



Boston Children's Hospital

Where the world comes for answers

GeMS Annotated Bibliography Spring 2020

Ages 2-6

***Bunnybear* by Andre J. Loney and Carmen Saldana (INDPB 2017).** What does it feel like to be born a bear but feel like a bunny? *Bunnybear* gently explores how to feel good about one's own identity.

***Introducing Teddy* by Jess Walton and illustrated by Dougal MacPherson (Bloomsbury USA, 2016).** *Introducing Teddy* seeks to help young readers understand gender and what it means to transition. When Thomas, Errol's teddy, builds up the courage to tell Errol, "In my heart, I've always known that I'm a girl teddy, not a boy teddy. I wish my name was Tilly, not Thomas," Errol responds with love and acceptance for his best friend. and together they teach children about being your true self.

***It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book about Gender Identity* by Theresa Thorn (Holt, 2019).** Engaging and clear discussion of gender expression and identity for the youngest children with appealing illustrations.

***It's Okay to be Different* by Todd Parr (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2001).**

This vibrantly colored book features many examples of things that might make us unique or different from one another. While it doesn't address gender nonconformity directly, the author encourages readers to be themselves even if they might be considered "different" and nearly every kid will be able to find a page they can relate to themselves.

***Jacob's New Dress* by Sarah and Ian Hoffman (Whitman, 2014).** Jacob wants nothing more than his own dress. While his parents and peers initially don't accept his love for dresses, his mom helps him sew a dress of his own, and wearing it to school his peers come to understand that it's okay for someone labeled a boy to wear dresses.

***My Princess Boy* by Cheryl Kilodavis (New York: Aladdin, 2010).** Dyson likes to wear dresses and tiaras, but his peers make fun of him because they don't believe he should dress that way. Dyson's parents nurture his spirit and encourage him to be his true self. This book does a good job prompting readers to begin a discussion about how they would act in situations similar to the book, and these discussions would be especially helpful towards decreasing bullying.

***Neither*, by Arlie Anderson (Little, Brown, 2018).** In a world of blue bunnies and yellow birds, a baby watches and wonders... what happens to those who don't fit in either?

***Not Every Princess* by Jeffrey and Lisa Bone** (*Magination, 2014*). A poetic book that explains how assumptions about one's identity might not always be true and that this is okay. The illustrations beautifully include all types of diversity.

***Pink is for Boys*, by Robb Pearlman** (*Running Press Kids, 2018*). A beautiful picture book which reframes gender binary color myths and encourages children to express themselves in 'every color of the rainbow'.

***Red: A Crayon's Story* by Michael Hall** (*HarperCollins Children's, 2015*). A crayon has a red wrapper around it, and the other crayons assume that it's a red crayon, but it's actually a blue crayon! This crayon struggles told to draw red things, until finally asked to draw something blue. At last it is accepted as a blue crayon, and enjoys drawing blue pictures with the other crayons.

***The Boy and the Bindi*, by Vivek Shraya** (*Arsenal Pulp Press, 2016*). A young boy wants a bindi (the red forehead dot commonly worn by Hindu women) of his own and is encouraged to learn the power of 'making sure I don't hide/Everything I am inside'.

***The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf, drawings by Robert Lawson** (*Viking, 1936*). Ferdinand is a young bull who lives in Spain. While all the other bulls enjoy fighting, he prefers smelling flowers and relaxing under his favorite tree. When chosen for a bull fight, Ferdinand only wants to appreciate the beautiful flowers on the spectator's hats, not fight the men trying to provoke him. After refusing to fight he returns to his favorite tree and happily continues being himself, smelling flowers and lounging in the sunshine.

Ages 5-10

***47,000 Beads*, by Koja Adeyoha, Angel Adeyoha and Holly McGinnis** (*Flamingo Rampant Press, 2017*). Beautifully presents First Nation, Two-Spirit exploration in the context of a child's dancing at annual Pow Wow and great family support.

***10,000 Dresses* by Marcus Ewert and Illustrated by Rex Ray** (*Seven Stories, 2008*). Bailey dreams every night of extravagant dresses but her family members tell her that she is a boy and can't have dresses. Bailey is confused and upset because she knows that she is a girl. She ultimately finds an older girl to sew with, and happily refers to Bailey as a girl.

***About Chris* by Nina Benedetto** (*CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015*). *About Chris* is a story about a transgender boy determined to find his self-worth. As Chris works to express his true self, those around him, including his teacher, learn lessons of their own.

***Allie's Basketball Dream* by Barbara E. Barber** (*Lee & Low, 1996*). Allie dreams of becoming a professional basketball player, and can't wait to practice after her father buys her a basketball. At the park a group of boys and Allie's friends tell her that basketball is only for boys, but she insists that she loves it regardless. The reader sees her skill grow as she perseveres throughout the book, and she proves that basketball isn't just for boys.

(2)

***All I Want To Be Is Me* by Phyllis Rothblatt MFT** (*CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011*). *All I Want to Be Is Me* depicts the wide range of ways in which children experience and express gender, offers language for those who don't fit gender stereotypes, who want to feel accepted and feel free to be themselves.

***Annie's Plaid Shirt* by Stacey B. Davids** (*Upswing Books, 2015*). Annie loves her plaid shirt and dressing as she pleases, but has to be creative about a wedding to which she is 'supposed' to wear a fancy dress.

***Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, illustrated by Caroline Binch** (*Dial for Young Readers, 1991*). Grace wants to audition for the role of Peter Pan in a play at school, but her classmates say that she cannot play this part because she is African American and a girl. Grace's mother and grandmother explain to her that she can be anything she wants to be, her race and gender shouldn't stand in her way. Grace puts on a stunning audition for the role of Peter Pan, and her class voted to give her the part!

***But I'm Not A Boy* by Katie Leone and illustrated by Alison Pfeifer** (*Doppler Press, 2014*). Sarah is a transgender girl, but everyone thinks she is a boy named David. Feeling lonely and confused, Sarah longs for the courage to tell her parents about her secret. Written from Sarah's perspective, *But I'm Not a Boy* is a story about a child's gender exploration, a desire for acceptance, and all of the emotions that comes with it.

***Henry Holton Takes the Ice* by Sandra Bradley with pictures by Sara Palacios** (*Dial for Young Readers, 2015*). Everyone in Henry's family plays hockey, but it never felt *right* to Henry after seeing an ice dancing show. Henry's grandma finally brings him figure skates, and he at once feels comfortable and happy on the ice. Henry's family ultimately embraces his love of figure skating.

***I Am Jazz* by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings** (*New York: Dial for Young Readers, 2014*). Based off the true story of Jazz Jennings, this book takes readers through her childhood life as she realized she is a girl despite the fact she was labeled a boy at birth. A good book for explaining transgender identities to children, as it provides them a character at their age with which they can relate.

***Julian is a Mermaid*, by Jessica Love** (*Candlewick, 2018*). Julian is obsessed with mermaids, and with his beloved abuela, attends a festival where everyone looks like a favorite mermaid and he shines. Beautifully illustrated!

***Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress* by Christine Baldacchino, illustrated by Isabelle Malenfant** (*Groundwood / House of Anansi, 2014*). Morris loves dressing up in a tangerine dress at school, though his peers make fun of him for wearing the dress and painting his fingernails pink and that boys can't wear dresses. Morris is initially discouraged by their comments, but as he returns to school full of self-confidence, and his classmates ultimately accept him for who he is.

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***Peanut Goes for the Gold*, by Jonathan Van Ness** (HarperCollins 2020). Follow the adventures of a gender non-binary guinea pig as he sets out to win a rhythmic gymnastics competition.

***The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch and illustrated by Michael Martchenko** (*Annick*, 1980). Elizabeth is a beautiful princess planning to marry Prince Ronald and when he is captured by a dragon, Elizabeth goes to rescue him. After she outsmarts the dragon during which her clothes are destroyed Ronald refuses to talk to her until she “looks like a princess”, so she decides not to marry him. Elizabeth skips off into the sunset, leaving us with the message that you don’t need to be “feminine” to be a princess.

***Peanut Goes for the Gold*, by Jonathan Van Ness** (HarperCollins 2020). Follow the adventures of a gender non-binary guinea pig as he sets out to win a rhythmic gymnastics competition.

***The Sissy Duckling* by Harvey Fierstein & Illustrated by Henry Cole** (*Simon & Schuster for Young Readers*, 2002). Elmer is a duckling who loves to paint pictures, decorate cookies, and put on theater productions. Other (male) ducklings make fun of Elmer because he doesn’t want to play sports. Even his father makes fun of his son, calling him a “sissy”. When Elmer’s father is injured as they begin migrating for the winter, Elmer is the only duck who stays behind to take care of him. Elmer is praised for his uniqueness, and finds that he isn’t an outsider after all.

***They She He Me: Free to Be*, by Maya Christina Gonzalez** (*Reflection Press*, 2017). An accessible, gentle and clear picture book about pronouns and gender fluidity.

***What Makes a Baby*, by Cory Silverburg and Fiona Smyth** (*Trifalger Square*, 2013). A fully inclusive, modern picture book about conception, gestation and birth.

***Who Are You?: The Kid’s Guide to Gender Identity* by Brook Pessin-Whedbee** (*Jessica Kingsley Publishers*, 2016). An interactive wheel is used to help children explore a wide range of diverse gender identities and expressions.

Ages 10-14

***A Boy Like Me* by Jennie Wood** (*215 Ink*, 2014). While beginning the process of affirming as male, Peyton develops an unexpected crush. This coming-of-age novel details his struggles and triumphs with his crush, their parents and their school with clarity, wisdom and wit.

***Alex As Well* by Alyssa Brugman.** (*Square Fish*, 2016). *Alex As Well* is a story about being intersex; exploring gender, sexuality and friendships; and seeking a sense of belonging. While everyone thinks Alex is a boy, gender feels more complex. As Alex works to better understand herself, she is also faced with learning how to navigate relationships with friends and family- all while transferring to a new school.

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***George* by Alex Gino** (*Scholastic, 2015*). George is 10 years old, and while everyone refers to her as a boy, she knows that she is a girl. The author uses female pronouns when referring to George, enforcing to readers that she is in fact a girl. Throughout the story George comes out to her friends, family, and peers at school as transgender, and this conversation starts as she auditions for the role of Charlotte in her schools production of “Charlotte’s Web”.

***Gracefully Grayson* by Ami Polonsky** (*Disney-Hyperion, 2014*). Grayson is a transgender girl in the sixth grade. Grayson often feels socially left out at school, but one day bravely auditions for the role of Persephone in the school play. Grayson’s playing the role of the female character ultimately helps her realize that she in fact identifies as a girl, and the support from other students in the play aid in her self exploration and discovery.

***Lily and Dunkin* by Donna Gephart** (*Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2016*). Lily Jo is a transgender girl navigating her way through eighth grade. Dunkin Dorfman, once known as Norbert Dorfman, new to the school has been hiding a big secret on top of managing his bipolar disorder. But when Lily Jo meets Dunkin Dorfman, their lives are forever changed.

***Riding Freedom* by Pam Muñoz Ryan, pictures by Brian Selznick** (*Scholastic, 1998*). The story begins in the 1860s, as Charlotte, a girl who has always played with the boys at the orphanage, decides she must run away to forge a life of her own Since then it was unacceptable for girls to travel alone, Charlotte cuts her hair, dresses in boy’s clothes and passes as Charley. Charley ultimately gets jobs at various stables doing what she loves but is always hired under the assumption that she is a boy. Charley is successful in life and gains the respect of people across the country for her amazing work with horses.

***The Moon Within*, by Aida Salazar** (*Arthur A Levine Books, 2019*). An *International Latino Book Award* winner, *The Moon Within* follows 11 year old Celi Rivera and her best friend as they navigates young adolescence, first love and gender identity, with gentle and sensitive parental understanding and support.

***The Other Boy* by M. G. Hennessey** (*HarperCollins, 2016*). Twelve-year-old Shane Woods is known to his friends and family as a regular boy. While Shane enjoys pitching for his baseball team, writing his graphic novel, and hanging with his best friend, Josh, he has a secret that could change everything. His world is turned upside down when Shane’s classmate threatens to uncover his secret. With great courage, and surprising allies, Shane stands up to hate and shows everyone that he’s still the same person as he always was.

***The Pants Project* by Cat Clarke** (*Sourcebook Jabberwocky, 2017*). Liv is a transgender boy who is forced to wear skirts everyday because of his school’s dress code. Liv creates Operation: Pants Project in an effort to change his school’s policy while also finding himself in the process.

***Wandering Son*, by Shimura Takako** (*Fantagraphics Books, 2015*). One in a series of *Japanese Manga comics* for LGBTQ youth, *Wandering Son* follows the exploration and adventures of two young adolescents journeying toward affirming their gender identities.

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***When Kayla Was Kyle* by Amy Fabrikant** (*Avid Readers Group, 2013*). “Kyle doesn't understand why the other kids at school call him names. He looks like other boys, but doesn't feel like them. Can Kyle find the words to share his feelings about his gender - and can his parents help him to transition into the girl he was born to be?”

***Zenobia July*, by Lisa Bunker** (*Viking Books for Young Readers, 2019*). Finally able to live life as the girl she knows herself to be, Zenobia uses her well-earned hacking and coding skills to solve the mystery of hateful, anonymous posts on her new school's website.

High School/Young Adults

***A + E 4ever* by Ilike Merrey** (*Maple Shade 2011*). This *graphic novel* depicts the relationship between Asher, a quiet androgynous boy, and Eulalie, a girl who presents with stronger masculine features. The two are brought together through their love for art, and a relationship exploring the boundaries of gender.

***Almost Perfect* by Brian Katcher** (*Delacorte Books, 2010*). Logan Witherspoon befriends Sage Hendricks at a time when he no longer trusts or believes in people. Eventually Logan's feelings for Sage grew strong until Sage finally discloses her big secret: she was born a boy. Once his anger has cooled, his regrets lead him to attempt to rekindle their friendship. But it's hard to replace something that's been broken—and it's even harder to find your way back to friendship when you began with love

***A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns* by Archie Bongiovanni and Tristan Jimerson** (Limerance Press, 2018). A *non-fiction comic book* about two friends explaining the correct use of gender-neutral pronouns into their worlds.

***Beast* by Brie Spangler** (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016). *Beast* follows the journey of unhappy and bullied Dylan, who finds himself unexpectedly befriended and challenged by a new friend with a journey of her own.

***Before I Had the Words: On Being a Transgender Young Adult* by Skylar Kergil** (*Skyhorse Publishing, 2017*). As seventeen-year-old Skylar Kergil posts weekly videos to YouTube, documenting emotional and physical changes throughout his transition from female to male, Skylar's transparency and positive energy attracts thousands of viewers to follow him along his journey. Revealing the intimate details of his experience, Skylar's memoir provides a deeper look into the highs and lows of what it's like to transition from one gender to another.

***Beautiful Music For Ugly Children* by Kirsten Cronn-Mills** (*Woodbury: Flux 2012*). Gabe is a young transgender teen who was assigned female at birth, but is in the process of transitioning . While bullied at school, he develops his own radio show and freely identify and be accepted as Gabe, and he enjoys this leisure. Tension grows as radio listeners out Gabe as “Liz” (the name he was assigned at birth) at school, and Gabe's strength and will are tested.

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***Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family* by Amy Ellis Nutt** (Random House, 2016) *Becoming Nicole*...is an eloquent and touching story of one family's journey to understand and support their child's gender transition.

***Being Emily* by Rachel Gold** (Bella Books, 2012). Emily, born Christopher, is a 16 year old high school student who keeps waiting for "it to get better" in her small town high school and instead is challenged...until she meets an unlikely guide, a substitute teacher.

***Beyond Magenta* by Susan Kuklin** (Candlewick, 2015). This book consists of a collection of personal stories and photographs from various members of the gender nonconforming community. A few of the stories are from transgender individuals, but there are also stories from genderqueer and intersex folks.

***Drag Teen* by Jeffrey Self** (PUSH (Scholastic Books), 2016). JD, the book's protagonist, and his best friend go on a road trip from Florida to New York City in search of their dreams.

***I Am J* by Cris Beam** (Little, Brown, 2011). This story follows J, a transgender teen boy who wants nothing more than to be accepted by his male peers. J maneuvers the obstacles placed before him while he transitions, and his strength is tested through tension with his family and friends.

***If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo** (Flatiron Books, 2016). As the new girl in school, Amanda Hardy just wants is to make friends and fit in. However, Amanda has a secret keeping her from getting too close to anyone. When Amanda begins developing feelings for Grant, she finds herself wanting to put her guard down and share an important piece of her identity- that Amanda was once known as Andrew.

***If You Could Be Mine* by Sara Farizan** (Algonquin Young Readers, 2013). "Frank, funny and bittersweet" (New York Times), this award-winning novel poignantly chronicles the love story of relationship between two teens in contemporary Iran.

***I Wish You All the Best* by Mason Deaver.** (Push, 2019). When Ben comes out as non-binary to his family he faces unexpected challenges from family and school, and unexpected resilience, support and romance.

***Jaya and Rasa. A Love Story* by Sonia Patel** (Cinco Puntos Press, 2017). Before meeting on a mountain in Hawaii, seventeen-year-old Jaya Mehta and Rasa Santos had never felt love or the closeness of family. Jaya, a transgender teen struggling with mental health issues, and Rasa, a beautiful young woman being exploited through a violent relationship, discover an unlikely romantic connection and strength to put their stormy pasts behind and start a new life with one another.

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***Jess, Chunk, and the Road Trip to Infinity* by Kristin Elizabeth Clark Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016).** After graduating high school, Jess finds herself on a cross-country journey with her best friend, “Chunk” to surprise her father, who is marrying her mother’s ex-best friend. However, Jess has not seen her father since before she came out as a girl. As Jess and Chunk make their way across the country, they discover more about themselves, each other, and their evolving relationship.

***Jumpstart the World* by Catherine Ryan Hyde (Alfred A. Knopf, 2010).** After being kicked out of her house at the request of her mother’s boyfriend, fifteen year old Elle rents an apartment next to a welcoming couple, Frank and Molly. Elle is immediately intrigued by Frank, and develops a crush on him. Elle never knew what “transgender” meant, but she quickly learns as she finds out that Frank is transgender. Elle grapples with her feelings and friendship with Frank as she tries to understand his identity.

***Lizard Radio* by Pat Schmatz (Candlewick, 2015).** A sci-fi, dystopian novel about a 15 year old non-binary, and species fluid teen finding their way in a gender rigid culture finding unexpected friendships and support.

***Luna* by Julie Anne Peters (Little, Brown, 2004).** In this novel Peters delves into the lives of Regan and her older (and transgender) sister Luna. Regan provided Luna with clothes and make-up at night, when during the day others referred to Luna as her name assigned at birth, “Liam”. Tensions arise in their family Luna wants to be more public about her female identity. Luna is ultimately supported in her transition by her sister.

***Parrotfish* by Ellen Wittlinger (Simon & Schuster for Young Readers, 2007).** This novel takes readers on a journey with Grady as he comes out as transgender. Though he initially faces bullying and discrimination, he ultimately finds acceptance and friendship in this engaging book.

***She’s Not There: A Life in Two Genders* by Jennifer Finney Boylan (Broadway Books 2013)** An accessible, moving and witty well considered gender transition overtime and the impact on her family, friends and career.

***Some Assembly Required* by Arin Andrews (Simon & Schuster, 2014)** This honest and captivating memoir details the author’s journey through gender affirmation during middle and high school with honesty and humor.

***Symptoms of Being Human* by Jeff Garvin (Balzer + Bray, 2016)** Riley Cavanaugh is a gender fluid teen who is not out to his world. Between the stress of a new school and having a congressman as a father, Riley starts an anonymous blog in search of some relief. After blogging about life as a gender fluid teenager, the blog goes viral, and his anonymity is threatened. Riley is faced with a life changing decision to delete the blog, his positive outlet, or come out to peers.

***The Art of Being Normal* by Lisa Williamson** (David Fickling Books, 2016). *The Art of Being Normal* follows the lives of two unlikely friends as they explore and understand their assumptions, differences and similarities. *An Amnesty International endorsed book.*

***The Complicated Geography of Alice* by Jules Vilmur** (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014). *The Complicated Geography of Alice* is story of a transgender teenager told from the perspective of her mother, *The Complicated Geography of Alice* illustrates a family's struggle to support a daughter's transition while managing her mental health and substance use issues.

***The Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing About Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Other Identities* edited by David Levithan and Billy Merrell** (Alfred A. Knopf, 2006). A thoughtful, witty, insightful and tender award-winning anthology of writing (essays, poems, memoirs) by young and diverse LGBTQ writers.

***The Lives of Merfolk* by Chelsea Mason Basiliere** (Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2015). Hayden, the protagonist, has a fresh voice and confident self-awareness which sustains him as he moves slowly but surely to a full, gender affirming transition with the help of a new friend and his mother.

***The Prince and the Dressmaker* by Jen Wang** (First Second, 2018). An engaging *graphic novel*/fairy tale about revealing and reveling on one's true identity.

***Tomboy* by Liz Prince** (Zest, 2014) *Tomboy* is a *graphic novel* about gender stereotypes and refusing gender boundaries. Follow author and zine artist Liz Prince from early childhood into adulthood as she explores her evolving gender identity.

***When the Moon was Ours*, by Anna-Marie McLemore** (Wednesday Books, 2018). This *magical fiction* book is about two inseparable friends, with a culturally diverse and vibrant cast of characters, as they plot to remain true to themselves in the face of family and history.