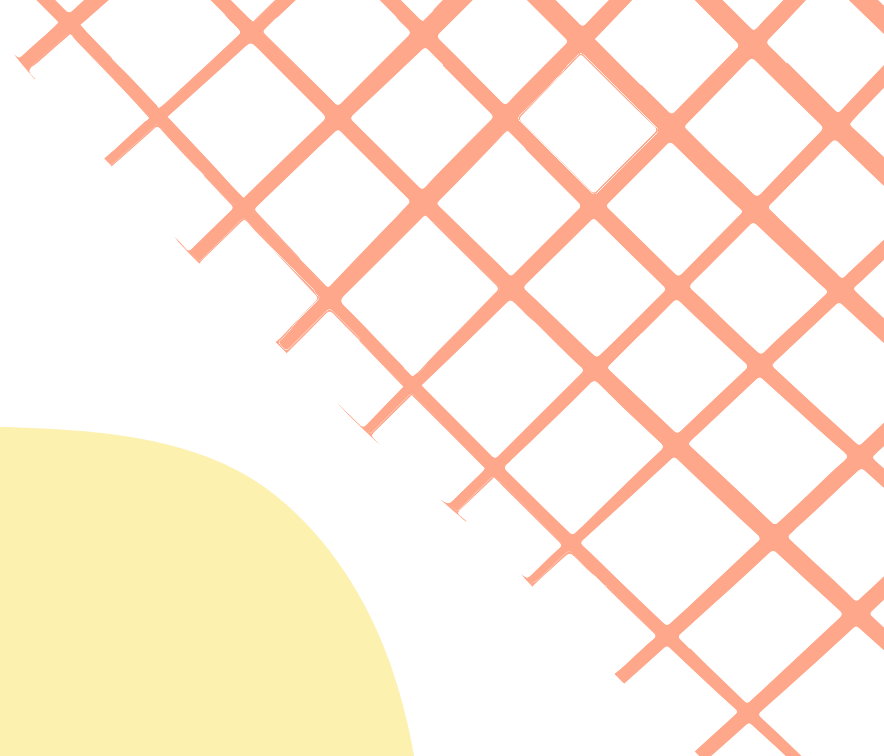


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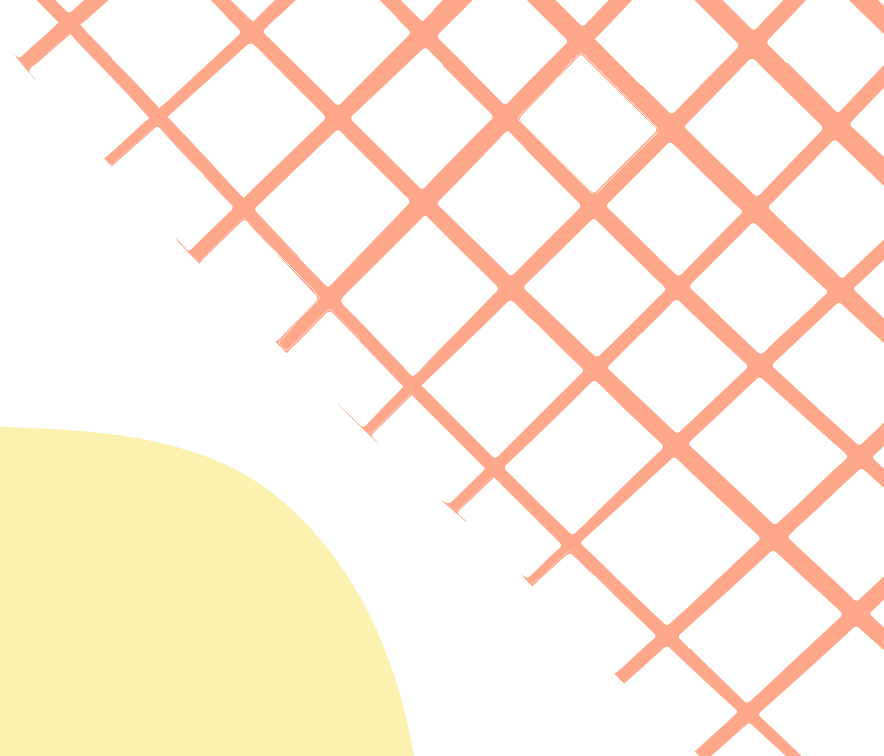
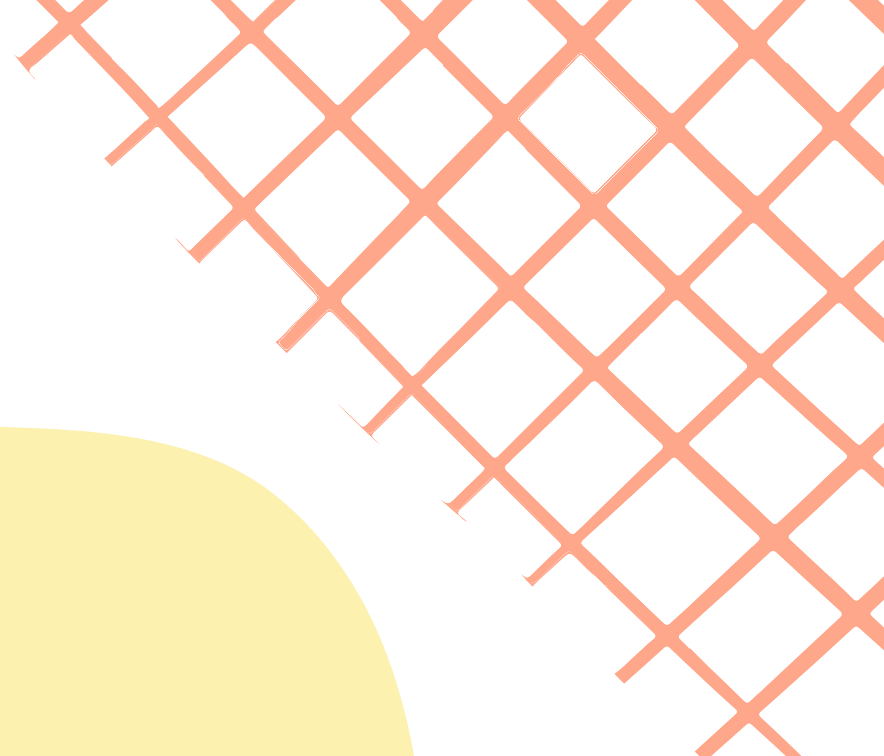
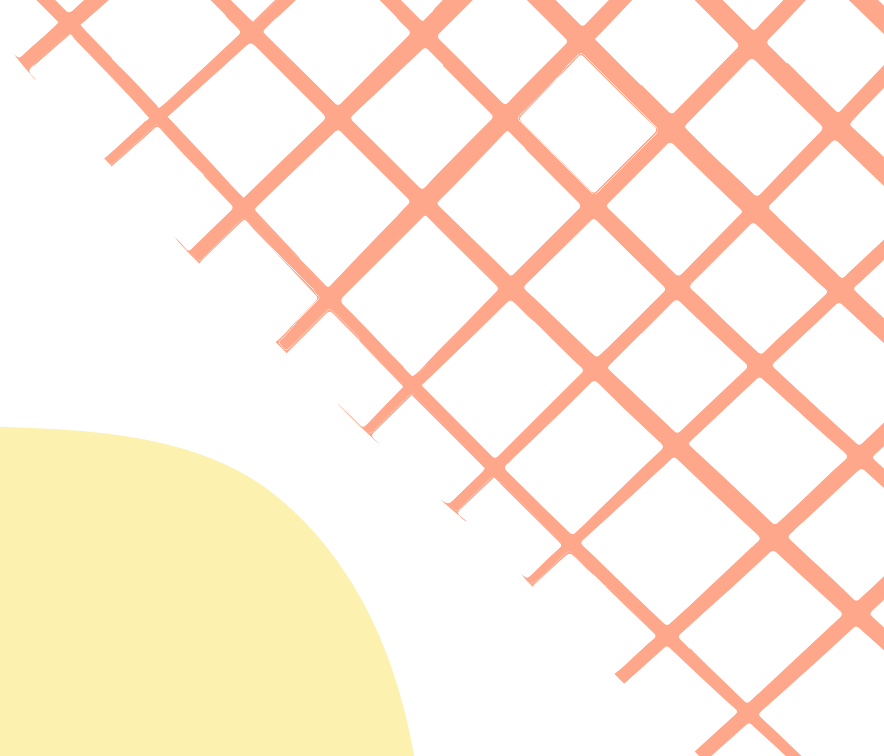
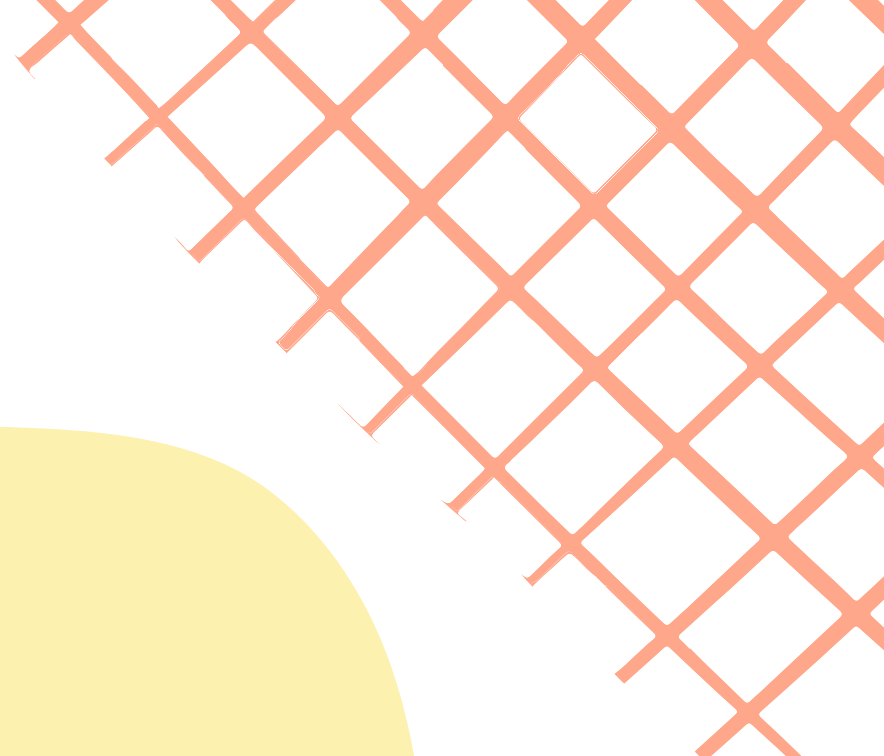
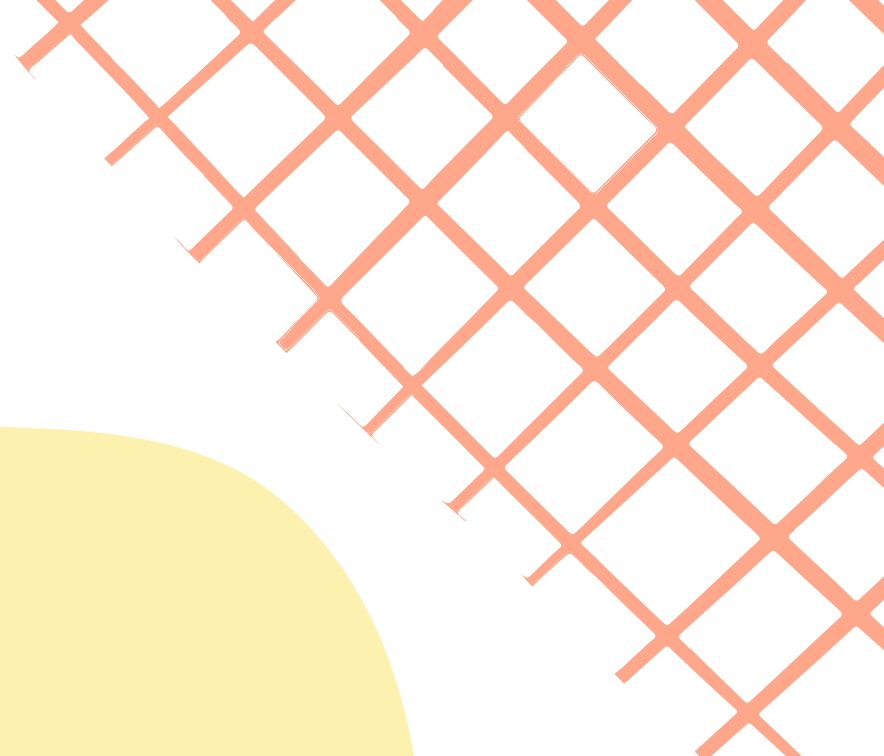


By: Fabiola Monic Nieves López



Criteria

To earn this award, a book must:

- **Stimulate Imagination:** Spark creativity and curiosity in readers.
 - **Promote Empathy and Understanding:** Include diverse characters, experiences, or cultures.
 - **High-Quality Writing & Storytelling:** Engaging plot, relatable characters, and a unique voice.
 - **Memorable Illustrations (if applicable):** Art that enhances the story and inspires visual thinking.
 - **Originality:** Present ideas, worlds, or perspectives that feel fresh and meaningful.
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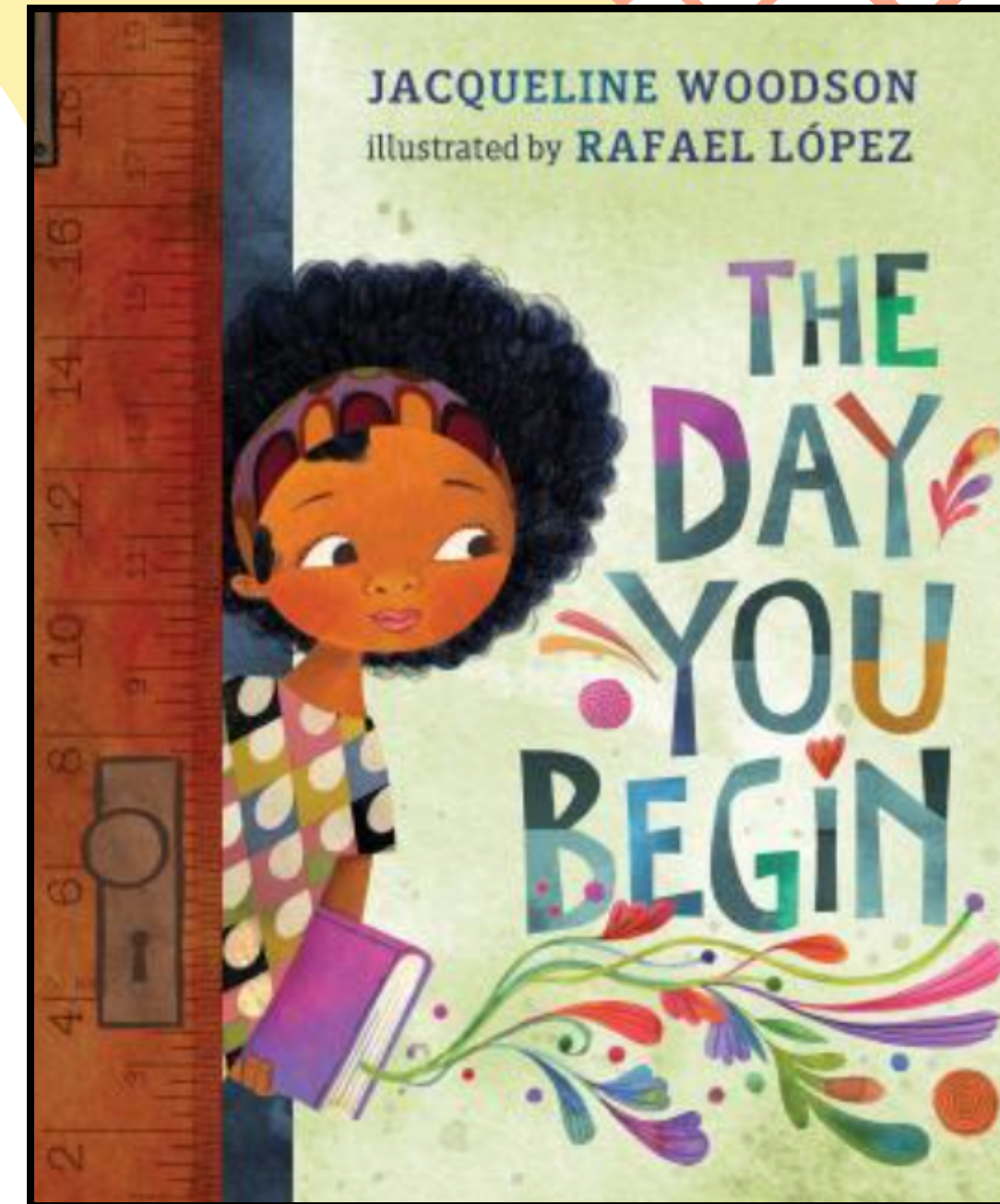
Reason for Creating the Award

- Children's literature is full of amazing stories, but many awards focus only on popular titles, sales, or classic literary achievements.
- This award fills a gap by recognizing books that actively connect children to new worlds and ideas, helping them understand themselves and others through imagination.
- In today's globalized and diverse world, young readers benefit from books that open their minds and foster creativity, empathy, and curiosity.
- Many books provide excellent entertainment but lack depth in cultural representation or imaginative storytelling.
- The Imagination Bridge Award celebrates titles that inspire children to explore, think critically, and appreciate diversity.
- It encourages writers to craft stories that truly build bridges between readers and the wider world.

Winner Selection

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson (2018)

The Day You Begin is a beautifully written children's book that encourages readers to embrace their differences and share their unique stories. It fulfills the award's criteria by promoting empathy and understanding, highlighting diverse characters and experiences. Woodson's poetic and engaging writing captures the imagination, inviting children to think about their own identities and the lives of others. The illustrations by Rafael López complement the story with vibrant and expressive visuals, adding depth to the book. The book builds bridges between readers of all backgrounds, making them feel seen while also encouraging curiosity about the world around them. Its message of courage, inclusion, and connection perfectly embodies the goals of the Imagination Bridge Award.



Winner Selection

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson (2018)

This makes it a deserving first recipient of the award. The book not only inspires children to embrace who they are, but also reassures them that differences should be celebrated, not hidden. It teaches the importance of listening to others' stories as a way of building kindness and respect. Through its universal themes, the story speaks to both children and adults, making it a meaningful read-aloud in classrooms and homes. Readers can return to this book many times and always find something new to reflect on. Overall, it is a timeless story that will continue to spark imagination and empathy for years to come.

