Reading with Pride is presented by The New York Public Library’s Center for Educators and Schools (CES). The team at CES is devoted to making all of the Library’s resources accessible and useful for educators. Find information about additional book lists, credit-bearing workshops, special access to exhibitions, tips on teaching with primary source materials from our research collections, and much more at: nypl.org/ces

The work of the Center for Educators and Schools is part of the Library’s overall commitment to our branch patrons and education programs, led by the Merryl H. and James S. Tisch Director of The New York Public Library. Major support for educational programming is provided by Merryl H. and James S. Tisch.

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Welcome!

The New York Public Library’s Center for Educators and Schools is excited to share Reading with Pride, a new set of resources for educators designed to support the reading and teaching of LGBTQ+ children’s literature.

Reading with Pride: Contemporary Queer Picture Books is a book list that celebrates the humanity, personality, and diversity of LGBTQ+ experiences, histories, and stories. In this guide, find developmentally appropriate book recommendations for early readers that promote discussion and understanding about gender, sexuality, and identity.

Plus, explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books for a collection of essays written by scholars, historians, and librarians that provide context on moments that shaped queer picture books as we know them today.

Discover the full range of instructional resources and more from the Library’s Center for Educators and Schools: nypl.org/readingwithpride

How to Use This Guide

The Educator Guide is a teaching tool that offers ready-to-use questions and activities to teach with titles from Reading with Pride: Contemporary Queer Picture Books. All pages include:

- **A plot synopsis** (around 300 words or less) for you to quickly reference when thinking about integrating these titles into your lessons.

- **At-a-glance teaching information** for educators, including available formats, grade levels, themes, and additional titles at comparable reading levels.

- **Discussion questions** that are designed to help students think critically about the topic and themes explored in each title.

- **Classroom activities** that explore the books from a new angle and direct students to our collection of digital resources, which are bolded throughout the guide.

- **A companion essay for educators from Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books** for further reading on the historical and social themes addressed in each book.

We welcome you to customize this content in a way that honors the specificities of your classroom and learning goals. Find additional teaching tools online: nypl.org/readingwithpride

The New York Public Library
Using the Library’s Resources

The following guide draws from resources and items offered by the Library, including physical items from our circulating collections and digital resources. Discover a small selection of everything you and your students can do through The New York Public Library below.

- **Get a Free Library Card**
  All New York State students and educators are eligible to receive a New York Public Library card free of charge. Sign up today to gain access to an array of digital resources and physical items, including books featured in this guide. Apply for a card in person at any NYPL location or online: nypl.org/librarycard

- **Apply for an Educator Card**
  Educator Cards offer a variety of unique privileges to teachers, including receiving expanded access to Library resources and services, borrowing up to 100 items, checking out materials for a loan period of 60 days, and more. Learn about the eligibility requirements and apply online: nypl.org/educatorcards

- **Explore Digital Tools & Online Databases**
  The Library offers free access to a collection of hundreds of online resources and databases. Use our online content to help with your research, whether it’s finding a single article, tracing a family tree, learning a new language, or anything in between. Explore all digital tools offered by the Library, including those referenced in this guide: nypl.org/databases

- **Schedule a Workshop with a Librarian**
  Invite a librarian to your classroom or arrange a visit to a neighborhood NYPL branch for a classic storytime or a discussion on one of the top titles explored in this guide. To customize your visit even more, meet one-on-one with your local school outreach librarian to discuss what might be the right fit for your classroom. To schedule a visit, contact us at: schoolvisits@nypl.org

Discover even more teaching tools, events, and opportunities offered by the Library’s Center for Educators and Schools:

nypl.org/ces
**Selected Titles**

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**Bathe the Cat**

*Alice B. McGinty*  
*Illustrated by David Roberts*

Everybody in the family has their own chore: mop the floor, wash the dishes, bathe the cat, and so much more! Can they tidy up the house before Grandma comes to visit? There's much to do and so little time! They'd better vacuum the lawn and sweep the dishes . . . or was it to mow the lawn and wash the dishes?

**Discussion Questions**

1. In the story, Daddy assigns a chore to everyone in the family. What chores do you do around the house?
2. What causes all of the confusion during cleanup?
3. Do you have any pets? Do they ever cause trouble at home?

**Classroom Activities**

- **Create a Rhyme** | Encourage your class to observe how every other line in *Bathe the Cat* rhymes. Invite students to write a short poem using an ABAB or AABB rhyme scheme.
- **Clean Up!** | Assign each student a role or responsibility in helping clean the classroom—or invite them to draw something they can do to help clean up. Check out the “Clean Up, Clean Up” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use worksheet to use in your classroom.
- **Make a Family Portrait** | Invite students to draw a family portrait of each of their household members. Check out the “Drawing Your Family: Preschool Basic Skills (Drawing)” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use worksheet. Encourage students to take their drawings home to display on their fridge, like Bobby and Sarah did.

**Companion Essay for Educators**

**Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books** | Read Jennifer Miller’s “Queer Kinship: Exploring the Family Unit Through LGBTQ+ Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

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**AVAILABILITY**

Print, e-Book

**GRADE LEVEL**

Pre-K–3

**THEMES**

Animals, Chores, Family

**FURTHER READING**

- *Bedtime, Not Playtime* by Lawrence Schimel, illustrated by Elina Brasliņa
- *Harriet Gets Carried Away* by Jessie Sima
- *Some Daddies* by Carol Gordon Ekster, illustrated by Javiera Maclean Álvarez
Door by Door: How Sarah McBride Became America’s First Openly Transgender Senator

Meeg Pincus
Illustrated by Meridith McKeen Gimbel

As a kid, Sarah McBride knew she wanted to work in politics one day. There was just one problem: her friends and family saw Sarah as a boy, and Sarah knew she was a girl. In college, she came out as transgender—and in 2020, she became the first openly transgender senator in the United States.

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Sarah dream of working in politics?
2. How do you think Sarah felt deep down when she had to hide who she truly was? How do you imagine Sarah felt when she told people who she was?
3. Why do you think it’s important to tell people who you truly are?

Classroom Activities

What Does a Senator Do? | Invite students to learn more about senators and state representatives. Encourage them to use their library cards to explore TrueFlix, an online resource that helps students learn through videos and digital books.

Door by Door | Decorate paper doors to represent all the doors Sarah McBride knocked on to win the election and become a senator. Check out the “Behind the Door: Response Manipulative” template on Scholastic Teachables for a printable worksheet that can be adapted to suit the needs of your class.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Hal Schrieve’s “Gender Identity: Tracing the Literary Arc of Trans Representation in Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

AVAILABILITY
Print, e-Book

GRADE LEVEL
K–1

THEMES
Civic Engagement, Gender Expression, Identity, Nonfiction

FURTHER READING
If You’re a Kid Like Gavin: The True Story of a Young Trans Activist by Gavin Grimm and Kyle Lukoff, illustrated by J Yang

A Song for the Unsung: Bayard Rustin, the Man Behind the 1963 March on Washington by Carole Boston Weatherford and Rob Sanders, illustrated by Byron McCray

Stitch by Stitch: Cleve Jones and the AIDS Memorial Quilt by Rob Sanders, illustrated by Jamey Christoph

Strong by Rob Kearney and Eric Rosswood, illustrated by Nidhi Chanani
Flower Girl
Amy Bloom
Illustrated by Jameela Wahlgren

Nicki is not a dress kind of girl. When her favorite aunt asks her to be the flower girl at her wedding, Nicki is over the moon . . . until she sees the pink dress that’s been picked out for her. Can Nicki find her voice and an outfit that feels more like her before her aunt’s big day?

Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the different emotions Nicki felt throughout the story?
2. What excites Nicki the most about being a flower girl? What is Nicki least excited about?
3. How does Nicki’s family help her overcome her nervousness?
4. What is your favorite outfit to wear? How do you feel when you wear this outfit?

Classroom Activities

What Would You Wear? | Ask students to imagine they’re attending Aunt Carmela and Uncle Big Dave’s wedding. Invite the class to draw or paint what they would wear to the celebration. Check out the “Draw an Outfit on the Child” template on Scholastic Teachables for a printable worksheet for your students.

Explore Fashion History | Invite students to learn more about women who advocated for women’s freedom to wear trousers in the 19th and 20th centuries, including Luisa Capetillo, Amelia Jenks Bloomer, and Susan Brownell Anthony. Encourage students to use their library cards to access our online resources, such as Biography in Context, to do their own research.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Selena E. Van Horn’s “The Gay Wedding: Uncovering Children’s Perspectives in Picture Books Across Time” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride
Grandad and Gramps used to adventure around in their old camper, and their granddaughter just loves hearing stories of their trips. Now with Gramps gone, Grandad doesn’t feel much up for adventure anymore, which their granddaughter wants to change by fixing up the old camper.

Discussion Questions

- What made Grandad and Gramps’ adventures so special?
- Why does the granddaughter love visiting Grandad every summer?
- What effect does restoring the camper have on Grandad?
- Do you have someone special who shares stories with you? Who are they? Why are their stories special to you?

Classroom Activities

**Show and Tell** | Invite students to draw an object that represents a bond with someone special in their lives. Encourage them to share why this item is special with the class.

**Explore Emotions** | Engage the class in a conversation about grief and loss. Check out the “Feeling Sad” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use worksheet that invites students to make poems about their grief.

**Remember the Past** | Discuss with students how memories help us feel more connected to each other. Ask students to write a poem about a special day or time in their lives. Who was there? What happened? Why was it special? Check out the “I Remember: Teaching Memory Poems” worksheet on Scholastic Teachables for ready-to-use printouts to share with your class.

Companion Essay for Educators

**Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books**

| Read Jennifer Miller’s “Queer Kinship: Exploring the Family Unit Through LGBTQ+ Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

**AVAILABILITY**

Print

**GRADE LEVEL**

K–3

**THEMES**

Adventure, Family, Grief

**FURTHER READING**

*Love Around the World* by Fleur Pierets, illustrated by Fatinha Ramos

*Love Makes a Family* by Sophie Beer

*A Plan for Pops* by Heather Smith, Illustrated by Brooke Kerrigan

*Stella Brings the Family* by Miriam B. Schiffer, illustrated by Holly Clifton-Brown
Julián Is a Mermaid

Jessica Love

While riding the subway with his abuela, Julián sees three women with colorful hair and long flowing dresses. Julián wants to be a mermaid just like them! All he can think about is dressing up in his own costume once he’s home. But what will his abuela think about the mess he makes—and how he’s dressed?

Discussion Questions

1. According to Julián, what makes someone a mermaid? Is it long hair, a tail, or something else?
2. What time of year does this story take place? How do you know?
3. There are more pictures in this book than words, and a picture is worth a thousand words. What can you learn about Julián from these illustrations?

Classroom Activities

Dress Up! | Encourage students to make a costume out of things they find around their classroom or home. Invite students to showcase their creations by walking around in a classroom parade.

This Is Me! | Ask students to write about what it means to be themselves and express themselves. Check out the “This Is Me” worksheet on Scholastic Teachables for step-by-step instructions to guide students to make a collage about themselves.

Design a Mermaid Tail | Julián is dazzled by the “mermaids” on the train. Invite students to design their own mermaid tail. Check out the “Mermaid Pattern” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use worksheet to distribute to your students.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Kareem Khubchandani’s “Dress & Play: Fashion, Style & Embodiment in Children’s Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride
Kapaemahu
Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hamer, and Joe Wilson
Illustrated by Daniel Sousa

Long ago, four spirits traveled from Tahiti to Hawaii, bringing with them healing powers that they shared with the native peoples. The spirits, neither male nor female, were mahu—a mixture of both. This beautifully illustrated book tells the legend of the mahu in both English and Olelo Niihau.

Discussion Questions
1. How did the story make you feel? Were there parts that made you happy, sad, or excited?
2. Why do you think the healers left their healing powers in the stones?
3. Why is it important to share stories from long ago, like the legend of Kapaemahu?

Classroom Activities
Share Your Story | Legends often begin as stories that are shared orally. Have students ask their parents or guardians about events early in the students' lives and record it on a piece of paper. Check out the “Time Lines Tell Stories (Children Reconstruct Their Past)” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use printout to share with your class. Then, invite students share their stories aloud with the rest of the class.

Learn About Hawaii | Invite students to learn more about Hawaiian history. Encourage them to use their library cards to explore BrainPOP (or BrainPOP Jr.), which features resources that help students discover the history of Hawaii through videos, puzzles, and games.

Companion Essay for Educators
Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Hal Schrieve's “Gender Identity: Tracing the Literary Arc of Trans Representation in Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride
Mama and Mommy and Me in the Middle

Nina LaCour
Illustrated by Kaylani Juanita

Mommy has to go away on a work trip for the week, while Mama stays home with their little girl. Even as the days go by and all three of them talk on the phone, the little girl still misses Mommy. Will the two of them be able to distract themselves from how much they miss Mommy while she’s gone?

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever missed anyone so much it hurt? What do you remember?
- Why does our narrator feel sad when Mommy comes home?
- What sorts of things do you do to feel better when you miss someone?

Classroom Activities

Keep a Diary | Ask students to create diary entries for a week, cataloging what they did and how they felt each day—either through writing, drawing, photographing, or collaging. Combine both visual and written components by inviting students to use their library cards to explore Pixton, a digital comic creation website for kids and teens.

Name that Emotion | Play an emotion-sorting game with your students. Create large depictions of common emotions—such as joy, fear, worry, and anger—to display at the front of the classroom. Give students photographs of people experiencing different emotions and invite them to sort the photos into the emotion categories. Have them explain their choices.

Make a Book About Feelings | Check out the “My Book About Feelings” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use printout that helps students associate their memories with emotions to make a mini book about their feelings.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Jennifer Miller’s “Queer Kinship: Exploring the Family Unit Through LGBTQ+ Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

The New York Public Library
Molly’s Tuxedo

Vicki Johnson
Illustrated by Gillian Reid

Molly would be excited for picture day if her mom hadn’t picked out a nice dress that Molly isn’t really a fan of. Luckily, she has the perfect thing to save the day—her brother’s old tuxedo! Can Molly find the courage to follow her heart and get her mom to realize just how awesome she’d look in this outfit?

Discussion Questions

- What is Molly most excited about on picture day?
- How does Molly feel when her mom insists that she wear the dress?
- How do Molly’s friends help her feel confident in her tuxedo?

Classroom Activities

What Would You Wear? | Invite students to think about their favorite outfit. Ask them why they like each article of clothing.

Dress Yourself | Ask students to draw a picture of themselves in an outfit that they feel like represents themselves. Check out the “Draw an Outfit on the Child” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use printout to distribute to students.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Kareem Khubchandani’s “Dress & Play: Fashion, Style & Embodiment in Children’s Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

Availability
Print

Grade Level
Pre-K–3

Themes
Gender Expression, Identity, Self-Confidence

Further Reading
Fred Gets Dressed by Peter Brown
Jovita Wore Pants: The Story of a Mexican Freedom Fighter by Aita Salazar, illustrated by Molly Mendoza
Not All Princesses Dress in Pink by Jane Yolen and Heidi Elisabet Yolen Stemple, illustrated by Anne-Sophie Lanquetin
My Paati’s Saris

Jyoti Rajan Gopal
Illustrated by Art Twink

Paati is preparing for a celebration tonight—while her grandson finds comfort in her sari, wrapping himself in its colors and clutching its folds for comfort. Discover how clothing can convey tradition and individuality and connect us to our families and ourselves in this picture book.

Discussion Questions

1. “Paati” is the Tamil word for grandmother. Do you have a special name for any members in your family?
2. How does the little boy feel when he wraps himself in Paati’s saris?
3. What activities do the boy and Paati engage in while preparing for an evening celebration?
4. Are there activities you do when you’re spending time with your grandmother?

Classroom Activities

Explore More About Tamil | Encourage students to use their library cards to access our online resources, such as Scholastic Go, to do their own research on the countries where Tamil is spoken.

Learn About Saris | A sari is a garment made from a long piece of fabric that is wrapped around the body. Encourage students to use their library cards to access our online resources, such as Kids InfoBits, to read articles about how this garment is worn.

Plus! Students can use their library cards to borrow passes for two or four people at cultural institutions throughout the city, including the Asia Society Museum, to learn more about South Asian culture using Culture Pass.

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Kareem Khubchandani’s “Dress & Play: Fashion, Style & Embodiment in Children’s Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride
**Our Subway Baby**

*Peter Mercurio*  
*Illustrated by Leo Espinosa*

Coming home from work one day, Danny discovers a newborn baby left in the subway station and has no idea how this baby will change his and his partner's lives forever. Although neither of them had prepared for parenthood, they are reminded that anything is possible with love.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Who is this story being told to?
2. What sorts of things do Danny and Pete need before they can bring baby Kevin home?
3. How has your family changed over time?
4. If you were writing a book about your family, what would you title the book?

**Classroom Activities**

**Explore More About New York |** This story is based on real events that happened in New York City. Encourage students to use their library cards to access our online resources, such as *Flipster* for news and magazine articles, to discover what’s happening in their city.

**Draw Your Family Members |** Every family is different! Have students make and illustrate their own family. Check out the “My Family Members: Draw and Write Chart” template on *Scholastic Teachables* for a ready-to-use printout for students to draw and write about their family members.

**Companion Essay for Educators**

**Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books |** Read Jennifer Miller’s “Queer Kinship: Exploring the Family Unit Through LGBTQ+ Picture Books” for additional context: [nyp.org/readingwithpride](http://nyp.org/readingwithpride)
Pink Is for Boys

Robb Pearlman
Illustrated by Eda Kaban

Pink is for boys . . . and girls . . . and everyone! Explore and encourage children to challenge gender stereotypes around the colors blue and pink. This book encourages everyone to authentically express themselves, empowering children to pursue their interests and their favorite colors.

Discussion Questions

1. What is your favorite color? Why is it your favorite?
2. Have you ever been told that certain colors or toys are for one gender? How did that make you feel?
3. What are some other colors not included in the book? What things remind you of that color?

Classroom Activities

Create a Collage | Discover the magic of colors by creating a collage. Sort clippings from magazines, colored paper, and other classroom materials into color groups and then paste them onto a sheet of paper. Use crayons and markers to label the finished collage.

Mix and Make New Colors | Check out the “Color Cookbook (Primary and Secondary Colors)” template on Scholastic Teachables for a ready-to-use worksheet that encourages students to learn about mixing colors to make other colors.

Create a Color Library | Visit your school library or neighborhood NYPL branch. Refer to page 5 to learn how to schedule a visit to a branch library. With the help of a children’s librarian, find picture books about colors with the class. Ask students: What do these books have in common? How are they different?

Companion Essay for Educators

Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Kareem Khubchandani’s “Dress & Play: Fashion, Style & Embodiment in Children’s Picture Books” for additional context: nypl.org/readingwithpride

The New York Public Library
‘Twas the Night Before Pride
Joanna McClintick
Illustrated by Juana Medina

Follow a family as they prepare for Sammy’s first Pride parade—and learn about how Pride came to be and what it means to LGBTQ+ communities. Sammy’s family is excited to continue the legacy of love, joy, and celebration that makes Pride so special.

Discussion Questions
1. Why are the narrator and their brother excited for Pride? What does the celebration mean to them and their family?
2. How did Pride come to be an annual celebration?
3. How do people celebrate Pride today? What sorts of things do they do, wear, and show?
4. What traditions or celebrations are special to you and your family?

Classroom Activities
Express Joy | Ask students to consider the role of joy and celebration in changing the world. Invite students to create a message that celebrates LGBTQ+ people in their community and write it down on a piece of colored paper to display in your classroom.

Explore More About Stonewall | Encourage students to use their library cards to access our online resources, such as Scholastic GO, to do their own research on the history of Pride, the Stonewall Riot, and the Stonewall National Monument. Invite them to share what they found interesting with the class.

Companion Essay for Educators
Explore Reading with Pride: 50 Years of Queer Picture Books | Read Jennifer Miller’s “Queer Kinship: Exploring the Family Unit Through LGBTQ+ Picture Books” for additional context:
nypl.org/readingwithpride
Explore More from the Library’s Center for Educators and Schools

The New York Public Library’s Center for Educators and Schools is an initiative devoted to using the resources and collections of NYPL to ignite the curiosity, joy, and passion of learning within educators, students, and school communities. Find information about programs and services tailored to the educator community below, including book lists, credit-bearing workshops, residency programs, special access to exhibitions, and much more.

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter to get the latest news, teaching tips, and more: nypl.org/educatorsnewsletter

Access Ready-to-Use Curriculum Guides
Discover curricular materials that leverage the Library’s collections, along with model questions and activities for your students. Plus, find a wide array of online teaching tools that explore various themes and can be easily integrated into your classroom.

Expand Your Classroom Collection
Explore instructional materials and book lists curated by our expert staff for students, teachers, librarians, and homeschooling parents—and get book sets delivered directly to your classroom through the MyLibraryNYC program.

Attend Events & Workshops for Educators
Build skills with your community by joining us for a wide range of programs for educators and librarians, including residency programs, credit-bearing professional development workshops with industry experts, author talks, and film screenings.

Schedule a Class Visit
Introduce your students to the Library by arranging a visit to an NYPL branch, inviting a librarian to run a classroom workshop, or viewing highlights from our collections in the Polonsky Exhibition of The New York Public Library’s Treasures with your students.

Learn more about the Center for Educators and Schools: nypl.org/ces
About The New York Public Library

Founded in 1895, The New York Public Library is the nation's largest public library system with a unique combination of neighborhood libraries throughout the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island and four scholarly research centers—the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, the Library for the Performing Arts, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the Thomas Yoseloff Business Center at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL). Serving millions of patrons a year both in person and online, the Library offers free materials, classes, and programs for users of all ages.