Annual Black History Month Read-In

Celebrate literature and hear from North Carolina authors with the Fourth-Annual Black History Month Read-In! The North Carolina African American Heritage Commission, in partnership with the North Carolina State Capitol, the State Library of North Carolina, the Richard B. Harrison Community Library, Liberation Station Bookstore, and the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, is presenting the Read-In virtually for 2021. Throughout Black History Month in February, the Commission will highlight individual Black North Carolina children’s book authors.

This year’s event will be entirely online to ensure the safety of authors, guests, and staff. Each week a video will be released highlighting a different N.C. children’s book author. The videos will include an interview with the author and an excerpt from one of their books. You can watch these videos on-demand any time by visiting the [YouTube channel of the NC African American Heritage Commission](https://www.youtube.com). For information regarding the video release schedule, visit [aahc.nc.gov](http://aahc.nc.gov).

This event is presented by the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission, in partnership with the North Carolina State Capitol, the State Library of North Carolina, the Richard B. Harrison Community Library, and Liberation Station Bookstore.
Featured authors for 2021 include:

- **Tameka Fryer Brown** is an award-winning picture book author. Tameka will be reading an excerpt from “My Cold Plum Lemon Pie Bluesy Mood” (illustrated by Shane W. Evans). Brown’s books also include “Brown Baby Lullaby,” as well as the forthcoming “Twelve Dinging Doorbells” and “Shirley Chisholm: Not Done Yet.” Brown currently resides in Charlotte.

- **Judy Allen Dodson** is a librarian, archivist, and children’s book author. Dodson will be reading “Escape From . . . Hurricane Katrina.” Dodson has a passion for celebrating diverse children’s literature and teaching children about Black history. She lives in Raleigh with her husband and two children.

- **Kelly Starling Lyons** is a founding member of The Brown Bookshelf, teaching artist and award-winning author of more than a dozen books that span easy readers, picture books and chapter books, fiction and nonfiction. In 2021, Lyons was made Piedmont Laureate, recognizing her excellence in the arts. Her mission is to center Black heroes, celebrate family, friendship and heritage and show all kids the storyteller they hold inside. Lyons will be reading an excerpt from “Dream Builder: The Story of Architect Philip Freelon” (illustrated by Laura Freeman). Her other titles include “Going Down Home with Daddy,” “Sing a Song: How Lift Every Voice & Sing Inspired Generations,” “Tiara's Hat Parade” and the Jada Jones and Ty's Travels series.

- **Eleanora E. Tate** will be reading “A Blessing in Disguise.” Tate is the author of eleven novels and numerous short stories for middle-grade readers, including: “Just an Overnight Guest” (Just Us Books), which was adapted into a television film; “The Secret of Gumbo Grove;” “Thank You, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.! A Blessing in Disguise” (Just Us Books); “Front Porch Stories at the One-Room School” (Just Us Books); and “Celeste’s Harlem Renaissance” (Little, Brown). A Drake University graduate and a long-time journalist, she was an instructor with the Institute of Children’s Literature, taught children’s literature at North Carolina Central University, and was in the Hamline University Master’s degree seeking program Writing for Children and Young Adults. She is a Zora Neale Hurston Award recipient, the highest award given by the National Association of Black Storytellers, Inc., and is a former national president.

About the African American Heritage Commission
Created in 2008, the African American Heritage Commission is a division of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The commission works across the department to preserve, protect and promote the state’s African American history, art and culture for all people. Its endeavors include the identification of heritage sites, compiling resources for educators, extending the work of national programs such as the National Park Service’s Network to Freedom Underground Railroad, and independent initiatives including Oasis Spaces: Green Book Project.

About the North Carolina State Capitol
The North Carolina State Capitol’s mission is to preserve and interpret the history, architecture and function of the 1840 building and Union Square. It is within the Division of State Historic Sites within the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and located at One Edenton Street, Raleigh.

About the State Library of North Carolina
The principal library of state government since 1812, the State Library of North Carolina builds the capacity of all libraries in North Carolina and develops and supports access to traditional and online collections such as genealogy, North Carolina culture and heritage and resources for the blind and physically handicapped.

About the Richard B. Harrison Community Library
The Richard B. Harrison Library first opened in 1935 to serve as a public library for the African American community in Raleigh, North Carolina. Under the leadership of Mollie Huston Lee, the library’s founder and first African-American Librarian in Wake County, and with strong community support, the library grew, causing it to move twice before settling into its current location in 1967, when the library merged with the Wake County Public Library System. Wake County Public Libraries is committed to “Instilling the love of reading and fostering the pursuit of knowledge for the residents of Wake County.”

About Liberation Station Bookstore
Since 2019, Liberation Station has trailblazed the industry as an independent, globally recognized children’s bookstore. Liberation Station believes in making representation accessible and amplifying Black voices. As booksellers and storytellers, they seek unconventional spaces to promote literacy, and pioneer creative programming that will ensure Black children are seeing themselves and being seen.