

WHAT IS
GIVEN
from the
HEART

PATRICIA C.
McKISSACK

APRIL
HARRISON

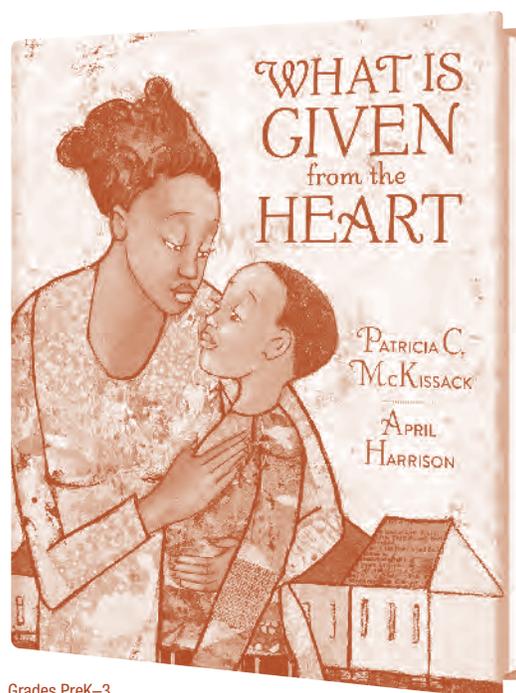
Discover the final magnificent picture book from three-time
Coretta Scott King Award and Newbery Honor winner

PATRICIA C. MCKISSACK

—a poignant and uplifting celebration of the joy of giving.

ABOUT THE BOOK

“Misery loves company,” Mama tells James Otis. It’s been a rough couple of months for them, but Mama says as long as they have their health and strength, they’re blessed. One Sunday before Valentine’s Day, Reverend Dennis makes an announcement during the service—the Temples have lost everything in a fire, and the church is collecting anything that might be useful to them. James thinks hard about what he can add to the Temples’ love box, but what does he have worth giving? With her extraordinary gift for storytelling, McKissack—with stunning illustrations by April Harrison—delivers a touching, powerful tale of compassion and reminds us all that what is given from the heart reaches the heart.



Art © 2019 by April Harrison

Grades PreK–3
F&P: N · Lexile: AD660L
HC: 978-0-375-83615-2 • GLB: 978-0-375-93615-9 • EL: 978-0-375-98800-4

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

PATRICIA C. MCKISSACK is the author of many lauded books for children, including *Let’s Clap, Jump, Sing & Shout*, a 2017 Parents’ Choice Gold Award winner, a New York Public Library, *School Library Journal*, and *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of the Year, and recipient of three starred reviews; *The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural*, a Newbery Honor Book and Coretta Scott King Award winner, and its companion, *Porch Lies: Tales of Slicksters, Tricksters, and Other Wily Characters*, an ALA-ALSC Notable Children’s Book; *Never Forgotten*, a Coretta Scott King Honor Book; and an ALA-ALSC Notable Children’s Book and winner of the 2008 Parents’ Choice Award. Ms. McKissack passed away in the summer of 2017. This is her final work.

APRIL HARRISON is a renowned folk artist born and currently residing in Greenville, South Carolina. Her work appears in the public collections of Vanderbilt University, the Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center, the Atlanta Housing Authority, the Erskine University Museum, and in many private collections. This is her first picture book. Learn more at aprilsongallery.com.



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WHAT IS GIVEN from the HEART

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

A BOOK TO GIVE

When James Otis gives Sarah the book he made for her, she says, “I will keep this book forever and ever.” Have each student create a book to give to someone, modeling their illustrations on those in *What Is Given from the Heart*. Have students study the pictures carefully for ideas. The copyright page describes the illustrations as “rendered in mixed media, including acrylics, collage, art pens, and found objects.” Can the students mimic this style? The text for each student’s book could be a story, essay, or poem they write or a poem or folktale they like. The book should have an appealing cover and an author-illustrator biographical note about the student. (To find ideas and templates for handmade books, consult makingbooks.com.)

SIMPLE GIFTS

Some of the best gifts, like the book James Otis gives Sarah, are handmade items or are not even physical objects at all. As a class, brainstorm a list of gifts that students could create. Crafts like knitting, sewing, woodworking, and paper crafts are possibilities, as are poems or performances of a song or dance. The ideas can come from art, like a sculpture or drawing, or games, like simple toys or board games. Based on the class list, students should make a plan about a simple gift they will give in the future to someone who, like Sarah, may not be expecting it.

SARAH’S THOUGHTS

The story focuses on James Otis, but Sarah plays a pivotal part. Have students consider Sarah’s perspective and write a letter from her to James Otis. The letter should describe what she’s gone through recently, her feelings about it, and her reaction to his gift. Students should draw from the narrative and illustrations but also use their imaginations to expand Sarah’s character beyond what the book conveys. Have students read the letters aloud in pairs and compare what they wrote.

WORDS OF INSPIRATION

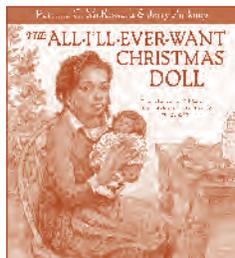
Reverend Dennis tells his congregation, “What is given from the heart reaches the heart.” Quotations and sayings like this can inspire people the way James Otis was inspired. Ask students to write down inspirational quotes or sayings that they already know and then gather more from friends and relatives. Then have each student choose a quote or saying and illustrate a small poster of it to put on a classroom Words of Inspiration board.

THE POWER OF PICTURES

Like many picture books, *What Is Given from the Heart* conveys information through its illustrations, some of which isn’t stated in the text. Ask each student to choose an aspect of the story that is shown through the pictures, such as house exteriors or interiors, clothing, possessions, terrain and weather, church services, and so on. They could also choose to consider how the pictures convey emotion. Have the students examine the book page by page to glean information about their topic, making a list of what they find. They should put an asterisk next to any piece of information that is not part of the text to demonstrate how important the pictures are. Have them share their findings and talk about the role of the illustrations in helping to tell the story.



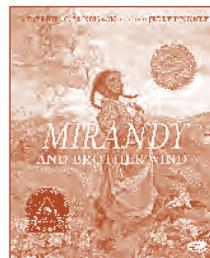
A PICTURE BOOK STUDY: Looking at More Gems from PATRICIA C. MCKISSACK



*The All-I'll-Ever-Want
Christmas Doll*
Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney
Grades PreK–3
F&P: O · Lexile: AD650L
HC: 978-0-375-83759-3



A Million Fish . . . More or Less
Illustrated by Michael Chesworth
Grades PreK–2 · Lexile: 690L
PB: 978-0-679-88086-8



Mirandy and Brother Wind
Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney
Grades PreK–2
F&P: R · Lexile: 690L
PB: 978-0-679-88333-3



*Stitchin' and Pullin':
A Gee's Bend Quilt*
Illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera
Grades K–4
PB: 978-0-399-54950-2

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Read aloud at least two of McKissack's books, and have students spend time with the books independently. Create a large chart with a column for each book. Write the book titles at the top of each column. For the rows, list picture book elements, such as characters, plot summary, setting (time and place), art medium, and any other categories you or your students can think of. Work as a class to fill in the chart. Keep it visible in the classroom while students do the other activities.

ON THE FRONT PORCH OF MY MIND

As a class, watch an excerpt from a speech that McKissack gave in 2010, posted online by the University of Wisconsin: tinyurl.com/y82mvtz. Then hold a class discussion about the speech and how it relates to the content of McKissack's books. Start by considering the title of the speech, which is "On the Front Porch of My Mind: Stories and Where the Stories Came From." What details about her childhood are echoed in her books? How do the books reflect her comments about the adults in her life?

GROWN-UP GUIDANCE

Parents, grandparents, and other adults play important roles in McKissack's stories, offering good advice or providing examples of how to act. Divide students into small groups to analyze examples of such adults in the books. Then ask students to each prepare a short speech about an adult who has helped them in some way. It should be someone the student respects, and the speech should give specific examples of why. Have students give their speeches in the small groups and then discuss the similarities and differences in their content.

TAKE NOTE

Three of McKissack's books include an author's note, and *What Is Given from the Heart* has a long dedication, written by the illustrator, that is similar to an author's note. Ask students to read the notes and choose the one that interests them the most. They should write a short essay that draws connections between the book and the note, quoting from both. Meet as a class and talk about the purpose of such notes and how they enrich books. As a follow-up, have students find authors' notes in other books to see what they add.

FAVORITE QUOTES

McKissack's stories and poems reflect a deep love of language. After reading her books, have students go back and find phrases and sentences that they especially like. Each student should write down three examples and then add them to a class list of quotes on a whiteboard, blackboard, or easel. Gather as a class and have students read aloud the quotes they chose. Then have a discussion about what the quotes have in common, addressing aspects such as imagery, alliteration, rhythm, and dialect.

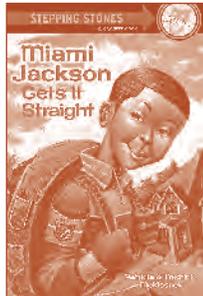


Also by PATRICIA C. MCKISSACK

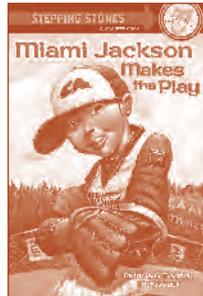
EARLY READERS

with Fredrick McKissack; Illustrated by Michael Chesworth

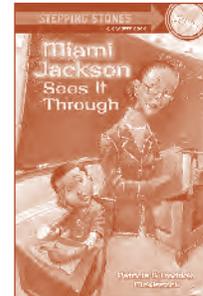
Grades 1-4



Miami Jackson Gets It Straight
F&P: M · Lexile: 400L
PB: 978-0-307-26501-2

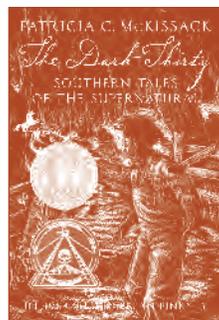


Miami Jackson Makes the Play
F&P: P · Lexile: 550L
PB: 978-0-307-26505-0

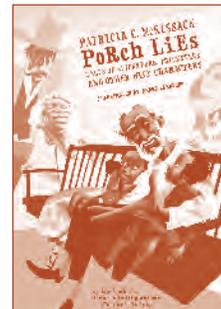


Miami Jackson Sees It Through
F&P: P · Lexile: 510L
PB: 978-0-307-26513-5

MIDDLE-GRADE

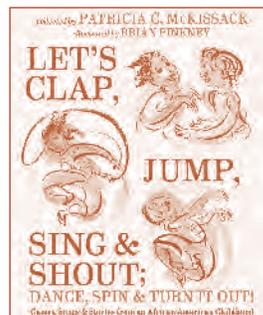


*The Dark-Thirty:
Southern Tales of the Supernatural*
Illustrated by Brian Pinkney
Grades 3-7 · F&P: R · Lexile: 730L
PB: 978-0-679-89006-5

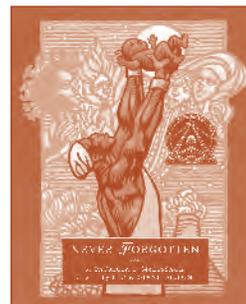


*Porch Lies: Tales of Slicksters, Tricksters,
and Other Wily Characters*
Illustrated by Andre Carrillo
Grades 3-7 · Lexile: 790L
HC: 978-0-375-83619-0

FOR ALL GRADES



*Let's Clap, Jump, Sing & Shout;
Dance, Spin & Turn It Out! Games, Songs, and
Stories from an African American Childhood*
All Grades · F&P: S · Lexile: 990L
HC: 978-0-375-87088-0



Never Forgotten
Illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon
All Grades · F&P: V · Lexile: 710L
HC: 978-0-375-84384-6

