

# Picture Books and Easy Readers for Use with Primary VOICE

Updated November 2006

The following are books that can be used to develop the concepts in the Primary VOICE curriculum—governance/rules, responsibility, conflict resolution, and participation (service and activism). Although we have organized the books according to the topics of the curriculum’s four units, many of the books could be used in other units as well. For example, many books listed under “Unit IV: Participation” can also be used to develop understanding of “Responsibility.” We recognize that the list is not comprehensive and invite you to send us suggestions for addition to the list. We do hope the list provides ideas you can use to expand and further develop students’ understanding of these critical concepts.

The books used directly in the Primary VOICE lessons are listed here because books have been added since the first versions of the curriculum were developed, and we wanted teachers using older versions of the unit to know about these books. Note that some of the books listed in the “Older But Still Useful” sections below (including some of the books used in the lessons are out of print. However, many of these are available in your school or local library or can be purchased used from Amazon or other online booksellers.

## Unit I: Governance

Unit I involves students in developing rules for the classroom and examining the consequences when rules are broken. Thus, books that deal with classroom rules are particularly well suited for use with the unit, but stories that focus on the need for rules in other settings are also appropriate, as are stories about the consequences of breaking rules.

### *New Books Related to Governance*

*Bully Blockers Club*, by Teresa Bateman , illustrated by Jackie Urbanovic (Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 2004). Grant is a bully, but he only breaks the rules when adults aren’t looking. Lotty doesn’t want to tattle, but eventually learns that talking to adults about serious problems isn’t tattling. The students in her class also learn to work together to solve their problem.

*Library Lion*, by Michelle Knudsen, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2006). When a lion comes to the library, the staff discovers there is no rule against lions in the library. Since there is a rule against roaring, however, the lion must be silent—until a special situation calls for that rule to be broken.

*No Dessert Forever*, by George Ella Lyon, illustrated by Peter Catalanatto (New York: Atheneum, 2006). When she is punished for something her brother did, the heroine of

this book fantasizes about the rules she will make and the consequences she'll establish when she is big and her parents are little. A fun way for students to practice evaluating rules and consequences.

*Once Upon a Banana*, by Jennifer Armstrong, illustrated by David Small (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006). This book has no text, but each page features a rule, beginning with "Please Put Litter in Its Place." When this rule is broken, it sets off a chain of consequences that result in other rules being broken as well. A good stimulus for discussion of consequences.

*Tara Pays Up*, by Kristen Larsen, illustrated by Paige Billin-Frye (New York: Kane Press, 2006). The concept of governance is taken into the community, as Tara learns about taxes and the services they pay for.

### ***Older but Still Useful Books Related to Governance***

*Arnie and the Stolen Markers*, written and illustrated by Nancy Carlson (New York: Viking, 1987; out of print). After spending all his money on candy, Arnie slips a set of markers under his shirt as he leaves the neighborhood store. When his mother finds out, he must deal with the consequences of breaking the law.

*Being With You This Way*, by W. Nikola-Lisa, Illustrated by Michael Bryant (New York: Lee and Low, 1995; core resource Unit 1, Lesson 1). A book that celebrates diversity among children, which can set the stage for discussing how rules will help the diverse students in the class learn together.

*Better Not Get Wet, Jesse Bear*, by Nancy White Carlstrom, illustrated by Bruce Degen (New York: Macmillan, 1988; out of print). This story deals with the idea that rules that apply in some contexts do not apply in others.

*Kids*, by Catherine and Laurence Anholt (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1992; out of print). Like *Being With You This Way*, *Kids* deals with the uniqueness of individuals and can be used to talk about the impact of diversity on how groups get along.

*Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*, by Kevin Henkes (New York: Greenwillow Books, 1996; core resource Unit I, Lesson 4). This book introduces the idea of consequences: Lilly is so enamored of her purse that she cannot stop playing with it, even when her teacher reminds her she is breaking a rule.

*Little Red Riding Hood: A Newfangled Prairie Tale*, by Lisa Campbell Ernst (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995). Grandma has moved out of the forest and taken up farming in this "fractured" version of the classic fairy tale. While the wolf's designs are still criminal in this version, they are not violent (he wants to steal Grandma's muffin recipe), so the consequences when Red breaks her mother's rules are less serious but still obvious.

*Miss Nelson Is Missing*, by Harry Allard and James Marshall (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977; core resource Unit I, Lesson 2). A misbehaving class is subjected to the most feared substitute teacher in the school; she is so strict students are ready to behave when the sweet Miss Nelson returns.

*Never Spit on Your Shoes*, by Denys Cazet (New York: Orchard Books, 1993; out of print). A first-grader reports to his mother on the first day of school.

*Roses Are Pink, Your Feet Really Stink*, written and illustrated by Diane de Groat (New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1996). This amusing story deals with a special rule for Valentine's Day and what happens when one student breaks the rule.

*Vampires Don't Wear Polka Dots*, by Debbie Dadey and Marcia Thornton Jones, illustrated by John Steven Gurney (New York: Scholastic, 1990). This book pays homage to *Miss Nelson Is Missing*. The third-graders in the story have driven their teacher from the classroom and are awaiting the new teacher, who they fear may be Viola Swamp. Instead, she is a mysterious red-head with few rules but her own ways of bringing order to the classroom.

*What If Everybody Did That?*, by Ellen Javernick, illustrated by Richard Hackney (Chicago: Childrens Press, 1990; out of print). This book illustrates the chaos that would occur if everyone broke the rules.

## **Unit II: Responsibility**

In this unit, students learn about the concept of responsibility and how it applies in their own lives. Literary works appropriate for use with this unit focus on different settings and ways in which young people take responsibility.

### ***New Books Related to Responsibility***

*Betty Rose Blue*, by Nancy Crocker (New York: Dial, 2006). Betty Rose's classmates make fun of her because her feet are unusually large. When those classmates are stuck in the snow, Betty Rose must decide whether to act responsibly.

*Candy Shop*, by Jan Wahl, illustrated by Nicole Wong (Watertown, MA; Charlesbridge, 2004). When the narrator of the story goes to the candy store with his Aunt Thelma, they discover a crowd gawking at nasty words written on the sidewalk while the owner cries inside. As the adults stand by, the young man takes responsibility and washes the sidewalk.

*Home*, by Jeanie Baker (New York: Greenwillow Books, 2004). This book has no words, conveying the story of the greening of a neighborhood through the artwork alone. Students could discuss who they think took responsibility for reclaiming the community.

*The Mixed-Up Rooster*, by Paula Duncan Edwards, illustrated by Megan Lloyd (New York: Katherine Tegen Books, 2006). Because he is not a morning bird, Ned the rooster is fired from his job in the hen house. When he saves the hens' eggs from a hungry snake, however, he realizes he can handle the responsibility of Director of Night Security.

*Reggie*, by Eve Bunting, illustrated by D. Brent Burkett (Chicago: Cricket Books, 2006). Alex finds a toy mouse and names it Reggie. Even when "Lost" posters asking for the mouse's return are posted, Alex keeps the toy. Only when he loses something of his own does he realize that his actions were not responsible.

*The Show-and-Tell Lion*, by Barbara Abercrombie, illustrated by Lynne Avril Cavrath (New York: Margaret McElderry Books, 2006). To impress his classmates, Matthew tells them he has a lion. Ultimately, he must take responsibility and admit that he told a lie—but he finds a creative way to do it.

### ***Older but Still Useful Books Related to Responsibility***

*Bently and Egg*, by William Joyce (New York: HarperTrophy, 1997; recommended resource Unit II, Lesson 1). Left in charge of his friend's egg, Bently the frog must go to great lengths to protect the egg from a boy who thinks it was left by the Easter Bunny.

*Berenstain Bears Trouble with Pets*, by Stan and Jan Berenstain (New York: Random House, 1990; out of print, recommended resource for Unit II, Lesson 3). When they adopt a dog, Brother and Sister Bear learn about the responsibilities that go along with having a pet.

*Bluebird Summer*, by Deborah Hopkinson (Greenwillow Books, 2001; out of print). Two children take responsibility for restoring some of the things their late grandmother cared about.

*A Day's Work*, by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Ronald Himler (New York: Clarion, 1999). When Francisco and his grandfather accidentally pull out the plants instead of the weeds, his grandfather insists they take responsibility for their mistake.

*Grandpa's Corner Store*, by DyAnne DeSalvo-Ryan (New York: HarperCollins, 2001). When a chain grocery store comes to town, a young girl takes responsibility for helping save her grandfather's corner grocery.

*Great Show and Tell Disaster*, by Mike Reiss, illustrated by Mike Cressy (New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2001). When Ned brings his invention to school, there are disastrous consequences. The anagram machine turns Nat into an ant and Kristen into a stinker. Ultimately, Ned must find a way to act responsibly and return things to their original state.

*Henry and Mudge*, by Cynthia Rylant, illustrated by Sucie Stevenson (New York: Alladin, 1996; recommended resource Unit II, Lesson 3). Henry doesn't have any brothers or sisters, so instead he gets a puppy, the irrepressible Mudge.

*Hope*, by Randy Houk (Wheeling, IL: Benefactory, 1997; recommended resource Unit II, Lesson 3). The story of a piglet rescued from a dumpster at a factory farm.

*Hurry!*, by Jessie Haas, illustrated by Jos. A. Smith (New York: Greenwillow, 2000; out of print). Farm children often have responsibilities unknown to city-dwellers. In this book, Nora must help her family get the hay in before the rain comes.

*I'll Always Love You*, by Hans Wilhelm (New York: Crown, 1989; core resource Unit II, Lesson 3). A story of the love between a boy and his dog as the boy grows up and the dog grows old.

*Just a Dream*, by Chris Van Allsburg (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990). Young Walter is careless, littering and refusing to sort the trash for recycling. When he dreams about a future created by actions like his own, he decides to act responsibly.

*Little Bear*, by Elsa Holmelund Minarik, illustrated by Maurice Sendak (New York: HarperTrophy, 1978). Several stories in this first Little Bear collection deal with issues of responsibility.

*Now One Foot, Now the Other*, by Tomie de Paola (New York: Putnam's, 1981). When Bobby's beloved grandfather has a stroke that leaves him incapacitated, Bobby is scared at first but eventually takes responsibility for helping his grandfather regain his ability to walk and talk.

*The Paperboy*, by Dav Pilkey (New York: Orchard Books, 1996). A job is a responsibility that most children do not yet have, but the paperboy in this story gets up early—even on cold Saturday mornings—to fulfill the responsibilities of his job.

*Pedrito's Day*, by Luis Garay (New York: Orchard Books, 1997; out-of-print, recommended resource Unit II, Lesson 4). Pedrito makes a mistake and loses the money his aunt gave him to buy bread. When he takes responsibility for the mistake, his mother decides he is responsible enough for a bicycle.

*Peter's Place*, by Sally Grindley, illustrated by Michael Foreman (New York: Gulliver, 1995; out of print). Wildlife is threatened when an oil tanker breaks apart near Peter's favorite place on the beach, and Peter and others must work nonstop for days to save the wildlife.

*Sato and the Elephants*, by Juanita Havill and Jean and Mou-sien Tseng (New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1993; out of print). A carver of ivory one day discovers a bullet embedded in the piece he is carving; realizing an elephant died to supply his materials, he decides to become a carver of stone instead.

*Too Many Tamales*, by Gary Soto (Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman, 1996). Maria fears that she has lost her mother's diamond ring in the tamales, so she and her cousins eat all the tamales in an effort to find the ring.

*Washing the Willow Tree Loon*, by Jacqueline Briggs Martin, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995; out of print). Ordinary citizens work together to rescue birds caught in an oil spill.

*Will You Mind the Baby, Davy?*, by Brigitte Weninger, illustrated by Eve Tharlet, translated by Rosemary Lanning (New York: North-South Books, 1997; out of print). Davy is not looking forward to having a baby sister, but learns that he can help care for her. He not only takes on this responsibility, but enjoys it.

*Zinnia and Dot*, by Lisa Ernst Campbell (New York: Viking, 1992; recommended resource Unit II, Lesson 1). Two hens are so involved in squabbling that a weasel takes all but one of their eggs. Their feuding stops only when they must work together to protect that egg.

### **Unit III: Conflict Resolution**

Conflict is a staple in literature for readers of all ages and abilities. Examining the ways in which characters in a book deal with conflict can help students further their understanding of ways in which conflicts can be resolved. Attempting to solve the problems of characters in a book can provide a safe venue for practicing conflict resolution skills.

#### ***New Books Related to Conflict Resolution***

*Alley Oops*, by Janice Levy (Chicago: Flashlight Press, 2005). When he learns of the negative consequences of bullying and being bullied, J.J. decides to make friends with the boy he has previously victimized.

*Clara and the Bossy*, by Ruth Ohi (Toronto, ON: Annick Press, 2006). When Clara becomes friends with the bossy Madison, she gives up many of her favorite things to be more like her friend. When she returns to being her true self, she recognizes that she is a better friend when she is herself. A theme similar to that of *Lionel and Amelia*, described below.

*Henry and the Kite Dragon*, by Bruce Edward Hall, illustrated by William Low (New York: Philomel Books, 2004). Set in 1920s Chinatown in New York, this book tells the story of two groups of boys—one Chinese and one Italian—in conflict until they discover the root of the problem and develop a solution that works for all.

*Hot Day on Abbott Avenue*, by Karen English, illustrated by Javaka Steptoe (New York: Clarion, 2004). Best friends Kishi and Renee are on the outs, having a “never-going-to-be-best-friends-again” day, but ice cream and a game of double-dutch bring them back together.

*It's My School*, by Sally Grindley, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain (New York: Walker Books, 2006). Big brother Tom is not happy that kindergartener Alice is joining him at school but keeps his eye on his sister and mediates a conflict when another child takes her beloved teddy bear.

### ***Older but Still Useful Books Related to Conflict Resolution***

*The Eagle and the Wren: A Fable*, retold by Jane Goodall, illustrated by Alexander Reichstein (New York: North-South Books, 2000). The birds have a contest to see who can fly highest, and the eagle seems to have won—but a surprise rests among his feathers. The fable’s moral is that cooperation makes it possible for us to do more than we can alone.

*Horace, Morris but Mostly Delores*, by James Howe, illustrated by Amy Walrod (New York: Atheneum, 1999). Three friends experience conflict when the boys join a boys-only club. Delores tries a club for girls, but it’s not to her liking. When she creates a new club, the conflict is resolved.

*Hunter’s Best Friend at School*, by Laura Malone Elliott, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger (New York: Harper Collins, 2002). Hunter and Stripe are best friends. One day, Stripe is “in a mischief-making mood” and ruins the day for Hunter. The next day, Hunter decides not to follow Stripe’s lead and instead distracts his friend into better behavior.

*Jamaica and Brianna*, by Juanita Havill, illustrated by Ann S. O’Brien (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993; core resource Unit III, Lesson 1). Best friends Jamaica and Brianna nevertheless experience jealousy and conflict when it comes to their boots! When they are honest with each other, they are able to leave the conflict behind them.

*Lionel and Amelia*, by Leone Peguero, illustrated by Adrian and Gerard Peguero (New York: Mondo Publishers, 1996; core resource Unit III, Lesson 2). One friend is messy, the other neat. While they find that adopting each other’s approach doesn’t work, they learn to live with their differences.

*Mary Marony and the Snake*, by Suzy Kline, illustrated by Blanche Sims (New York: Putnam’s, 1992; out of print). Mary Marony stutters, and her classmates—especially the obnoxious Marvin—tease her about it, causing her anxiety. When a snake is lost in the classroom, Marvin is surprised and impressed by Mary’s courage.

*Matthew and Tilly*, by Rebecca C. Jones, illustrated by Beth Peck (New York: Dutton, 1991). Matthew and Tilly are best friends. While they sometimes fight, the strength of their friendship allows them to get beyond the conflict.

*Old Henry*, by Joan W. Blos, illustrated by Stephen Gammell (New York: William Morrow, 1987). Old Henry is not like his neighbors, who often criticize the way he lives. Only when he moves away do they realize that his individuality made their neighborhood special.

*Rachel Parker, Kindergarten Show-off*, by Ann Martin, illustrated by Nancy Poydar (New York: Holiday, 1992; out of print). Two friends compete over everything. When the competition leads to conflict, their teacher devises a situation in which they must cooperate to succeed.

*The Recess Queen*, by Alexis O’Neill, illustrated by Laura Huliska-Beith (New York: Scholastic, 2002). The schoolyard bully rules at recess until a new girl refuses to be intimidated and makes friends with the bully, changing the playground dynamics.

*Rosie’s Story*, by Martine Gogoll, illustrated by Noela Young (New York: Mondo Publishers, 1995; core resource Unit III, Lesson 3). Rosie feels she is not accepted by her classmates because of her red hair. When an assignment allows her to express her feelings, her classmates share their own experiences of feeling like outsiders.

*Six Crows*, by Leo Lionni (New York: Knopf, 1988; out of print). An owl mediates the growing conflict between a farmer and the six crows that are eating his crops.

*Snail Started It*, by Katya Reider, translated by Rosemary Lanning (New York: North-South Books, 1997). This charming story about animals who insult each other when their feelings are hurt illustrates how mean words can start a cycle of conflict, while kind words can restore good feelings.

*The Three Wishes*, retold by Celenia Chevere, illustrated by David Melendex (Greenvale, NY: Mondo Publishers, 1988; out of print, core resource for Unit III, Lesson 4). Many other versions of the classic tale are also available.

*The War*, by Anais Vaugelade (Minneapolis: Carolrhoda, 2001). A powerful allegory about perceived difference and conflict.

## **Unit IV: Participation**

This unit deals with two forms of participation—service and activism. Consequently, the stories recommended here provide examples of people who have provided a service to improve their community and world or have taken a stand on an issue that is important to them.

### ***New Books Related to Participation***

*Book Fair Day*, by Lynn Plourde, illustrated by Thor Wickstrom (New York: Dutton, 2006). While the main story line of this book has to do with Dewey's frustration about being the last class to visit the Book Fair, it also nicely illustrates service, as Dewey's class reads to kindergarteners and Dewey himself serves as a "consultant" to help his classmates pick books.

*The Bus Ride that Changed History: The Story of Rosa Parks*, by Pamela Duncan Edwards, illustrated by Danny Shanahan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005). This nonfiction book is packed with information and challenging vocabulary, but the use of repeating lines on every page will help younger students follow the story of Rosa Parks.

*Dear Mr. Rosenwald*, by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie (New York: Scholastic, 2006). This book is based on actual events in the 1920s, when a philanthropist offered money to African American communities to build schools—but only after they raised money themselves. For an impoverished community, this was a difficult task and the story of how they achieved it is moving.

*Delivering Justice: W.W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights*, by Jim Haskins, illustrated by Benny Andrews (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005). Westley Law grew up in Savannah, Georgia, and worked throughout his life to bring civil rights to African Americans living in the city. Through Law's story, the book highlights a variety of methods of drawing attention to the need for change.

*The Kindness Quilt*, by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2006). When the students in Mrs. Cooper's class are challenged to do acts of kindness and depict them in drawings, their work is so impressive, they create a "kindness quilt" that continues to grow.

*Knitting Nell*, by Julie Jersild Roth (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006). Because people have made fun of her voice, Nell does not speak much—but she listens and knits for her friends and for charities. By the end of the book, Nell has been honored for her knitting and her service and is using her voice to teach others her hobby.

*Show Way*, by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Hudson Talbot (New York: Putnams, 2006). This beautiful book traces several generations of women in the author's family, from enslaved women who made quilts to direct people to freedom to the author's mother and her twin sister who demonstrated for civil rights as young girls, finding strength in the quilt patches they carried with them.

*Vote!* By Eileen Christelow (New York: Clarion Books, 2003). An informative and entertaining introduction to important forms of participation—voting, running for office, and campaigning.

### ***Older but Still Useful Books Related to Participation***

*Ballot Box Battle*, by Emily Arnold McCully (New York: Knopf, 1996). This book tells parallel stories of a young girl's struggle for acceptance and her neighbor's efforts to vote (her neighbor just happens to be Elizabeth Cady Stanton).

*The Butterfly*, by Patricia Polacco (New York: Philomel Books, 2000). Monique is a young French girl whose mother hides a Jewish family in the basement. When a neighbor sees the family's daughter, they must flee.

*City Green*, by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan (New York: Morrow, 1994; core resource Unit IV, Lesson 2). An urban community turns an empty lot into a neighborhood garden.

*The Day Gogo Went to Vote*, by Elinor Batezat Sisulu, illustrated by Sharon Wilson (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996). An elderly South African woman goes to extraordinary lengths—with the help of her family and election officials—to vote in the first election open to black South Africans.

*Freedom Summer*, by Deborah Wiles, illustrated by Jerome Lagarrigue (New York: Atheneum, 2001). Two friends—one black and one white—play together in the summer. When the law requires the public pool to be open to all races, the town fills in the pool rather than let African Americans swim there. Hurt and angry, the youngsters decide to act—by desegregating the store where the white youth usually buys popsicles for both.

*Goldilocks Returns*, by Lisa Campbell Ernst (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000; core resource Unit IV, Lesson 1). Middle-aged Goldilocks returns to the forest to set right the damage she did to the bears' cottage—but her solutions are just as unwanted as the results of her original visit.

*Gowanus Dogs*, by Jonathan Frost (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1999; out of print). Workers and a homeless man decide to help a family of stray dogs living along the Gowanus Canal in New York.

*Granddaddy's Gift*, by Margaree King Mitchell, illustrated by Larry Johnson (New York: BridgeWater Books, 1997; out of print). Little Joe loves her granddaddy so much she would rather stay home with him than go to school, but Granddaddy tells her she must go to school so she will have choices when she grows up. Granddaddy shows his own courage and determination by studying for the Constitution test so he can become their town's first black registered voter.

*Gus and Grandpa and the Christmas Cookies*, by Claudia Mills (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997). Baking with his grandfather, Gus learns about two ways of helping others.

*Jamaica Louise James*, by Amy Hest, illustrated by Sheila White Samton (Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1996). To cheer up her grandmother, Jamaica paints posters to hang in the subway station. The result is a place where everyone is friendlier and happier.

*Mrs. Katz and Tush*, by Patricia Polacco (New York: Bantam Books, 1992). Larnel, a young African American boy, befriends elderly Mrs. Katz, learns about the struggles of her people (Polish Jews), and gains a lifelong friend.

*Pearl Moscowitz's Last Stand*, by Arthur A. Levine, illustrated by Robert Roth (New York: Tambourine Books, 1993; out of print, core resource Unit IV, Lesson 3). Pearl has lived on Gingko Street all her life. While she has enjoyed watching the neighborhood change, she becomes an activist when a man from the power company comes to cut down the last gingko tree.

*The Quiltmaker's Gift*, by Jeff Brumbeau, illustrated by Gail de Mercken (Duluth, MN: Pfeifer-Hamilton, 2000). A famous quiltmaker who gives her quilts only to the poor and homeless refuses a quilt to the rich, greedy, and unhappy king. She tells him he must give away everything; then she will give him a quilt. The king finds that giving away his possessions makes him happy and decides to help the quiltmaker by delivering her quilts to those in need.

*Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen*, by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan (New York: Morrow, 1991). A young boy who is afraid of homeless people gains a new perspective when he helps his uncle work at the soup kitchen.

*Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge*, by Mem Fox, illustrated by Julie Vivas (Brooklyn, NY: Kane/Miller, 1985). The four-named title character lives next door to a senior citizens' home. When he learns that his favorite senior has lost her memory, he decides to find memories for her.