

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan library programs as well as activities for the daycare, classroom, or family.

Meet Ohio-born, Brooklyn-based author Jacqueline Woodson, and illustrator James Ransome, who lives in upstate New York.

Discover connections to the Five Early Literacy Practices in easy extensions that can be done at home, school, or at the library.

Explore fun activities that align with Ohio's New Learning Standards.

This Is the Rope: A Story from the Great Migration

by Jacqueline Woodson (author)
and James Ransome (illustrator)

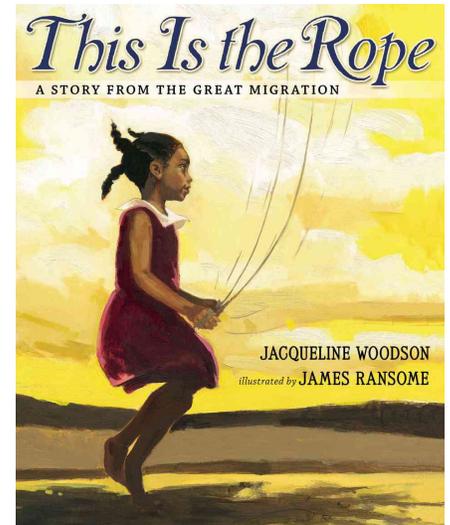


About the Book

When a little girl in South Carolina finds a rope under a tree, she has no idea it will become part of her family's history. But for three generations, that rope is passed down, used for everything from jump rope games to tying suitcases onto a car for the big move north to New York City, and even for a family reunion where that first little girl is now a grandmother. Readers follow the little girl's journey north during the time of the Great Migration, when millions of African American families relocated from the South, seeking better opportunities.

Nancy Paulsen Books (Penguin Young Readers Group), 2013. ISBN 9780399239861. Ages 5-8. AD1090 Lexile.

<http://www.penguin.com/book/this-is-the-rope-by-jacqueline-woodson/9780399239861>



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Get Ready To Read!

Encouraging early literacy skill-building in young children.

Many of the activities in this toolkit incorporate **five early literacy practices**, everyday activities that help children get ready to read. These practices are:

Reading - Writing - Talking - Singing - Playing

Reading to and with children is the most effective way to support reading readiness, as it develops six key early literacy skills: print motivation, phonological awareness, vocabulary, narrative skills, print awareness and letter knowledge.

Writing (or drawing and scribbling) helps children learn about print, letters, and vocabulary, and supports fine motor skills.

Talking helps children learn oral language – a critical early literacy skill – and also increases vocabulary and comprehension.

Singing slows language down so children can hear the different sounds that make up words, and develop vocabulary and phonological awareness.

Playing teaches children to think symbolically, practice self-expression, and put thoughts into words.

All of these practices lead to children being ready to learn how to read when they begin school.

Parents, teachers, and librarians can share these practices with children at home, in the classroom, or at the library. For more information, visit <http://www.ohreadytoread.org/>.



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About the Author

Jacqueline Woodson was born in Columbus, Ohio but was raised in Greenville, South Carolina and Brooklyn, New York. She is the author of a number of books for children, young adults and adults.

In addition to writing full-time, Woodson also works with the National Book Foundation's summer writing camp. There, along with three other writers in

residence, she teaches creative writing to young people from under-served communities.

Woodson is the winner of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for lifetime achievement in writing for young adults, and the winner of the 2014 National Book Award for **Brown Girl Dreaming**. She is the recipient of the Coretta Scott King

Award for **Miracle's Boys**. She has won three Newbery Honor awards, three Coretta Scott King Honors, and many other awards and honors. Woodson's novel **After Tupac and D Foster** is a 2009 & 2010 Choose to Read Ohio selection.

Woodson lives with her family in Brooklyn.

Author Resources

Jacqueline Woodson's official website

<http://www.jacquelinewoodson.com/>

Author Page on Penguin Random House website

<http://www.penguin.com/author/jacqueline-woodson/1000035036>

A Video Interview with Jacqueline Woodson from Reading Rockets

<http://www.readingrockets.org/books/interviews/woodson>

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Contact Jacqueline Woodson at Authorappearances@jacquelinewoodson.com. Include the requested date, location, audience (grade levels), location of nearest airport, and available honorarium. Most of Woodson's presentations focus on her journey to writing, writing process, inspirations, and other topics of interest to the audience. She usually reads from age-appropriate works of hers, and welcomes a Q & A period, often followed by an autographing.

Talk about special objects and special memories.

Sing "Miss Lucy Had a Baby". Have the children ever heard that rhyme before? Do they know other jump-rope rhymes?

"Read" the story by asking children what is happening in the pictures.

Practice It!

Here are some fun ideas for extending the story to include the five practices.

Reading

While reading the story with younger children, occasionally direct the children's eyes to the text by running your finger along underneath the words or asking, "Where are the words on this page?"

Look at the cover of the book together. Point out the title, and the author's and Illustrator's names. Talk about the roles of these people. After reading the book, consider reading the Author's Note (opposite the Dedication Page) to the children.

Writing

With younger children, point to the first letter in each child's name. See if each child can find objects around the room that begin with this letter. Help each child write the names of the objects that begin with his or her "special" letter.

About the Illustrator

James Ransome has illustrated more than fifty books for children and has won the Coretta Scott King Award for **The Creation** (by James Weldon Johnson). His work has also earned him a Coretta Scott King Honor, IBBY Honour, ALA Notable, NAACP Image Award, Bank Street Best Book of the Year, and Rip Van Winkle Award. Among his many books, James Ransome has also illustrated Jacqueline Woodson's picture book **Visiting Day** (2002).

James Ransome lives in upstate New York with his wife, author Lesa Cline-Ransome, and their family.

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Illustrator Resources

James Ransome's official website

<http://www.jamesransome.com/>

James Ransome at the National Book Festival

http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/author/james_ransome

This site links to video clips of James Ransome's speeches at the 2010 and 2013 Festivals.

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

See James Ransome's School Visits page: <http://www.jamesransome.com/school.html>

In the story, our main character sings a special jump rope song: "B, my name is Beatrice, I come from Brooklyn." Have children each write his or her name and circle the first letter. Help them to write their very own songs using the first letter of their names, e.g.: "C, my name is Carrie, I like candy."

Talking

In **This Is the Rope**, Beatrice's grandmother moves from the countryside to the big city. Have each child name some things found in the country (farm animals, hay bales) and in the city (tall buildings, lots of different vehicles). Talk about what it might be like to move

from the countryside to the city. How might life be different?

Singing

In **This Is the Rope**, family history is very important. Think of a lullaby or another song with special significance to your family. Teach the song to your child and sing it together. Find other songs about family to sing together.

Playing

In **This Is the Rope**, several characters sing jump-rope rhymes as they jump rope with family and friends. Share a favorite jump-rope rhyme from your childhood, or discover new rhymes and repeat them as you jump rope together.

Encourage the children to make up their own jump-rope rhymes. If jump roping is not possible, they can clap and chant the rhymes.

Pretend to pack a suitcase in preparation for a "big move." What would you pack? Where would you go? Map a route together using a real map.

Plan a "family picnic reunion" like the one Beatrice attended with her family at the end of **This Is the Rope**. What would you bring to eat? What games and activities would you play? Then go on a real (or imaginary) picnic together!

Tie It In!

Using this book with Ohio's New Learning Standards.

Educators: These activities using *This is the Rope* align with specific standards across the curriculum for grades K-2. These are examples. Other standards may also apply, and every Choose to Read Ohio selection may be used to support Common Core Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening Standards.

Librarians, parents, and others: These activities may also be used in library programs, family activities, and other projects. Ohio's New Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. They are included for teachers who want to use this book in school. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, <http://education.ohio.gov>. Click on "Ohio's New Learning Standards" in the Teacher Resources section.

These activities are also great for library programs, family time, and playgroups.

English Language Arts

Reading: Key Ideas and Details. Although a work of fiction, *This Is the Rope* describes an important historical event known as The Great Migration, in which many African-Americans migrated north to take advantage of new opportunities. Think about the characters in the story. Why do you think they chose to move? How did they respond to the challenges they faced along the way?

Reading: Craft and Structure. Sometimes authors carefully choose words and phrases that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. *This Is the Rope* is full of such words and phrases. Make a list together of some descriptive words and phrases found in the story. How do phrases like "sweet-smelling pine" and "hot city breeze" make you feel? Why would the author use these phrases for this story?

Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas. Have the children identify the author and illustrator of *This Is the Rope*, and have them think about the ways in which the contributions of both come together to tell the story. Would the story have the same impact if we heard the words, but did not see the pictures? What if we saw the pictures, but did not have the words?

Reading: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas. Who is the main character in *This Is the Rope*? How can you tell? Talk about the setting of the story. In what ways does the setting change throughout the story?

Mathematics

Mathematics – Measurement and Data. In the story, Beatrice's family migrates from South Carolina to Brooklyn, New York by automobile. Use a map to locate the states of South Carolina and New York. Calculate the distance between them. Estimate the amount of time it might take to drive from one state to the other. What factors must one consider when making a long trip with family?

Social Studies

Social Studies: History: Historical Thinking and Skills. Throughout *This is the Rope*, a piece of rope has special significance for Beatrice's family and is used in many ways for generations. Can you remember all the ways the rope was used? Have children think about an item that they own that is special to them. Why is it special? What items might they pass along to future generations?

Social Studies – History: Heritage. In *This is the Rope*, narrator Beatrice tells us about her family history in connection with the Great Migration. What stories does your family share? Help children develop awareness and appreciation of their own family stories and personal histories by asking them to share stories that are special to themselves or their families. Each child may put together and decorate a special "memory box" for future generations, with items of personal significance to them.

Social Studies: Geography: Places and Regions. Beatrice's grandmother moved from the South Carolina countryside to the big city of Brooklyn, New York. What are some differences between the city and the countryside? How do you think Beatrice's grandmother's life became different when she moved? Talk about what it might be like to move and to start a new life in a new place.

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits: <http://library.ohio.gov/ctro>.

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