

Children's Books that Break Gender Role Stereotypes



Amazing Grace. By Mary Hoffman. Illustrated by Caroline Binch. 1991. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

Grace loves to act out stories. She eventually overcomes restrictions of gender and race to play the part of her dreams, Peter Pan, in the school play.



Anna Banana and Me. By Lenore Blegvad. Illustrated by Erik Blegvad. [1987] 1999. New York: Aladdin. Distributed by Econo-Clad Books.

Anna Banana is a fearless young girl. When she plays with a timid boy, he eventually becomes as brave as his friend.

The Art Lesson. Written and illustrated by Tomie DePaola. 1999. New York: Putnam. Distributed by Econo-Clad Books.

Tommy loves to draw but feels constrained in art class. A new teacher finally strikes a compromise to allow for Tommy's creativity.

Boy, Can He Dance! By Eileen Spinelli. Illustrated by Paul Yalowitz. 1993. New York: Four Winds.

Tony doesn't want to become a chef like his father. Instead, he wants to dance.

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This list is from their "Come and Listen to a Story about a Girl Named Rex: Using Children's Literature to Debunk Gender Stereotypes," in the March issue of *Young Children*.

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Lisen C. Roberts and Heather T. Hill

The Chalk Box Kid. By Clyde Bulla. Illustrated by Thomas B. Allen. 1987. New York: Random House.

Gregory does not have anywhere to grow a garden, so he creates one of his own.

Christina Katerina and the Box. By Patricia Lee Gauch. Illustrated by Doris Burn. 1998. New York: PaperStar/Putnam's Sons.

An innovative young girl finds a number of uses for a large box.

Ira Sleeps Over. Written and illustrated by Bernard Waber. 1973. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

When Ira is invited to sleep over at Reggie's house, he must decide whether to take his beloved teddy bear. In the end, he learns that it is acceptable for boys to have teddy bears.

Little Granny Quarterback. By Bill Martin Jr. and Michael Sampson. Illustrated by Michael Chesworth. 2001. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press.

Granny, who was a star quarterback in her youth, leaps into her television to assist her favorite team with the winning touchdown.

Mama and Me and the Model T. By Faye Gibbons. Illustrated by Ted Rand. 1999. New York: Morrow Junior Books/Harper-Collins.

When the Model T arrives, Mama proves that she, like the men, can drive.

Mermaid Janine. By Iolette Thomas. Illustrated by Jennifer Northway. 1993. New York: Scholastic Trade.

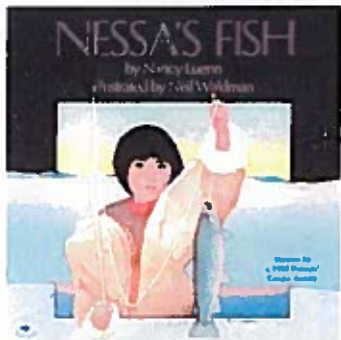
Janine takes swimming lessons and becomes determined to swim the length of the pool. With practice and attention to her body's strength, she finally does.

Mirette on the High Wire. Written and illustrated by Emily McCully. 1992. New York: Putnam Group Juvenile.

Mirette learns to walk the tight rope, taught by Monsieur Bellini, who himself has withdrawn from the performance due to fear.

More Than Anything Else. By Marie Bradby. Illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. 1995. New York: Orchard Books.

This story is based on the childhood of Booker T. Washington, a boy who wants more than anything else to learn how to read.



Nessa's Fish. By Nancy Luenn. Illustrated by Neil Waldman. 1999. Econo-Clad Books.

When Nessa's grandmother becomes ill on a fishing excursion, Nessa defends her and their catch against wild animals.

The Paper Bag Princess. By Robert Munsch. Illustrated by Michael Mart-chenko. 1988. Annick Press. Distributed by Perfection Learning Corp., Des Moines, IA.

Princess Elizabeth rescues her prince from a fire-breathing dragon. When he doesn't appreciate her efforts, she decides not to marry him after all.

Pinky and Rex and the Bully. By James Howe. Illustrated by Melissa Sweet. 1996. The Pinky and Rex series. New York: Atheneum.

A boy who loves the color pink defends himself and his choice for a best friend, a girl who loves dinosaurs.

Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt. Written and illustrated by Lisa Campbell Ernst. 1983. William Morrow/HarperCollins.

Sam isn't welcome in the women's quilting club, so he organizes a men's quilting group.

Eventually the men and women join to make a quilt together.

The Story of Ferdinand. By Munro Leaf. Illustrated by Robert Lawson. 1936. New York: Viking.

This classic about the value of peace presents Ferdinand, a young bull who prefers smelling flowers to butting heads.

Tonio's Cat. By Mary Calhoun. Illustrated by Edward Martinez. 1996. New York: Morrow Junior Books/HarperCollins.

Tonio is new in town and wants to make friends. At the risk of making himself an outcast, he defends Toughy, a stray cat, against the other kids.

Tough Boris. By Mem Fox. Illustrated by Kathryn Brown. 1994. San Diego: Harcourt Brace.

Boris is tough, but in the end when his parrot companion dies, he—like all pirates—cries.

When Sophie Gets Angry, Really, Really Angry. Written and illustrated by Molly Bang. 1999. New York: Scholastic Trade.

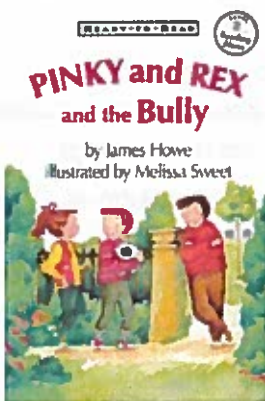
Sophie gets angry and deals with her strong feelings by climbing trees.

Will I Have a Friend? By Miriam Cohen. Illustrated by Lillian Hoban. 1989. New York: Aladdin. Distributed by Econo-Clad Books.

Jim worries about the first day of school until he connects with another boy.

White Dynamite and Curly Kidd. By Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault. Illustrated by Ted Rand. 1996. New York: Henry Holt.

A child excitedly watches Dad ride the rodeo bull and wants to grow up to be a bull rider like him. The twist is that she's a girl.



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