



# Velvet Pumpkin Books

February 2026 Newsletter

## BLACK HISTORY & BELONGING

February is a month of love—but not only the kind written on Valentine's cards. It's the love of ancestors who dreamed us into being. The love of storytellers who refused to let their people be forgotten. The love that says, *You belong here. You always have.*

This month, we celebrate Black History Month by lifting up stories of resilience, legacy, and the ongoing work of belonging. These aren't just stories about the past—they're stories about right now, about who we choose to remember and whose voices we choose to amplify.

### *February's Focus: Legacy & Resilience*

February is home to:

- Black History Month
- Valentine's Day — a reminder that love takes many forms
- An invitation to ask: Whose stories deserve more space?

Black History Month was established not to confine Black history to 28 days, but to ensure it couldn't be ignored entirely. The work of February is to carry these stories forward—into March, into summer, into every conversation about who built this country and whose contributions have been erased.

*History isn't just what happened. It's what we choose to remember.*

### *February Reading Circle: Stories of Resilience & Love*

This month's reading selections celebrate Black voices, cultural legacy, and the many forms love takes across generations.

#### **Children's Pick**

##### ***Lucy's Umbrella***

by Sara Madden — Velvet Pumpkin Books

A heartwarming story of connection, community, and the small acts of kindness that ripple outward. Lucy discovers that the things we share—even something as simple as an umbrella—can bring people together in unexpected and beautiful ways. A gentle reminder that belonging isn't something we find; it's something we create for each other.

#### **Young Adult Pick**

##### ***Brown Girl Dreaming***

by Jacqueline Woodson

In this National Book Award winner, Woodson shares her childhood in verse—growing up in South Carolina and New York during the Civil Rights era. She writes of family, faith, and the pull between two worlds. Lyrical and deeply moving, this memoir-in-verse shows how the stories we inherit shape who we become. A book to read slowly, to savor, to return to.

### **Adult Pick**

#### ***Between the World and Me***

by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Written as a letter to his teenage son, Coates confronts the history of racism in America and the ongoing reality of what it means to inhabit a Black body in this country. Raw, urgent, and unforgettable, this is a book that demands we reckon with uncomfortable truths. Not an easy read—but a necessary one.

#### ***Velvet Pumpkin Spotlight: Hidden Histories of Black Women***

As part of our Hidden Histories Universe, we're researching and writing about Black women whose contributions to American history have been overlooked, minimized, or erased entirely.

From the women who served as spies during the Civil War to the mathematicians who sent astronauts to space, from healers and midwives to organizers and educators—these are stories that belong in our classrooms, our libraries, and our collective memory.

We believe that recovering these stories isn't just about the past. It's about showing young readers today that people who look like them have always been making history—even when history books failed to notice.

*When we tell the whole story, we become whole.*

#### ***Community Connection – Utah Highlights***

Here in Utah, February offers meaningful ways to celebrate Black history and culture:

### **Black History Month Events**

Salt Lake City, Ogden, and communities across the Wasatch Front host lectures, performances, film screenings, and community gatherings throughout the month. Check local event calendars for programming.

### **Utah Black Chamber of Commerce**

Support Black-owned businesses this month and every month. The Utah Black Chamber maintains a directory of member businesses across the state.

### **Museum Exhibits & Library Programs**

Many Utah libraries and museums feature special Black History Month exhibits, author events, and reading programs. The Utah Museum of Fine Arts and Natural History Museum of Utah often host relevant programming.

*Check your local library, community center, or city calendar for events near you.*

## *A Question to Carry With You This Month*

*"Whose story deserves more space this month?"*

Maybe it's an author you've never read. A neighbor whose history you've never asked about. A chapter of local history that wasn't taught in school. Let February be an invitation to listen—and to share what you learn.

### **Looking Ahead**

In March, we'll explore:

- Women's History Month
- International Women's Day (March 8)
- Stories of courage, voice, and visibility
- A deeper look at the *Hidden Histories of Women* series

Until then, may your February be filled with love in all its forms—the love of family, the love of community, and the love that refuses to let any story be forgotten.

*With gratitude,*  
**Velvet Pumpkin Books**

*Stories for the thoughtful, the curious, and the kind.*