



Can I Touch Your Hair? Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship

by Irene Latham and Charles Waters, illustrations
by Sean Qualls and Selina Alko

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A fifth grade boy and girl have to work together on a poetry project, and they're not sure what to write about . . . at first.

Irene Latham, who is white, and Charles Waters, who is black, use this fictional setup to present paired poems about topics including shoes, sports, music, stereotypes, and much more.

Accompanied by artwork from acclaimed illustrators Sean Qualls and Selina Alko, this relatable collection explores different experiences of race, and how we talk about it in twenty-first century America.

A fresh approach to exploring interracial communication...a brave and touching portrayal worthy of sharing in classrooms across America." - [Kirkus](#) ★ STARRED REVIEW

"The poems delicately demonstrate the complexity of identity and the power of communication to build friendships." - [Publisher's Weekly](#) ★ STARRED REVIEW

"Young readers searching for means to have difficult, emotional, and engaged discussions about race will find an enlightening resource in Irene and Charles' explorations." - [Booklist](#)

"... a beautifully direct yet somehow outstandingly subtle work that will allow young readers to navigate and understand their places in their communities and the greater world." - [Shelf Awareness](#)

"This clever book of poetry is about finding an unlikely friend... would make an excellent read-aloud or a launch pad for collaborative classroom writing." - [The Horn Book Magazine](#)

For more information about the book, the authors, and a downloadable Curriculum Guide, please visit charleswaterspoetry.com and irenelatham.com.