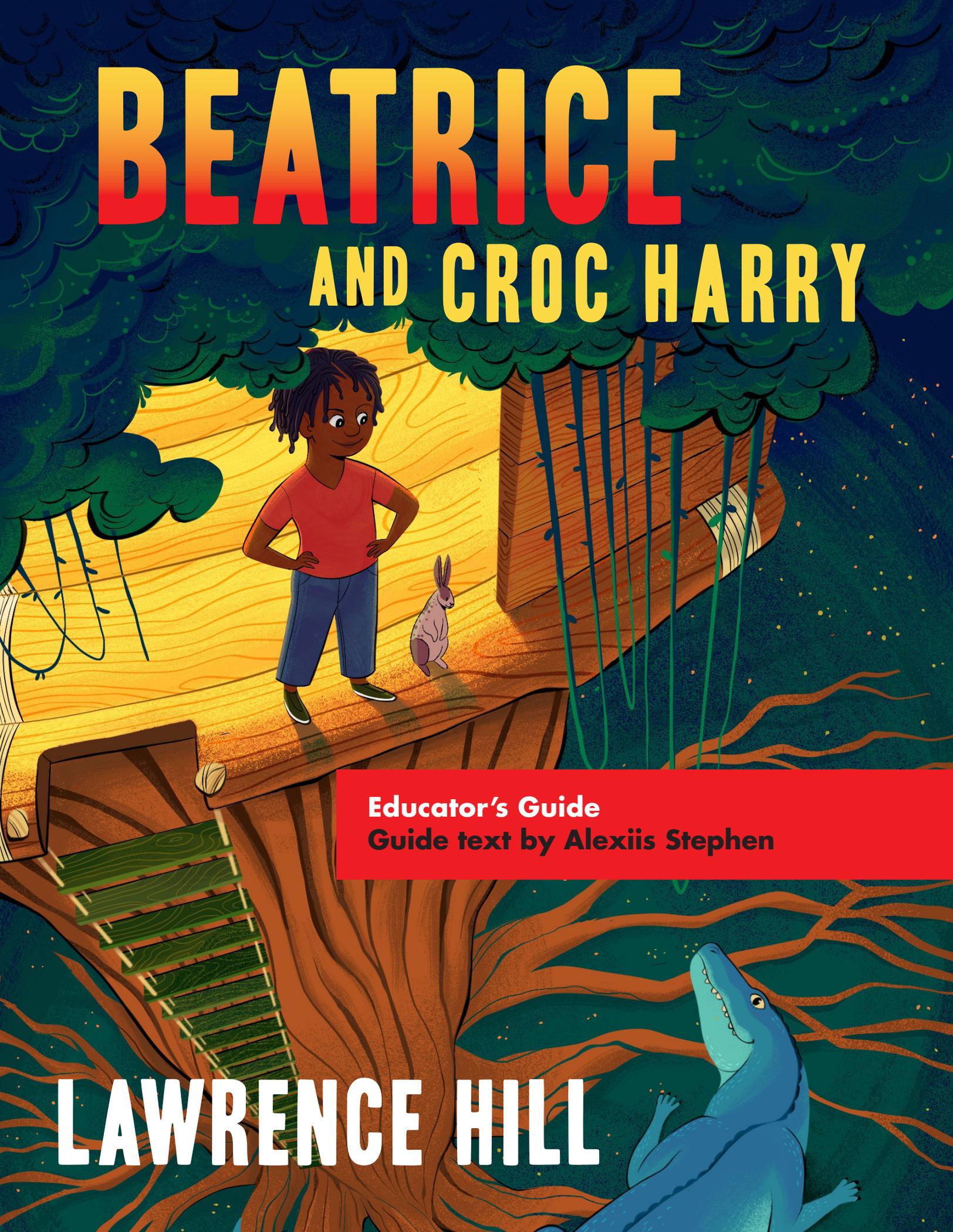


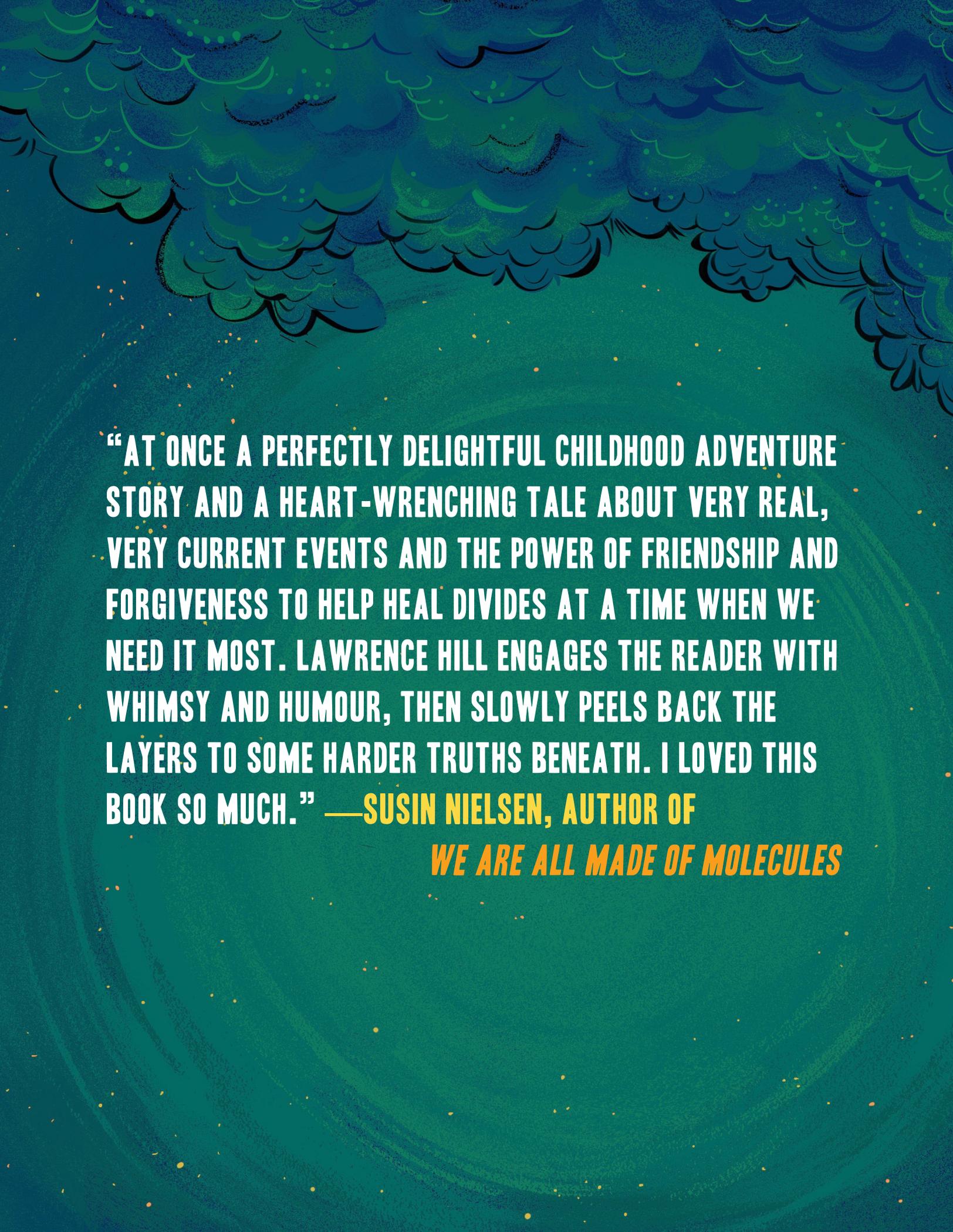
# BEATRICE AND CROC HARRY

The illustration depicts a young boy with dark skin and dreadlocks, wearing a red t-shirt and blue pants, standing on a wooden platform high up in a tree. He has his hands on his hips and is looking towards the right. A small, spotted rabbit is sitting on the platform next to him. The treehouse is built on a large tree trunk, with a wooden ladder leading up to it. The background is a dark, starry night sky with silhouettes of trees and a large crocodile swimming in the water below. The crocodile is blue and has its mouth open, showing its teeth. The overall style is colorful and whimsical.

**Educator's Guide**

**Guide text by Alexiis Stephen**

**LAWRENCE HILL**



**“AT ONCE A PERFECTLY DELIGHTFUL CHILDHOOD ADVENTURE STORY AND A HEART-WRENCHING TALE ABOUT VERY REAL, VERY CURRENT EVENTS AND THE POWER OF FRIENDSHIP AND FORGIVENESS TO HELP HEAL DIVIDES AT A TIME WHEN WE NEED IT MOST. LAWRENCE HILL ENGAGES THE READER WITH WHIMSY AND HUMOUR, THEN SLOWLY PEELS BACK THE LAYERS TO SOME HARDER TRUTHS BENEATH. I LOVED THIS BOOK SO MUCH.” —SUSIN NIELSEN, AUTHOR OF**

***WE ARE ALL MADE OF MOLECULES***



## DEAR EDUCATOR,

Some twenty years ago, when a three-year-old girl named Beatrice entered my life and suddenly became my fifth (and final!) child, I looked for ways to bond with her. She loved a good bedtime story, so I began inventing stories featuring an older girl with the same name and her adventures with a hypervocal, 700-pound crocodile named Harry.

Every night, the fictional Beatrice would find herself in the death grip of the crocodile, who had lured her in with friendly talk, only to attempt to have her for lunch. And every night, Beatrice would narrowly escape the jaws of death by finding a new means to outfox her predator. I told my daughter dozens of variations on this theme, until she finally had her fill and moved on to other stories. However, I promised real-life Beatrice that one day I would turn the stories into a book and dedicate it to her.

I gave this book my heart and soul. From the outset, it was clear that I would have to lift the story beyond its original structure. I would have to show Beatrice and Croc Harry evolving in their testy relationship. I also thought more deeply about what I was trying to teach my Beatrice in these nightly tales. The novel grew into an allegory about predation, danger, trust and friendship. It wasn't easy to pen because I was striving to write with a light touch about heavy issues.

It became my goal to write in an exuberant, playful way about a subject close to my heart: the loss and rediscovery of identity, which is at the core of the historical experiences of peoples of the African Diaspora. It seemed only right to begin the story with Beatrice alone and abandoned in a massive forest. On the first page, when she awakens in the Argilia forest, she has no memory of what happened before, or who she was. She doesn't even know her last name or what year it is. She is truly alone. Nobody is coming to rescue her. So, it is up to this clever, spirited girl to find out why she is all alone, if she has a family and a community, and how to return home.

Beatrice begins to realize that she is Black, but she has no idea about her own racial identity. She will only start to discover and claim it as she prepares to re-enter a very troubled world.

I love language, and playing with it, and I brought this love to every page of this book. Growing up in Toronto in the 1960s, I learned countless rich and colourful expressions from my African American father, Daniel G. Hill III. *Uncouth*, *gouzelum* and *willy lump lump* were just three of the terms that I already loved by the time I started reading. I have always jumped at opportunities to poke around in libraries (big and small, humble and grand—gotta love them all!)

and to explore English, French and Spanish. In writing, I dove into all those pleasurable memories and sought to give my characters some of the richest sounds and speech idiosyncrasies that surrounded me in childhood.

In the real world, many displaced people have had to draw upon great intelligence and linguistic flexibility as they entered new continents and cultures. In the magical forest of Argilia, Beatrice relies on her own linguistic genius to communicate with a crocodile, a rabbit, a tarantula and a lemur as she gathers the broken pieces of her life and tries to fit them back together.

I wrote this story with children in mind, but I was also imagining and reaching out to adult readers who are still children at heart. For me, and I believe for many other adults, there is something strangely timeless and comforting about stepping with both feet into a fantasy for children. I hope that *Beatrice and Croc Harry* speaks to children and adults of all ages who love language and who welcome story as one of humankind's greatest gifts. I also hope that this novel gives readers reason to reflect about injustice and how to confront it, and about how perpetrators of injustice and those who have been wronged might meet again later in a place of respect and healing.

Thank you for being open to *Beatrice and Croc Harry* and for sharing it with young readers. I hope you have a beautiful journey.

I, for one, walked a long, curving, scenic road as I unlocked a story that had sat dormant in my soul for twenty years before it was ready to come out and play.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Hill





## **NOTE TO EDUCATORS**

This guide was designed with a focus on continuing conversations around specific themes that run through the novel, including but not limited to race, identity, intersectionality and social justice. The approach taken is directed toward Junior and Intermediate students, Grades 4–8. Background information, context and considerations are offered in each theme, along with division-driven discussion questions and activities. As teachers, you should use professional judgment to select what will work best for your students, depending on their grade level and strengths. Just as importantly, knowing your learner should precede any conversations and drive the direction and depth of discussions as well as the activities chosen.

Building community early and continuing throughout the school year contribute to safe and inclusive learning spaces. Establishing norms, upholding Indigenous and human rights, and interrupting harmful or discriminatory language all enhance the ways in which students experience education. In recognizing the diversity and intersectionality in any classroom, it is important to be aware that the story of *Beatrice and Croc Harry* will be experienced differently by every student.

### **Affirming student identity**

One big question woven throughout this novel is, At what point does race matter? To further consider this question, it is worth reflecting on the ways in which media, social media, society, etc., inform these perspectives. Messages—both overt and subtle—can influence the ways that children come to understand notions of race and difference. Lack of exposure to racial diversity, along with messages that reinforce stereotypes and low expectations, can contribute to experiences of racial discrimination. Learning spaces are a great place to change the narrative.

As an educator, a good place to begin is in thinking critically about the classroom environment. Consider hidden messages in the posters on the wall, in the examples provided in lessons, and in the books and resources made available to students. Consider what quantity of the resources, books and images represent the many intersectionalities of Black identity in an affirming way. *Beatrice and Croc Harry* offers a foundation for wide-ranging discussions around challenging topics while at the same time affirming Black identity.



## A LIST OF KEY TERMS

It is important that educators familiarize themselves with these terms and understand their connections to the novel, as they regularly surface throughout this guide.

- segregation
- intersectionality
- microaggressions
- race
- white supremacy
- racism
- stereotyping
- biracial
- multiracial
- allyship
- anti-Black racism
- Eurocentric
- bystander

## BEATRICE AND CROC HARRY: ACTIVITIES

1. After reading the novel, do you think that the cover art explains the story of Beatrice and Croc Harry well? (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. Intermediate Extension: Book Review! Create a post on TikTok or Instagram to share your thoughts on the novel.
2. The novel *Beatrice and Croc Harry* has a lot of words that are explained throughout, as well as a dictionary at the end. Make a personal dictionary of the words that were new to you and/or that you found most interesting. (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. If you were to rewrite or make a sequel to the book, what invented words might you include? Co-create an expanded dictionary for your classroom. (Junior/Intermediate)
3. In Chapter 10, Beatrice speaks Spanish and French to Croc Harry. Being able to speak another language in addition to English helps Beatrice to express herself and use the exact words she needs in that moment. (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. What are the many languages that are used in your classroom? Discuss how the meaning of words can change with language. (Junior/Intermediate)
  - b. Co-create a multilingual dictionary for your classroom. (Junior/Intermediate)
4. The author provides great detail around Argilia, from its geography and its rules to how its inhabitants have come to be there. Build a diorama of Argilia based on the descriptions found in the novel. (Junior/Intermediate)

- a. Where do you think Argilia might be found in the world? Why do you think so? (Junior/Intermediate)

discussion on the book. Pick one of the themes and create a question to ask your group. (Intermediate)

- 5. *Beatrice and Croc Harry* contains various themes, including race and racism, intersectionality, identity and social justice. Imagine you are leading a book club or

## REFERENCES OF NOTE

Topic	Page #	Details
Caribbean culture and language	8 & 339	The term <i>broughtupcy</i> refers to an individual's perceived manners.
	176	Sucking front teeth is an action that might be taken to show disapproval and/or annoyance (a.k.a. <i>Kiss-teet</i> or KMT).
	192	<i>Tender-headed</i> is used to refer to someone who feels unreasonable pain when their hair is being done.
	284 & 358	The term <i>ragamuffin</i> would apply to an individual who is poorly dressed or unkempt.
Hairstyles referenced in the novel	191	For more context and information on Black hair, listen to the CBC Radio podcast " <a href="#">Tangled Roots: Decoding the History of Black Hair.</a> "
		Cornrows (canerows) is a natural Black hairstyle in which the wearer traditionally has flat braids close to the scalp in rows from the front of the hairline to the nape of the neck. Contemporary cornrows can include a myriad of designs using the flat braid that is close to the scalp.



Topic	Page #	Details
Hairstyles referenced in the novel (cont.)	159 & 160  317	<p>Twists are a natural Black hairstyle that look like braids but are made using two strands of hair versus three.</p> <p>An afro is a natural Black hairstyle in which the hair is allowed to grow (or is teased with a pick) out and away from the head. The afro often looks round, like a ball. It became a very popular hairstyle in Canada, the United States and in Caribbean countries in the 1960s and 1970s and was representative of Black pride. Many people still wear afros proudly today.</p>
African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.)	266	<p>The A.M.E. Church has a long history in North America. Founded in 1812, the A.M.E. Church provided a place for worship for Black church members who were otherwise pushed out of white churches at the time. Since then, the church continues to provide a sense of community for its members. To learn more about the history of the church, please visit the official <a href="#">website</a>.</p>
History of violence to members of the Black community	266  296	<p><b>The following parts of the novel could be a trigger for some students. Providing a warning, along with offering support and time to unpack, are all strategies when approaching this topic.</b></p> <p>Although the event described in the novel is fictitious in nature, it is based on real events. There is a long history of violence targeted at members of Black communities in their places of worship.</p> <p>The comment “I would just as soon shoot that little Black girl” reflects a long history of violence against Black people. Initially, to justify the inhumane act of the Transatlantic slave trade, the socially constructed concept of “Black” was created; it was and continues to be used to try to maintain power by European and non-Black descendants by making a false association with inferiority. The racism that is uniquely experienced by members of the Black community is called Anti-Black racism and impacts all parts of Black lives. Anti-Black racism is ingrained in the structures of North American society and contributes to the devaluing of Black people.</p>





## RACE AND RACISM

Race is a social construct created to benefit one group in society over another. This is supported by strong scientific and anthropological evidence. Although a concept, race has had a significant impact on all facets of society to this day and ultimately shows up through acts of racism. From policy and law to the present-day structures of many institutions, the concept of race continues to contribute to experiences of superiority and inferiority in society.

In the twenty-first century and earlier, racism can be described as operating at the individual, interpersonal and institutional level. At the individual and interpersonal level, racism can be discrete and layered (i.e., microaggressions) to outright and obvious, such as acts of violence. The ongoing and most pervasive form of racism is institutional, or systemic in nature. Systemic racism is racism that is baked into core societal institutions: education, child welfare, housing, health, banking and the justice system, including policing and incarceration. Racism—whether it is outright and visible, or systemic and subtle—continues to have long-lasting impacts and is exacerbated by the daily patterns of living in societies that centre, normalize and affirm Eurocentric experiences.

In the novel, Beatrice journeys through her own discovery of self, and that includes her

race. Initially, Beatrice notices her skin colour as a fact of who she is. Throughout the novel, the perceptions and reactions of others to Beatrice's skin colour inform and shape her growing sense of self. This novel provides the opportunity for the reader to wonder, When do we become aware of our differences, and who (or what) influences this awareness?

On page 286, Beatrice says, “But haven't you noticed—when somebody does something bad to you, the natural instinct is for *you* to feel bad?” This question speaks to the impact of racism and the personal hurt and anguish these experiences can cause at an emotional level. It is important to note that anti-Black racism goes beyond verbal slurs. It includes actions—individual and institutional (or systemic)—that specifically target people because of the colour of their skin or perceived race.

### **RACE AND RACISM: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. The author writes about how Beatrice sees herself in comparison to how others see her (p. 246). In only seeing Beatrice's skin colour, what did the white men not see? (Junior/Intermediate)
2. On page 38, Croc Harry asks Beatrice about her skin colour. Beatrice doesn't appreciate this question and wonders



whether there is something wrong with her skin to make Croc Harry ask. She finally determines that “her skin was her skin, and that was all there was to it.” In your own words, compare how Beatrice sees herself and how Croc Harry (the world) sees her. (Junior/Intermediate)

- a. *Note to teacher:* it is important to see colour, and at the same time it is our role as citizens to become knowledgeable about, and respectful of, those who have different physical attributes. Consider who in society is consistently asked about aspects of their physical appearance, such as skin colour, and who is not. Consider who is regarded as neutral and who is “othered” in asking these questions.
3. In the novel, Croc Harry says, “It’s the price I pay for being a King Croc” (p. 39). Why do you think Croc Harry believes that he’s king? Did anyone tell him? Is he really a king? (Junior/Intermediate)
4. On page 312, Beatrice doesn’t want to be called Black, but on page 323, the Queen tells Beatrice that differences are something to be celebrated. On page 204, Killjoy explains that being Black is something to be proud of, saying, “Black isn’t just a colour. It’s a people. A shared history. A

sense of belonging.” Why do you think it is important for Beatrice to be proud of who she is? (Junior/Intermediate)

## RACE AND RACISM: ACTIVITIES

1. Pretend the author is planning to write a sequel to this book. Identify three actions you think that the citizens of the Giant’s Land would have to take for them to live peacefully in the Queendom. (Junior/Intermediate)
2. Beatrice longingly thinks about being part of a family on page 61. She believes that having a family would mean that “They would not ask why your skin was brown because they would know it was normal to have brown skin.” What does this mean for Beatrice, in terms of how much she feels that she is part of the world around her? Critically think about your classroom and greater school space. Is it designed for everyone to feel included? (Junior/Intermediate)



## IDENTITY

How people see themselves is often directly and indirectly impacted by the reactions of others. This is further compounded by the normalizing of Eurocentric standards through various forms of media, including social media. Identity of self evolves and is shaped by where one lives, goes to school or works, especially in interactions with others both physically and virtually.

Although it is known that race is a social construct, people in society are prejudged based on the colour of their skin and other physical features. In the novel, Beatrice's hair is a defining feature of her identity and plays a role in her growing sense of self, as well as in how she is seen (and wants to be seen) by others. Hair continues to be an ongoing conversation among those who identify as women in the Black community—from the cryptic code of **hair type** to products used for it, to the act of “taming” one's hair, to embracing its natural beauty. Black hair is a defining feature of self-love. The Oscar award-winning short film and book *Hair Love* both affirms identity and lovingly embodies the experiences above. And at the same time, many Black-identifying women of all ages find their hair a mystery. This is primarily due to normalized Eurocentric standards of beauty in North America and falsely associated shame that is often connected with Black hair. The

CBC short documentary *Nancy's Workshop* shares a hairdresser's journey in helping young Black girls reclaim the love for their uniquely beautiful crown of natural hair.

A person's name can be an aspect of identity, due in part to the name's origins as well as preconceived notions about it. Many of the characters in the novel have telling names that define their personality, character traits and how they see themselves. Take time to discuss with students how their own names might have shaped or influenced their identities.

The novel brings to light the unique way in which other words also shape and define identity. From the diversity of formal languages to culturally based slang, words contribute to a sense of belonging and community. The author introduces some words that are entirely made up and yet mean something to the bearer of the words and members of their community. Consider asking your students if they also invent or play with words as a way of defining their own lives and communicating in special ways with people who know them very well.

## IDENTITY: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. On page 179, Beatrice describes her hair as “Nourishment for my true nature, nutrients for my personality, food for my spirit—all that.” What differences can you see between the way Beatrice sees her



hair and the messages about Black hair that occur in public and private conversations, as well as in the media? (Junior/Intermediate)

2. In the novel, the author has invented a number of words. Think about the words that you use at home, among friends, on specific teams/groups, etc. What words do you use that are made up and unique to each group? (Junior/Intermediate)
3. Fuzzy is the first character to call Beatrice beautiful that she can remember (p. 82). Why do you think that Beatrice can't remember being called beautiful before? Think about the messages about beauty that are prevalent throughout North American society, including in the media. How have these messages created a narrative about who is beautiful and who is not? (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. *Note:* At the Intermediate level, consider making connections to social media and its impact on the perception of beauty. Are beauty ideals the same on social media? Or different? Why or why not?
4. Brian is able to talk to certain citizens in Argilia in a way that can lead to racist and discriminatory thoughts and actions. Brian also, at times, makes Beatrice question her

identity and sense of self. How does Brian's message reflect some of the most negative and harmful ways of thinking that occur in everyday conversations? (Junior/Intermediate)

- a. *Note:* At the Intermediate level, consider connecting this question to social media as well.

## IDENTITY: ACTIVITIES

1. *Affirmation in Action!* Choose one aspect of your physical identity that you love, and give it some love. For example: *I love my hands, which are strong and allow me to play the drums.* Or: *I love my eyes. They are so dark they are almost black. They allow me to see beauty in the world around me.* (Junior)
2. Guardians and families often choose names that they feel suit the person in question. Research the meaning of your name. Do you think that the meaning is true for you? Why or why not? (Junior/Intermediate)
3. Critically think about who you follow on social media. How would you describe the physical attributes of the people you tend to follow? Do they only look like you? (Intermediate)

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- a. If this is the case, what are the identities that you are missing?
  - b. How can only seeing people who look like you inform the way you see others in society?
  - c. *Challenge:* Carefully select people to follow who will help you to see diverse perspectives and experiences.

## INTERSECTIONALITY

**Intersectionality** is defined as “the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism and classism) combine, overlap or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.” To better understand the unique experiences and perspectives, an **intersectional approach** needs to be taken when reflecting on the actions, choices, beliefs, perspectives, etc., of one another. Specifically, in an effort to understand another’s lived experience, one needs to understand the ways in which parts of their identity impact the way in which they navigate the world. The author provides a picture of each character, which helps the reader to better understand their decisions and perspectives, as well as the past experiences that have defined who they are presently. In doing so, each character is also humanized.

Globally, there is a long history of members

of Black communities being seen as all the same. This leads to generalizations and stereotypes. At times, actions by one individual are often considered to reflect negatively upon all people in Black communities. This exacerbates anti-Black racism and plays out in similarly negative ways upon people in other racialized communities. It helps to remember that one person’s choices or actions do not speak for all people in any cultural, social or racial group. It also helps to recognize that the intersectionality (or multifaceted nature) of one’s identity contributes toward the way society is navigated. Beatrice’s character reminds us that we all want to be, and deserve to be, seen in the beautiful fullness of our humanity.

In the novel, the reader discovers that Beatrice is biracial. Specifically, her mother is white and her father is Black. In addition to other characteristics, this intersectionality of identity contributes to the ways in which Beatrice experiences the world around her and to how she is treated. Beatrice experiences anti-Black racism in her conversation with Matilda (pp. 54–55) at the Academy, in her interactions with Brian (p. 188) and at the end of the book when she’s engaging with the hunters (pp. 245–246). Beatrice also experiences anti-Black racism from Croc Harry. Croc Harry is able to see beyond the colour of Beatrice’s skin when he spends time with her and learns about all the things that make her a unique person. Only then do they

develop a meaningful and trusting friendship.

Culture also contributes toward the intersectionality of identity. Developing an understanding of culture (becoming culturally competent) reduces assumptions and can pave the way to the possibility of deeper and more authentic relationships. Cultural competence is one of the three tenets of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP). **The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Voice article** describes cultural competence as “helping students to value their own cultures while learning about the cultures of others who may or may not be represented in their classrooms.” This also includes removing assumptions about another’s culture based on prejudgments and stereotypes.

## **INTERSECTIONALITY: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. On page 246, Beatrice feels as though the hunters “couldn’t see her properly.” What do you think she means by this? What are the hunters missing? (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. How would seeing Beatrice properly change the hunters’ perspective of her?
  - b. What do the hunters need to do differently in the future?
2. Over the course of the novel, Beatrice and Croc Harry develop a meaningful

and trusting friendship despite their original differences that led to them being in Argilia. Brainstorm what you consider to be the qualities of a true friend. (Junior/Intermediate)

3. Killjoy describes her love of dance to Beatrice (p. 194). She says, “I dance to be whole . . . And to unite my colours. I can be not just Black, or white, but I can be both.” What does this statement say about Killjoy? (Intermediate)
  - a. *Note:* At the Junior level, students can make the connection to themselves.
4. Look up the term *intersectionality* and make a definition in your own words. (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. Create a Venn diagram of two different characters in the novel. What parts of their identity do you notice are similar/different?

## **INTERSECTIONALITY: ACTIVITIES**

1. An iceberg is well known to be much bigger below the surface of the water than above. Similarly, with people we often get to see only the physical attributes of each other and seldom what’s under the surface. Make a list of all the parts of Beatrice’s identity that are shared in the book. Draw



an iceberg and place the attribute either on the top of the iceberg (what can be seen easily by everyone) or below the water line (what can't be easily seen by everyone). (Junior/Intermediate)

2. Throughout the novel we learn what makes certain characters feel whole or free. For Beatrice, it is speaking up against injustice. For Horace, it is learning all that he can. For Killjoy, it is dancing expressively. For Croc Harry, it is developing a closer relationship with Beatrice. What activity allows you to feel whole or free? (Junior/Intermediate)

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice is characterized by the United Nations as actions taken to achieve peace and security for all members of society. Action can be taken by respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms globally. The **United Nations** has identified February 20 of every year as the World Day of Social Justice.

When engaging in discussions with students around human rights, race and racism, it is important that learning is paired with action. Allyship is a way in which students who experience less discrimination (or who are part of the dominant group) can support and create space for students whose lived experiences,

perspectives or identities are ignored, minimized and/or assumed. Authentic allyship cannot be performative in nature (i.e., social media posts, actions for optics, centering self, etc.). It requires commitment, reflection of self, a willingness to be uncomfortable, etc. For more information, please watch the TEDx Talk by Catherine Hernandez titled “**A Guide to Lifelong Allyship.**”

Part of the conversation of authentic allyship requires every individual to stand up and take action when injustices are witnessed. Being a bystander (i.e., staying neutral, quiet, etc.) maintains the status quo and continues to uphold spaces where racism is permitted. It is important that when experiencing instances of racism and/or discrimination, students know that interrupting, addressing and informing someone in authority is what is required in being an authentic ally.

The author demonstrates the need to go beyond allyship when/where harm has occurred. Restorative justice can function to embed accountability and repair past harms in a way that upholds the dignity of all parties. The story of *Beatrice and Croc Harry* provides an opportunity to see how relationships can be restored when there's an opportunity to learn more about the perspectives of one another while addressing the harm that has occurred. Addressing incidences of race through restorative justice is complex and



requires a strong analysis of systemic racism and its role in education.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Beatrice demonstrates authentic allyship at the Academy when she witnesses the injustices against the speckled rabbits and when facing the Giant. On page 200, she says, “As soon as you become aware of the world’s problems, you have to help deal with them.” Define the terms *social justice*, *performative allyship* and *authentic allyship*. Identify the ways in which Beatrice demonstrated authentic allyship during her time in Argilia. (Junior/Intermediate)
2. In Chapter 27, Horace, Beatrice and Croc Harry discuss the past events that have led to where they are at that moment. Beatrice and Horace each have a very different reaction to the events that occurred. What actions did each character take to begin their healing? (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. *Note:* It is important to note in instances of racism that the responsibility should not be on the victim to restore the relationship. Additionally, as shown in the novel, readiness to resolve will be different for each individual. To heal, true action is required by the perpetrator and

should derive from self-reflection, an understanding of the impact and a commitment to change.

3. Is there anything sad or troubling about the ending? Does all seem perfect in the Queen-dom? Are you optimistic that all wounds will be healed? (Junior/Intermediate)
  - a. In your opinion, do all stories in real life get happy endings? Do all wrongs get righted in the end?
  - b. Is healing always possible? Why or why not?
  - c. If you were to add a new chapter to the end of this book, or to write a sequel, what would you put in the story?

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE: ACTIVITIES**

1. Research the difference between performative and authentic allyship. Journal about an area in your life in which you would like to work on being a better and more authentic ally. How will you do that? (Junior/Intermediate)
2. On page 292, Croc Harry says that “Every child needs their fun.” Review the **Convention on the Rights of the Child**. Identify one Article (or area) that you would like to learn more about. What is

one way you can create awareness of your chosen Article? (Junior/Intermediate)

3. Imagine there is a sequel to the novel in which Croc Harry is able to demonstrate how he is an authentic ally. What do you think Croc Harry would have to do? How would he atone for his earlier crimes? (Junior/Intermediate)

- a. Can you imagine a story in which Croc Harry and Beatrice are reunited?
- b. Imagine that you are pitching a sequel to a publisher. Write a summary of the story you envision.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**LAWRENCE HILL** (author of *Beatrice and Croc Harry*) has written many award-winning and internationally bestselling books, including *The Book of Negroes*, which was made into a six-part TV miniseries, and *The Illegal*, which won CBC's Canada Reads and was a #1 national bestseller. His previous novels, *Some Great Thing* and *Any Known Blood*, also became national bestsellers. Hill's non-fiction work includes *Blood: The Stuff of Life*, the subject of his 2013 Massey Lectures, and *Black Berry, Sweet Juice*, a memoir about growing up Black and white in Canada. As a

volunteer, Hill has worked with Crossroads International, the Black Loyalist Heritage Society, Book Clubs for Inmates and the Ontario Black History Society. He is a professor of creative writing at the University of Guelph and lives with his family in Hamilton, Ontario, and Woody Point, Newfoundland.

**ALEXIIS STEPHEN** (guide text author) is an educator and instructional program leader for Equity and Inclusive Education and engages in community advocacy. Using critical race theory and an anti-oppression framework, she works with individuals and groups in public and private sectors to identify and challenge unexamined perspectives. Her knowledge and experience guide people from thought to action. Alexiis Stephen has a passion for human rights and equity, and believes in the power of relationships to shift toward transformational change.

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