



The ABCs of Black History by Rio Cortez
Workman Kids, Hachette Book Group, 2020
ISBN: HC 9781523507498
*Age Range: 5 and up
Grade Range: K and up

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Letter by letter, **The ABCs of Black History** celebrates a story that spans continents and centuries, triumph and heartbreak, creativity and joy.

It's a story of big ideas—P is for Power, S is for Science and Soul. Of significant moments—G is for Great Migration. Of iconic figures—H is for Zora Neale Hurston, X is for Malcom X. It's an ABC book like no other, and a story of hope and love.

In addition to rhyming text, the book includes back matter with information on the events, places, and people mentioned in the poem, from Mae Jemison to W. E. B. Du Bois, Fannie Lou Hamer to Sam Cooke, and the Little Rock Nine to DJ Kool Herc.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

- "An impressive array of names, events, and concepts from Black history are introduced in this alphabet book for early-elementary readers... The rhyming verses are light on the tongue, making the reading smooth and soothing. The brightly colored, folk art–style illustrations offer vibrant scenes of historical and contemporary Black life...A substantive and affirming addition to any collection." - **Kirkus Starred Review**
- In rhyming couplets, Cortez leads readers on a journey through Black life that acknowledges pain and struggle while building confidence with examples of triumph. It's a tricky maneuver when writing for children, but Cortez pulls it off." - **The New York Times**
- "...The layers of history are plentiful and complex....A useful mentor text for writing projects, a springboard for research, and an essential addition to classroom libraries." - **Booklist**
- A richly accessible resource for anyone seeking to celebrate Black visionaries." - **Publishers Weekly**
- "A uniquely crafted ABC book that portrays some of the most important events in Black History with a vibrancy and joy that young children will absolutely love." - **Parade**

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- *New York Times* bestseller
- California Reading Association Eureka Book Award
- Wisconsin State Reading Association Picture This! Reading list
- Skipping Stones Honor Award

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Educator Guide](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League Parent/Family Discussion Guide](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League Educator Guide](#)
- [KIPP SoCal Public Schools interview with author Rio Cortez](#)
- [Workman Publishing: An Interview with Rio Cortez and Lauren Semmer](#)

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

- [Bay News 9: “What’s it like to have Florida schools pull your books off library shelves? We asked.”](#)
- [NPR: “A Miami bookstore is handing out some of the titles banned from kids’ library”](#)

AUTHOR STATEMENT (OPTIONAL)

Offer the author an opportunity to provide a statement about the potential impact of banning their book or a link to an existing author statement.

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.