizabeti's Doll** (1998) by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen

Elizabeti doesn't have a doll and yet she wants to take care of a baby all her own, just like Mama takes care of the new baby. So she finds a rock, kisses it, and names it Eva. This story takes place in Tanzania, and lifestyle differences, such as how a baby is carried in a kanga cloth and the way that food is cooked in a separate hut, are an integral and unobtrusive part of the text. One year we painted rocks after reading this book - and most of the children painted faces!

**Rise and Shine, Mariko-chan!** By Chiyok Tomioka

This is a delightfully illustrated book showing a typical morning in the home of Mariko-chan in Japan. Glimpses into the Japanese customs occur as how the sisters seal a promise by linking baby fingers, the making of triangular-shaped rice balls and the obvious show of affection and respect for Oba-san "dear grandmother".

**Something Beautiful** by Sharon Dennis Wyeth

A 7-9 year old girl longs to see beyond the scary sights on the sidewalk and halls of her building. When her teachers write the word "beautiful" on the blackboard, the girl begins an odyssey to find beauty. Her neighbors share their own beautiful things - a beautiful fruit store - a beautiful smooth stone - a beautiful fried fish sandwich. She experiences the beauty of friendship and the power of hope. 4-8 year olds.

**Amazing Grace** (1991) by Mary Hoffman

Everyone should have a copy of this book! It is a must! An imaginative African American girl decides she can do anything she puts her mind to! This book has never failed to start a wonderful discussion about fairness and bias.

**Ruby's Wish** (2002) by6 Shirin Yim Bridges

Another strong, spunky girl!

This book is based on the author's grandmothers' story about how one handles the conflict between Chinese tradition and young Ruby's longing to attend university with grace and compassion. She sets the scene with a description of "a block of houses, five houses wide and seven houses deep, [once] the magnificent home of one family." Ruby lives in this home with her grandfather (who "did what rich men did in old China: he married many wives"). A tutor teaches any of the 100 assorted grandchildren who wish to learn, but Ruby is the only girl who continues to study while also keeping pace with learning her many household duties. Bridges characterizes the heroine as confident and spunky.

**Jingle Dancer** (2000) BY Cynthia Leitich Smith

Warm, evocative watercolor illustrations match the author's lyrical style of writing as she tells the story of how a contemporary Muscogee girl turns to her family and community to help her jingle dance have a voice. Just lovely.

## **Feelings**

**Sometimes I Feel Like a Mouse** by Jeanne Modesitt (1992) Scholastic

A beautifully illustrated book illustrating a child as he experiences all kinds of feelings, "Sometimes I feel scared like a rabbit."

**Quick as a Cricket** by Audrey Wood (1982) Scholastic

Don Wood illustrates this book of a child experiencing a variety of feelings.

(Both of the above are fun to "act out" with children.)

**Everybody Has Feelings: The Moods of Children** by Charles Avery (1992) Gryphon House

A wonderful selection of photographs of children experiencing many moods.

**Daniel's Dog** by Jo Ellen Bogart (1990) Blue Ribbon

Daniel has a new baby sister named Carrie. He is conflicted in his feelings, sometimes loving the baby and sometimes feeling angry. His invisible friend (a dog named Lucy) helps him through his emotional ups and downs.

**Let's Be Friends Again!** By Hans Wilhelm (1986) Crown Publishers

A brother and sister have typical sibling difficulties until one day, the little sister "did a terrible thing." The brother is so angry he slams his door loudly and fanaticizes about ways to punish her. He was "mad, mad, mad!" He visualizes all kinds of punishment for his sister. He eventually calms down and befriends his sister again. Delightful illustrations and a believable story.

**Lost!** By David McPhail (1990) Trumpet

A boy discovers a very frightened bear crying. He is lost. The two research together to find the bear's home. Once there, the boy becomes frightened because, now, he is lost! The pair in this sweet story experiences a full range of emotions.

**Don't Need Friends** by Carolyn Crimi (2000) Scholastic

Rat's friend Possum has to move to another junkyard, leaving Rat behind. Rat decides he doesn't need friends! He grouchy rejects others' overtures of friendship. He meets an equally grouchy newcomer, Dog. The two hesitantly become friends.

**What are Friends For?** By Sally Grindley Penny Dann (1998) Scholastic

Jefferson Bear and Figgy Twosocks Fox are great friends until Figgy, wanting to play, scares Bear awake. Bear becomes angry and Figgy sadly trudges off. The two reconcile once Bear becomes worried and is led to where Figgy is hiding by the sound of great big sobs.

**Tough Boris** by Kathryn Brown (1994) Trumpet

This is a simple story of a fearless, scruffy, massive pirate who cries when his parrot dies.

**Pip's Magic** by Ellen Stoll Walsh (1994) Trumpet

Pip the lizard is afraid of the dark – but he has to go through a dark tunnel, a dark forest and the dark night to find the wizard who will make him brave. This is a fun book to act out - ( you can make an obstacle course!)

**The Island of the Skog** by Steven Kellogg (1973) Dial Books

Illustrated in the detail of Steven Kellogg, this story is about a group of mice who are fed up with the dangers of living in the city, and set off in a ship. When they arrive at an island, they discover a huge footprint. One faction wants to try to make friends with the island's inhabitant, but the other faction, who is responding to fear, sets up a trap to catch "monster". When the monster is revealed to be a tiny being (mole?), everyone becomes friends.

**Where the Wild Things Are** by Maurice Sendak

Mischievous Max gets into trouble and is sent to his room without his supper! While in his room a forest grows and an ocean tumbles by and he sails to the land Where the Wild Things Are. Max and the Wild Things experience fear, anger, loneliness and joy in this classic.

If the book is not to "scary" for the children, it is a fun book to "act out."