

Book Reviews

We Shall Overcome: The Story of a Song

by Debbie Levy, Illustrated by
Vanessa Brantley-Newton,
Jump at the Sun Books, 2013

This Jane Addams Award Winner depicts the evolution of the familiar protest song by tracing the history of slavery, segregation, and the civil rights movement in the U.S.—and beyond.

“No single day marks the birth of the song. No single person is its author... it is a product of many voices singing similar songs over many years in many places.”.

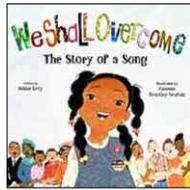
The illustrations mark key events during this long history. *We Shall Overcome* is a great picture book to share with children of all races about different points in our shared history. Each double page spread includes a few lines from the song and the historic detail relating to that verse.

The book is dedicated “to the families and community of Newtown CT.”

Ms. Levy is a newspaper editor and a lawyer and Ms. Brantley-Newton’s information can be found at oohlaladesignstudio.blogspot.com.

The information, in the back of the book, includes internet sources to “hear the song”, notations of the people who made the word changes, an interesting timeline with milestones, and a bibliography.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge MA



Families,

Shelley Rotner, Author, Photographer;
Sheila Kelly, Co-Author,
Holiday House, 2016

“Sometimes the people in a family look alike or sometimes they don’t.”

Vivid color photographs by Ms. Rotner, a UNICEF photographer open the book. She and Ms. Kelly, a clinical psychologist, have previously collaborated together.

Many opportunities unfold for discussion of how families relate while enjoying the variety of activities and sharing the concept of diversity among multigenerational families. The book illustrates families that include adoption, disability, and divorce, “*The people in a family may not all live in the same place.*”

It closes with families having fun being together and asks the most important question.... ***What about yours?***

I am very pleased to recommend this upbeat book for Pre-school - Grade 2.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge MA



Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns: A Muslim Book of Colors,

By Hena Khan, illustrated by
Mehrdokht Amini, Chronicle
Books, 2012, Paperback 2015

Summary: In simple rhyming text a young Muslim girl and her family guide the reader through the traditions and colors of Islam.

“*Gold is the dome of the mosque, big and grand. Beside it two towering minarets stand. Silver is a fanoos, a twinkling light, a shiny lantern that glows at night.*”

With breathtaking illustrations and informative text, *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns* magnificently captures the world of Islam, celebrating its beauty and traditions for even the youngest readers. Sure to inspire questions and observations about world religions and cultures, it is equally at home in a classroom reading circle as it is being read to a child on a parent’s lap.

Since its publication, *Golden domes and Silver lanterns* has earned critical acclaim and numerous awards including The Banks Street College of Education Best Book of the Year and a Parents’ Choice Recommended Seal.

I teach Child Development courses at San Bernardino College, in California. I first came to learn of this children’s picture book when my student, Sahlah, read it aloud to her fellow classmates in my course titled *Teaching in a Diverse Society*. After reading this book, Sahlah’s invitation to her peers to talk together about it was met with warmth and appreciation, opening the door to building understanding about her Muslim faith. The wonderful exchange that occurred amidst the students was a heartening testimony to the power of engaging learners in dialogue. This form of sharing; of listening and of offering opportunities for inquiry and reflection promoted a deeper sense of understanding and respect for Sahlah and for her faith.

Well written children’s books such as *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns* can act as a catalyst while serving to dispel stereotypes and common misconceptions and thus become a gateway toward expanding children’s and our own perceptions. It appealed to the adult listeners and teachers of young children in my class with the lyric flow of the language used, the descriptive definitions coupling colors with new vocabulary and traditions, and the gorgeous illustrations that filled each page. The magic of this book gets the attention of an adult reader, enticing him or her to then read it to inquisitive children. This book most certainly will draw in both adults and children alike while simultaneously offering a perfect opportunity to engage all in a meaningful dialogue.

Amber Wallick - Redlands CA.

