

# BOOK IDEAS

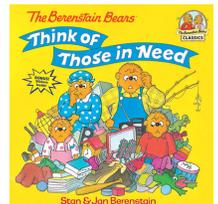
*Books about giving back, empathy, and being a good neighbor.*

Philanthropy is sometimes hard for children of all ages to understand. However, when introduced with colorful illustrations, intriguing stories, and language that is easy to understand, children (and teens) are more likely to catch on. Here is a list of books that introduce the concept of giving and generosity, as well as empathy and inclusion, to add to your child's book collection.

## AGES 0-4

### **The Berenstain Bears Think of Those in Need** by Stan and Jan Berenstain

In this book, the Berenstain Bears realize they have too much stuff and decide to donate their unneeded items to those in need. The Bear family feels doubly good donating not just their hand-me-downs, but also their time and energy to help others in the community.



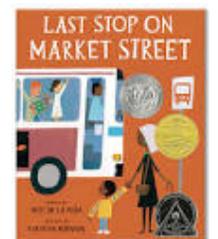
### **Thank You, Omu!** by Oge Mora

A multiple-medal winner, this is a wonderful story of sharing and community (and the collage illustrations are stunning!). Omu (pronounced AH-moo) makes a delicious-smelling stew that she just can't wait to eat for dinner, but instead she shares it little by little with grateful neighbors until it's all gone. You'll have to read and see how the gratitude her friends and neighbors felt from her generosity comes back to her! Ages 4-8, but delightful for all ages.



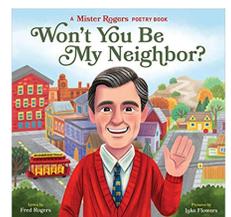
### **Last Stop on Market Street** by Matt de la Pena

When CJ expresses disappointment with elements of their life in Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Pena, his grandmother patiently helps him see the beauty all around them. There are many important messages woven throughout the story — not least of all, the importance of helping those less fortunate.



### **Won't You Be My Neighbor?: A Mister Rogers Poetry Book** by Fred Rogers

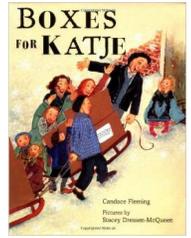
For the first time ever, Mister Rogers's beloved opening theme song is a board book to share with the youngest readers. With bright, upbeat illustrations by Luke Flowers and sweet lyrics fans will know by heart, readers follow Mister Rogers through his neighborhood as he greets the familiar, lovable cast of characters from the show.



## AGES 5-8

### Boxes for Katje by Candace Fleming

After WWII, Rosie, who lives in the United States and Katje, who lives in Holland, become pen pals. Rosie learns about the rough conditions in Holland and sends care packages to Katje, experiencing the joys of international giving.



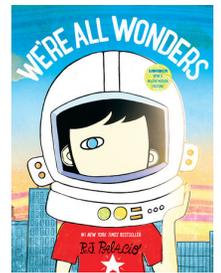
### The Thank You Letter by Jane Cabrera

After Grace receives a bounty of birthday gifts from friends and family, she sits down to write each of them a note of thanks. Soon, Grace discovers that expressing gratitude feels pretty wonderful, so she starts to write thank you letters to everyone in her community. Grace's gratitude snowballs into a thankful town in this sweet picture book about giving and receiving.



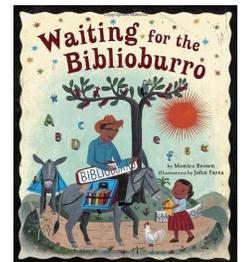
### We're All Wonders by R.J. Palacio

In this book, readers are reminded that we can choose to be kind to one another rather than cruel. Born with a facial deformity, Auggie knows that he looks different from other children but is hopeful that others will see past his differences and appreciate all the other things that make him unique. This is a powerful story of accepting others for who they really are and not judging them based on how they look. A great addition to any home or classroom library.



### Waiting for the Biblioburro by Monica Brown

Even today, if there aren't roads, books can still get to eager readers, young and old! Inspired by the story of real-life librarian Luis Soriano, this book tells the story of the most beautiful sight that book-loving Ana has ever seen: a traveling library, brought by a kind man on the backs of two burros. In Colombia, where Soriano works to bring literacy to isolated villages, there are thousands of children just like Ana, who sit and wait excitedly for the BiblioBurro to come. Also available in a bilingual English / Spanish edition.



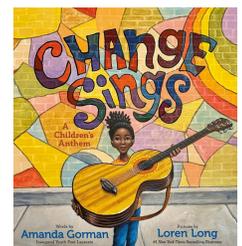
### Make A Stand: When Life Gives You Lemons, Change The World! by Vivienne Harr

This a great real-life story that shows that kids can make a really big difference! Vivienne Harr was 8 years old when she saw a photograph of two enslaved Nepalese boys and decided she couldn't stand by and ignore slavery in the modern world. In her own words, Vivienne tells the story of how she turned a simple idea — run a lemonade stand and donate the profits — into Make A Stand Lemon-Aid, a for-profit social impact company that has raised over \$100,000 for organizations dedicated to ending child slavery.



### Change Sings: A Children's Anthem by Amanda Gorman

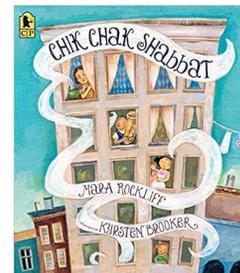
The girl in this book knows change is coming — and that's a good thing! She can hear its hum, but she wants to amplify its voice. So she lifts her own voice... and urges others to do the same. In this stirring picture book by the first-ever National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman, whose inspiring words captivated the nation at President Joe Biden's inauguration, a musical journey becomes a metaphor for community action, and how many people making changes, no matter how big or small, can have a huge impact on the world.



## AGES 5-8 CONTINUED

### Chik Chak Shabbat by Mara Rockliff and Kyrsten Brooker

Goldie Simcha's neighbors love Saturday afternoons. That's because the delicious smells of her cholent waft through the apartment building (all the way down 4 floors!) When they join her for the Shabbat meal of cholent, each neighbor has a different theory on why it is so delicious. But Goldie doesn't think it's the ingredients themselves that gives the stew its taste. The taste comes from the experience of togetherness and peace that happens on Shabbat. One Saturday, it doesn't smell like cholent through the apartment building. But Goldie's neighbors are determined to find a way to make it feel – and taste – like Shabbat for Goldie.



### The Bear's Garden by Marcie Colleen

A little girl imagines a beautiful garden that starts with a single seed — and a stuffed bear — in this picture book inspired by the Pacific Street Brooklyn Bear's Community Garden in Brooklyn, New York. Outside her window, there's a vacant lot that she envisions as "a place to grow, a play to play, and a place to love." The girl has to leave for a while, and leaves her bear to supervise... and when she returns, the community has come together to create something amazing! This charming picture book celebrates the joy of working together to create beauty in surprising places.



### The Boy with Big, Big Feelings by Britney Winn Lee

This book is relatable for any child -- especially for a child experiencing anxiety, extreme emotions, a child identified as a Highly Sensitive Person, or a child on the autism spectrum. The boy tries to cope by stuffing down his feelings, but with a little help and artistic inspiration, the boy realizes his feelings are something to be celebrated.



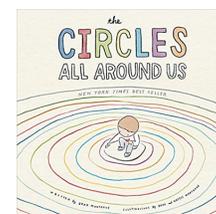
### The Girl with Big, Big Questions by Britney Winn Lee

"Why can't people live on the moon?" "Can I be president when I grow up?" "What makes a person good?" These are just some of the questions that bubble forth from one little girl with twinkling eyes and a curious mind. When the girl finds that her big questions make some people uncomfortable, she stops. But then she learns that her questions can solve problems and that asking questions is how we learn and grow. Celebrate the spirit of curiosity and the joy of learning with this lively picture book about a persistent girl and her quest for knowledge.



### The Circles All Around Us by Brad Montague

In the circles all around us, everywhere that we all go, there's a difference we can make and a love we can all show. This book is the perfect way to start a conversation about how to expand our worlds with kindness and inclusivity - even if it seems scary or uncomfortable.

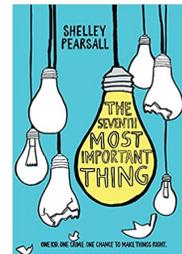


## AGES 9-12

### The Seventh Most Important Thing by Shelley Pearsall

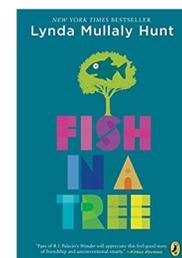
Arthur T. Owens grabbed a brick and hurled it at the trash picker. Arthur had his reasons, and the brick hit the Junk Man in the arm, not the head. But none of that matters to the judge—he is ready to send Arthur to juvie forever. Amazingly, it's the Junk Man himself who offers an alternative: 120 hours of community service . . . working for him.

Arthur is given a rickety shopping cart and a list of the Seven Most Important Things: glass bottles, foil, cardboard, pieces of wood, lightbulbs, coffee cans, and mirrors. It isn't long before Arthur realizes there's more to the Junk Man than meets the eye, and the "trash" he's collecting is being transformed into something more precious than anyone could imagine. . . . An affecting and redemptive novel about discovering what shines within us all, even when life seems full of darkness.



### Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; however, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. As her confidence grows, she discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.



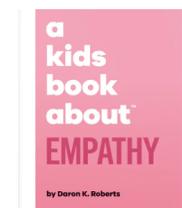
### A Kids Book About Gratitude by Ben Kenyon

This book explores what it means to be grateful. Not just for the big things, like birthday parties and iPhones, but the small things, too, like dinner, a cozy bed, and a sunny day. This book doesn't teach kids how to pretend like everything is always OK. It teaches them how to change their perspectives so they can live bold, influential, and authentic lives.



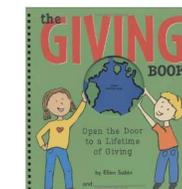
### A Kids Book About Empathy by Daron K. Roberts

This is a book about empathy. Feelings aren't always easy, especially when they are other people's. This book teaches kids (and grownups) how to feel "with" someone, and not just for them.



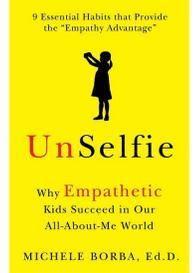
### The Giving Book by Ellen Sabin

An interactive and entertaining book, The Giving Book teaches children about giving and lets them plan their philanthropic journey.



# TEENS

**UnSelfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World** by Dr. Michele Borba  
Studies show that teens are 40% less empathetic today than they were thirty years ago – a trend that hurts both kids and society as a whole. In fact, self-focused behavior can hurt academic performance, lead to increases in bullying behavior, and reduce kids' resilience when things go wrong. This thoughtful parenting book explores nine research-based habits to build kids' empathy. From identifying and controlling their emotions to thinking about "us" not "them", these strategies can be used daily to encourage kids to see the world from the perspectives of other people around them, reducing rudeness and bullying and setting them up for a lifetime of positive relationships.



**Sitting Pretty: The View from My Ordinary Resilient Disabled Body** by Rebekah Taussig  
A memoir-in-essays from disability advocate and creator of the Instagram account @sitting\_pretty Rebekah Taussig, processing a lifetime of memories to paint a beautiful, nuanced portrait of a body that looks and moves differently than most.



**The House in the Cerulean Sea** by T.J. Klune  
When Linus Baker is tasked with investigating an unusual home for children, he thinks it'll be business as usual for his job as a case worker for government orphanages, but the Marsyas Island Orphanage is anything but usual. This book is full of kindness, magic, wonder and beautiful friendships and relationships. It's a big hug that stays with you long after you've finished reading it.

