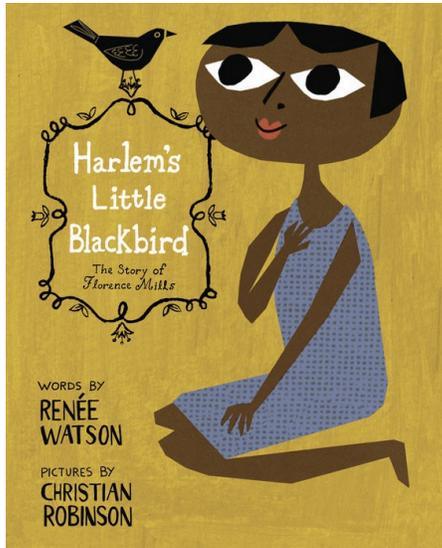




**“Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer, Spirit of the Civil Rights”
Movement by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Ekua Holmes**



About *Harlem's Little Blackbird*: Born to parents who were both former slaves, Florence Mills knew at an early age that she loved to sing, and that her sweet, bird-like voice, resonated with those who heard her. Performing catapulted her all the way to the stages of 1920s Broadway where she inspired everyone from songwriters to playwrights. Yet with all her success, she knew firsthand how prejudice shaped her world and the world of those around her. As a result, Florence chose to support and promote works by fellow Black performers while heralding a call for their civil rights. *Harlem's Little Blackbird* is a timeless story about justice, equality, and the importance of following one's heart and dreams.

Read Aloud Tips:

- Introduce the book, author and illustrations.
- Use a timeline to connect events in social justice from emancipation to civil rights.
- Give clear examples of prejudice that Black Americans faced at that time, and today.
- Singing helped Florence Mills. Asked students to identify things that make them feel more powerful. Students can make a collage to name these traits.

About The Author: Renée Watson is the author of the children's picture book, *A Place Where Hurricanes Happen* (Random House, June 2010), which was featured on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams. Her middle grade novel, *What Momma Left Me* debuted as the New Voice for 2010 in middle grade fiction by The Independent Children's Booksellers Association. Renée's one woman show, *Roses are Red, Women are Blue*, debuted at New York City's Lincoln Center at a showcase for emerging artists. Her poetry and articles have been published in *Rethinking Schools*, *Theatre of the Mind* and *With Hearts Ablaze*. When Renée is not writing and performing, she is teaching. Renée currently lives in New York City.



Additional Resources:

Find more information on other books that can be used in your class library at literacy.roosevel.edu.

“With a text that stylistically sings yet is packed with information, the book introduces a woman who, though part of the Harlem Renaissance, is not well remembered by history.”

- *Booklist*