

Author of the Month...

May 2026

Lesya Cline-Ransome

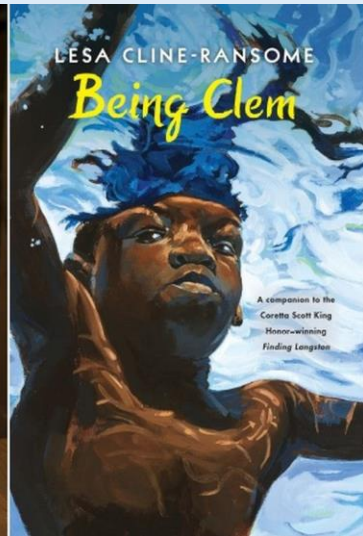
Lesya Cline-Ransome is the writer of many picture books. Her picture book biography titles include *Satchel Paige*, *Major Taylor*, *Champion Cyclist*, *Young Pele*, *Soccer's First Star*, *Helen Keller*, *The World in Her Heart*, *Before There was Mozart* and *Words Set me Free: The Story of Young Frederick Douglass*.

Other titles are *Quilt Alphabet*, *Quilt Counting*, *Light in the Darkness*, *A Story about How Slaves Learned in Secret*, and the 2018 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Book *Before She Was Harriet: The Story of Harriet Tubman*.



Originally from Malden, Massachusetts, Lesa has worked as a proofreader, fashion copywriter, publicist, teacher in the New York City Schools, and taught writing for adults. She has a B.F.A. in Merchandising and Management from Pratt Institute and an M.A. in Education from N.Y.U.

She lives in Rhinebeck, New York and with her husband and frequent collaborator, illustrator James Ransome, four children and St. Bernard, Nola.



1. What is your favourite word?

Serendipity. Which means a happy accident. It sounds like a roller-coaster ride. Like singing a song. Like an ice cream flavour. Just lovely and fun and playful.

2. Did you always want to be a writer?

First I wanted to be a veterinarian, then a farmer, a librarian, and an Olympic athlete racing in the 200 meter. I have worked as a fashion copywriter, a teacher, a publicist and a full time mom, but a writer? Not so much. For a long time, even though I was an avid reader, I never really thought about writing books as full-time job. My writing was always encouraged in school and college, but it wasn't until I began graduate school in Elementary Education at New York University and my husband, illustrator James Ransome began illustrating, that I started thinking about writing books for young readers. Of course now I can't imagine doing anything else.

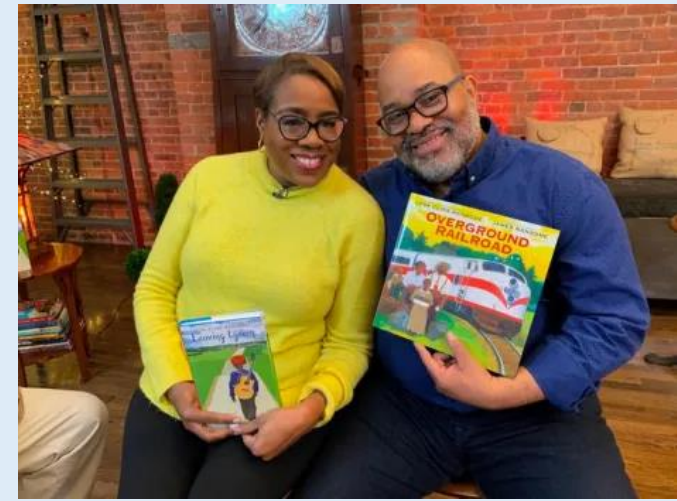
3. What do you do when you're not writing?

I spend an awful lot of time writing but I do love listening to music live, on vinyl, singing loudly in the car, and in the kitchen while dancing and cooking dinner. I also love puzzles, anagrams, playing board games and watching movies, but my two favourite things to do are reading and hosting family dinners with my four children and my extended family and spending hours at the table eating, laughing and talking.



4. What is it like working with your husband?

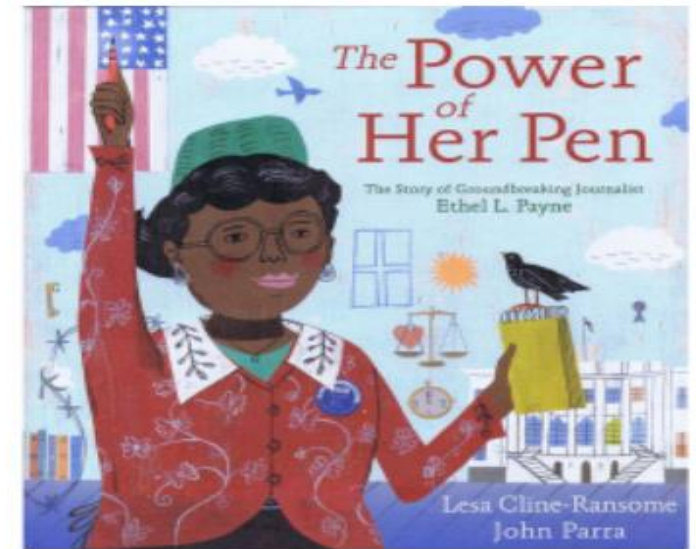
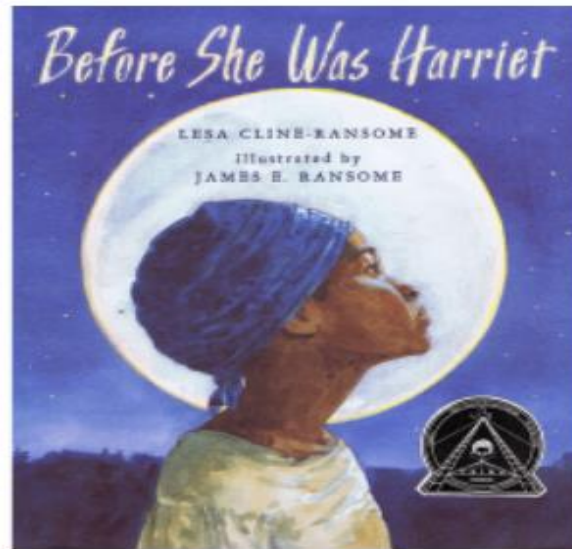
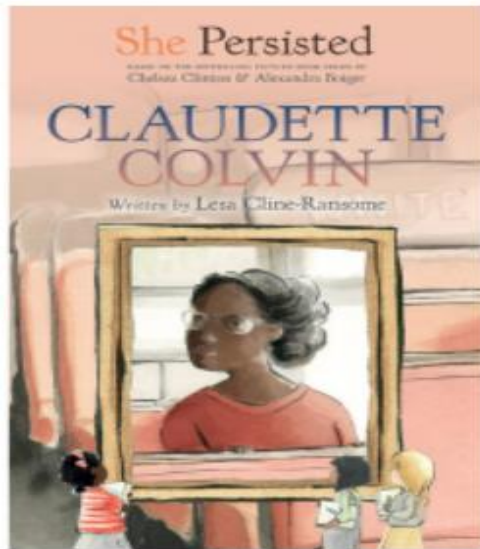
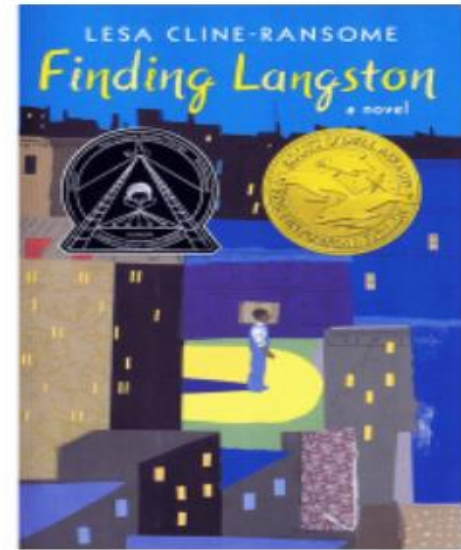
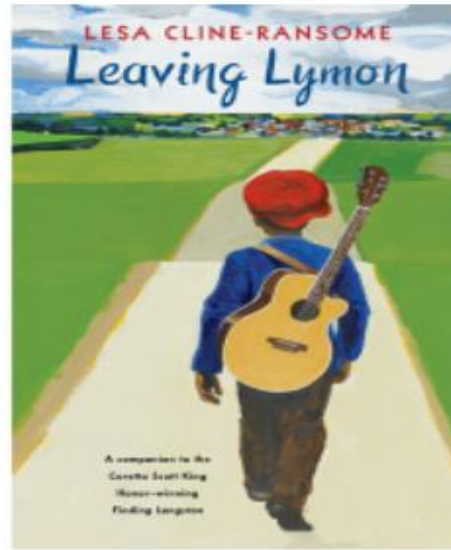
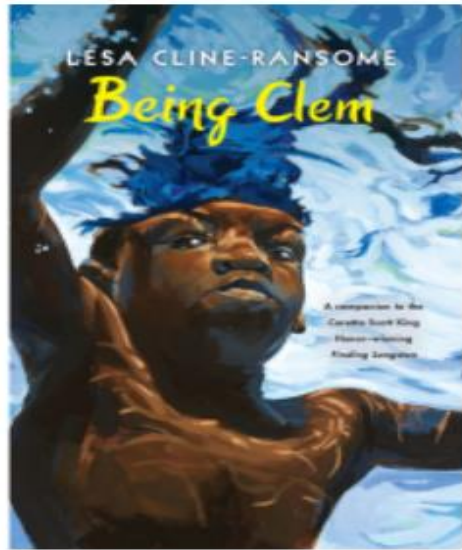
When people hear that my husband, illustrator James Ransome, often illustrates my picture books, I think they like to imagine the two of us, side by side, poring over a manuscript I have written, and then making our way to James' easel to discuss each of the paintings James will create. The truth is that the only time we truly collaborate is when we are brainstorming projects to work on together, usually over breakfast or dinner or while running errands. Other than that, I work in my office and he works on the opposite side of the house in his studio. Typically after I complete a manuscript he begins illustrating, sometimes 1–2 years later, at which point I have forgotten most of what I have written.

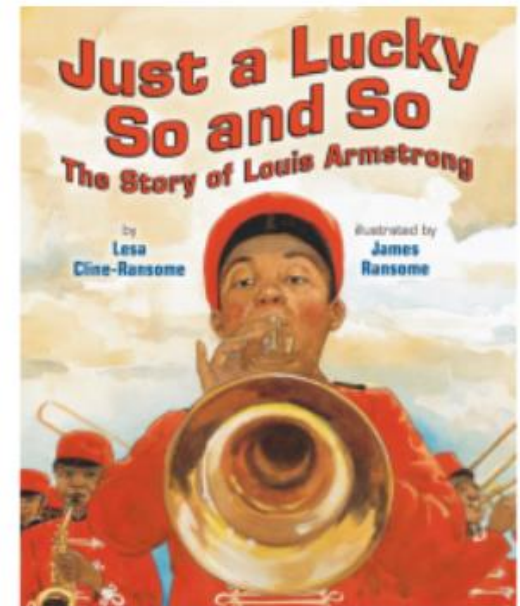
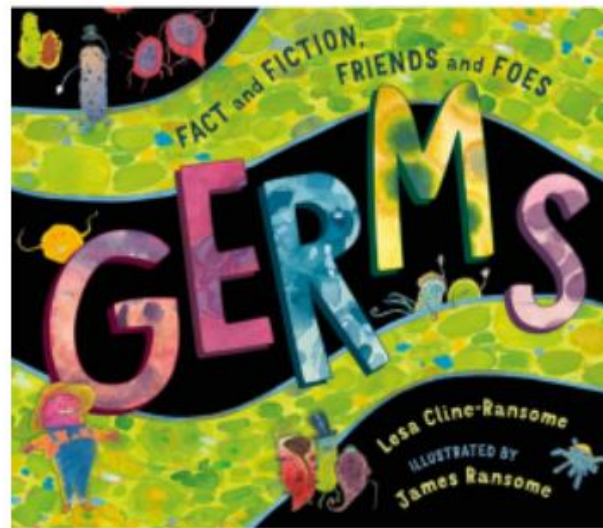
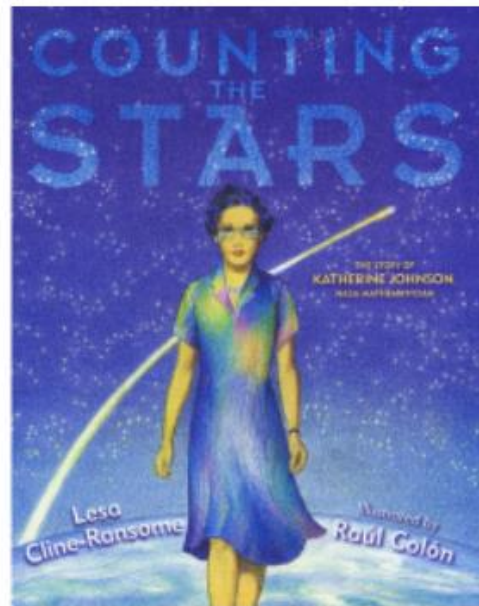
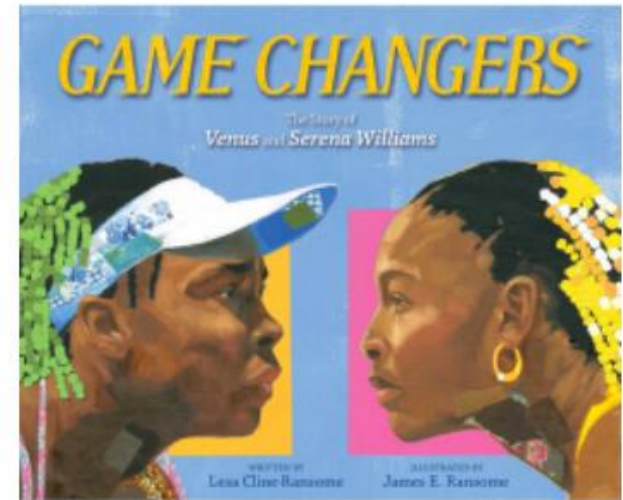
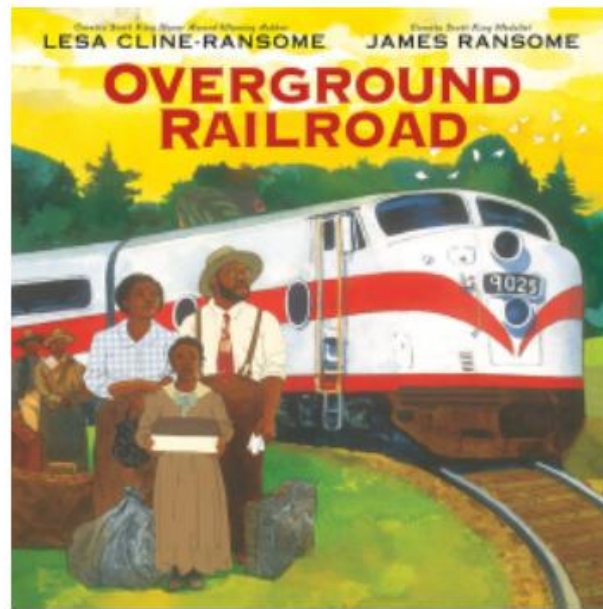
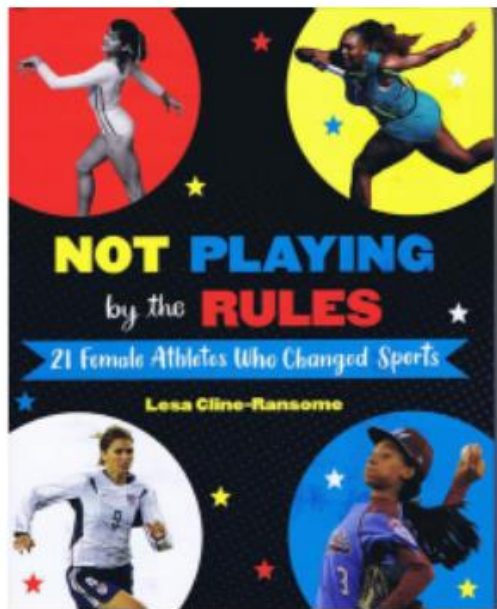


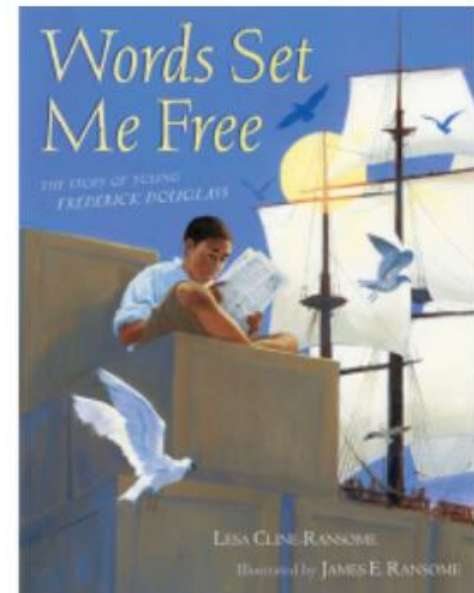
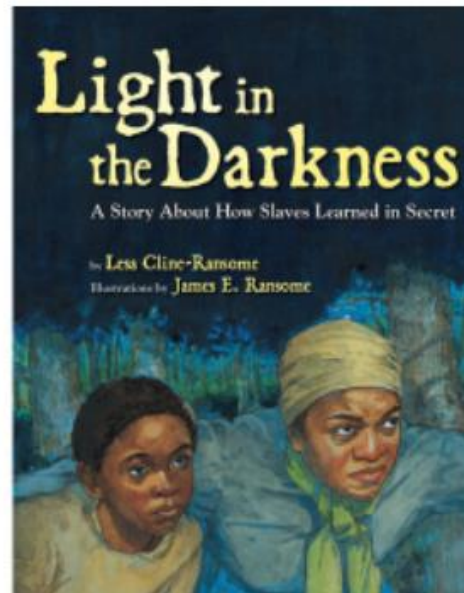
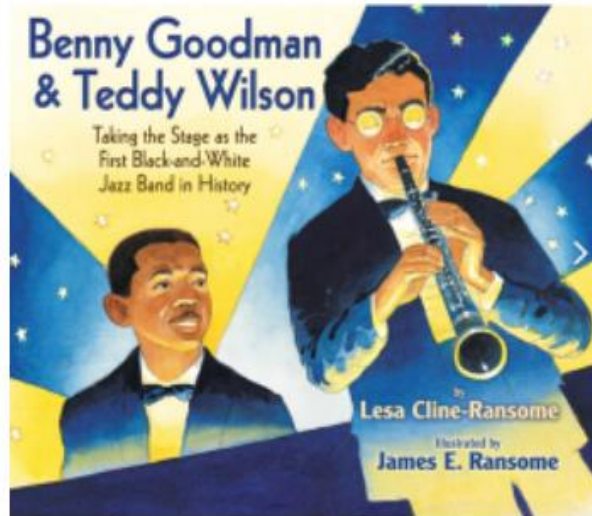
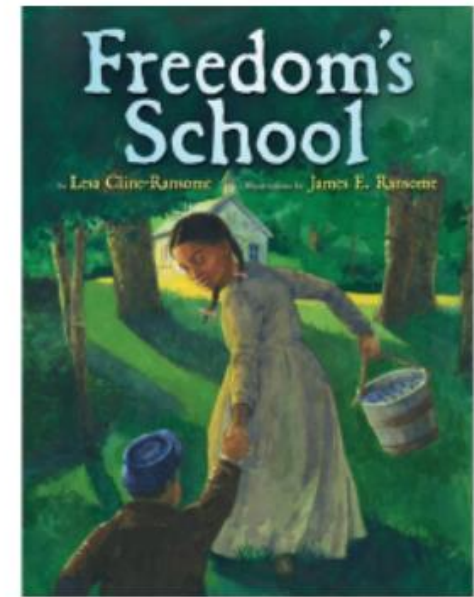
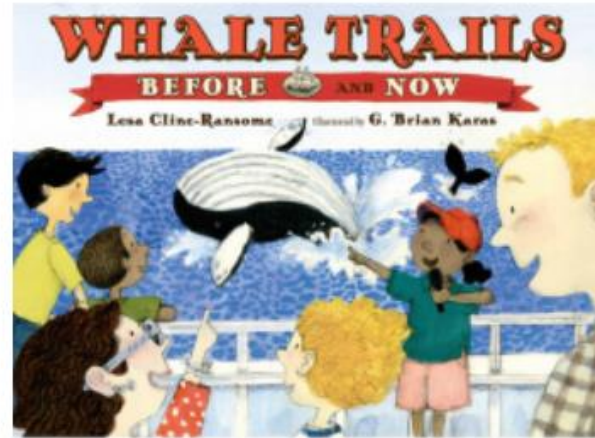
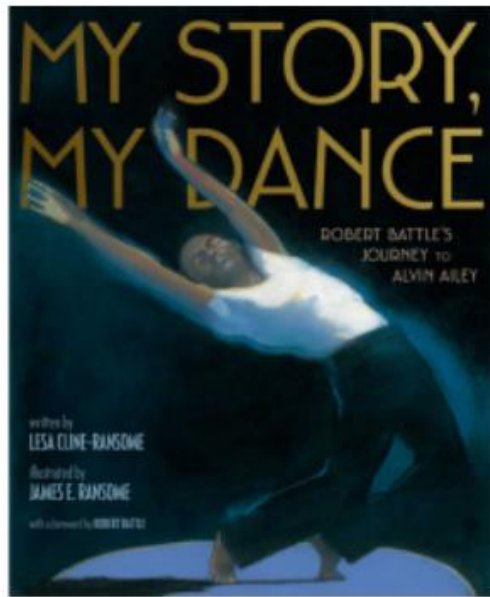
5. What is your advice for aspiring writers?

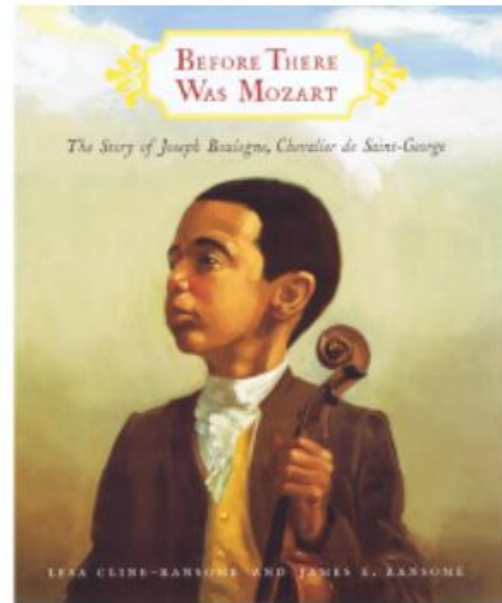
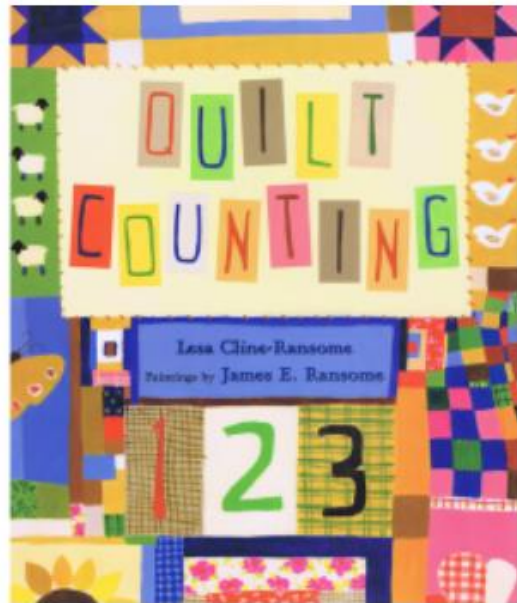
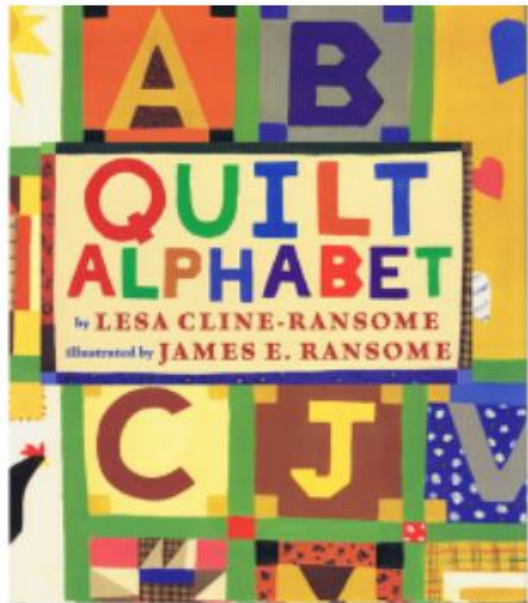
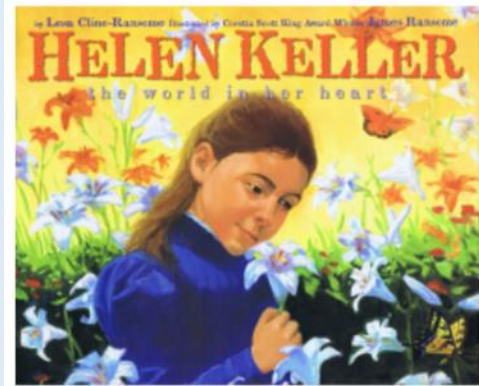
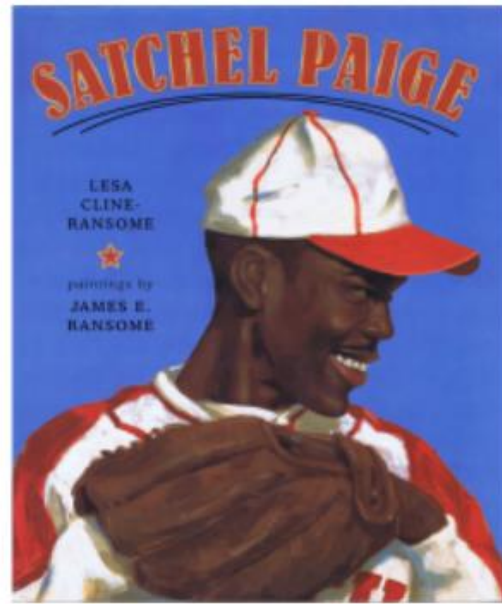
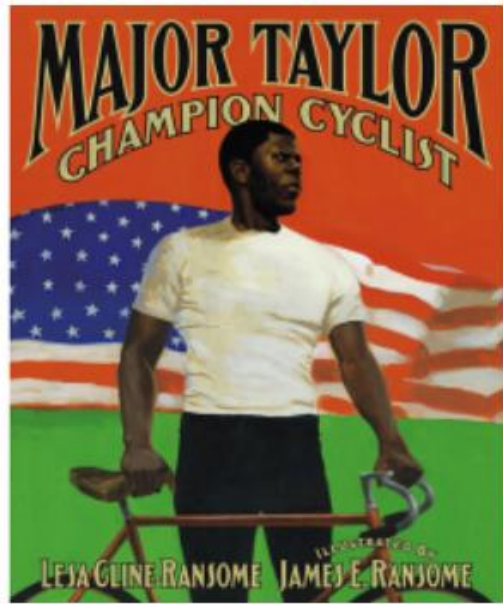
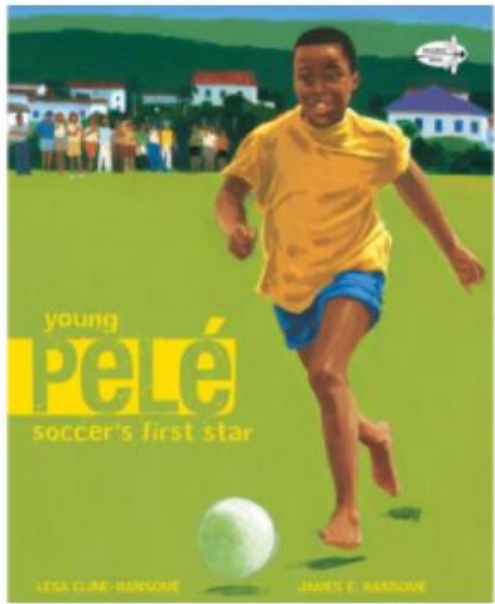
Read and write often. It's just that simple. Each time you pick up a book, you are teaching yourself how to write.

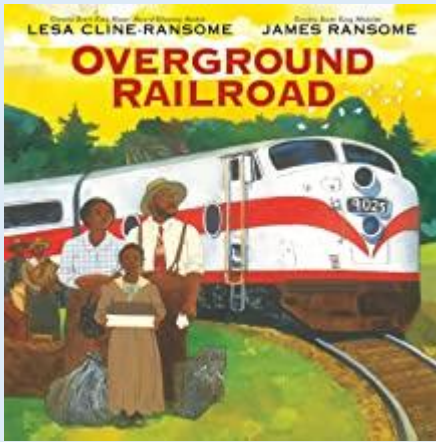




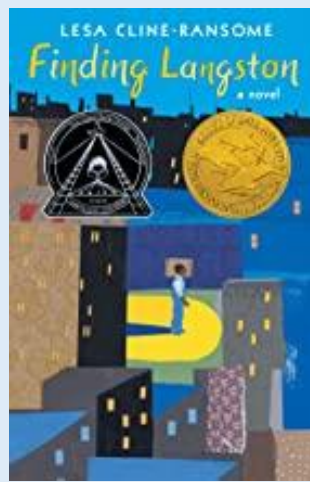




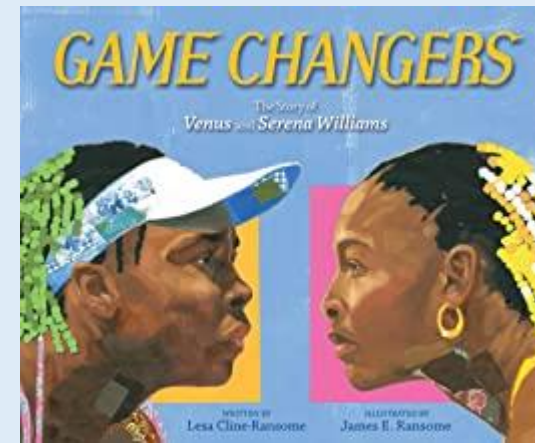




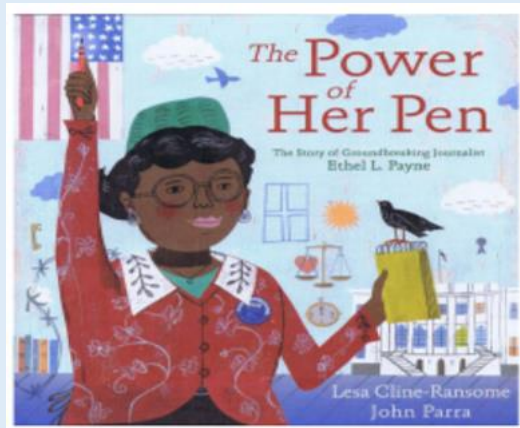
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lEHwTT9z2E>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3jScvVurKY>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lk-AiP8liGQ>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Au0KKeBvko>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufkYX-rN9VE>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0VQbu2pc6A>