

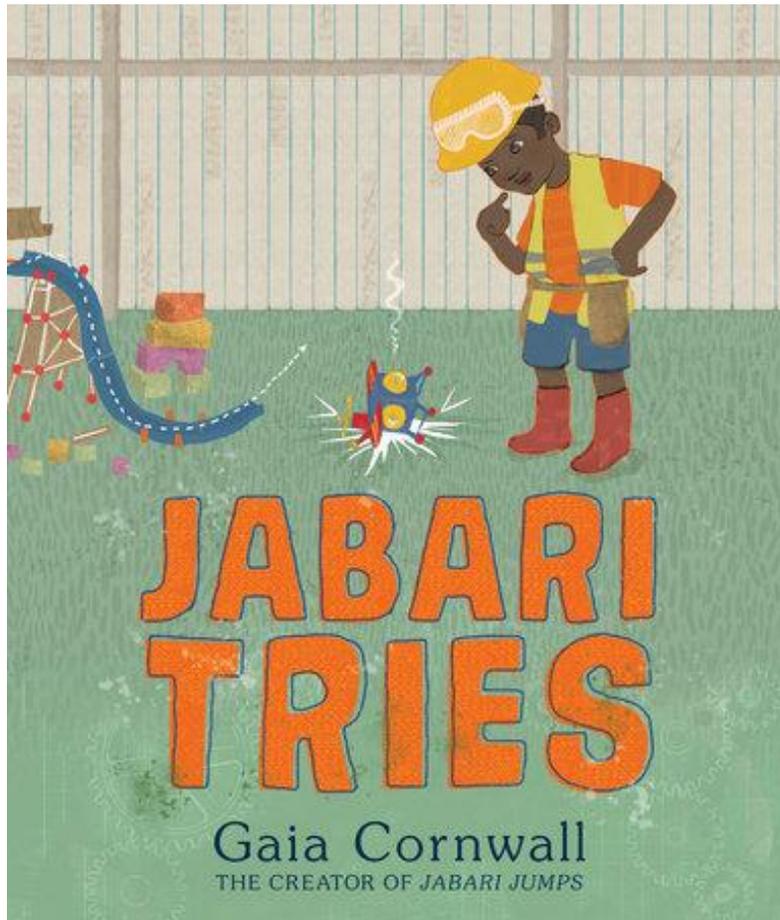
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JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE & LITERACY EDUCATION

**Review of *Jabari Tries* Written by Gaia Cornwall & Illustrated
by Gaia Cornwall**

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Dr. Stacie L. Finley
Missouri State University

Child/Student Reviewer: Greyson D. Finley, Grade 1



Cornwall, G., & Cornwall, G. (Illustrator) (2020). *Jabari Tries*. Scholastic Inc.

ISBN: 978-1338810059

Adult Review: Dr. Stacie L. Finley

Jabari, the sweet character from the book, *Jabari Jumps*, is back, along with his encouraging and supportive dad and precious little sister, Nika, in a new story, *Jabari Tries*. In *Jabari Tries*, Jabari is a creative and curious young child who tries to build a flying machine. Using racecar tracks, blocks, and other parts, he builds a ramp to launch his machine into the sky. He becomes frustrated when his machine crashes. When he becomes frustrated, he tries again. It crashes, again. So, he tries, again. His machine still will not fly. Ready to give up, he kicks his things and sits down to sulk. His dad, who is working on a gardening project in the backyard, encourages Jabari to let Nika help him. He resists this suggestion at first, but after giving the idea some thought, eventually asks his sister to help him. Working together, they figure out a way to make the flying machine soar!

Jabari Tries is an engaging book with characters most children can connect with and appreciate. Cornwall (2020) created Jabari as a relatable character, as most children are naturally curious, but still learning how to problem-solve and persevere. Young children are also still learning how to manage their emotions, so the outburst and learning to work through big emotions will connect with young children. Jabari's dad, who is also in the backyard working on a project, sits down and helps Jabari work through his frustrations. Cornwall (2020) does a fantastic job of showing a father who is supportive and nurturing, a role usually reserved for mothers in literature. Jabari's dad suggests Jabari ask his little sister, Nika, to help him. It is only when he lets Nika help him that his machine is able to fly. The author's use of the sister as a partner in trying to solve a challenging problem promotes the importance of collaboration, teamwork, and sibling love. Teachers can use this book to bring more

representation into their classroom libraries and literacy curriculums. It also can be used to hold conversations around failure, teamwork, and the power of "yet".

At one point in the story, Jabari sits to think about how to make his flying engine fly. His mind wonders to a number of great scientists and inventors in history, their faces appearing above Jabari in the clouds. Cornwall (2020) was brilliant in selecting scientists and inventors who are not well-known in history books but made major contributions to the field. Educators should learn more about the people Jabari is thinking about before reading the story to their students, so they can share who these scientists and inventors are, and why they are notable. The more we share the amazing stories of People of Color as scientists and inventors, the more we can empower and inspire our students, especially students who see reflections of themselves in eyes of the characters.

Student Review: Greyson D. Finley, Grade 1

This book was important because it is okay to be frustrated but even if you are frustrated, you should never give up. Jabari didn't give up, even when he got really frustrated, he still tried. I'd recommend this book because it is fun to read, and I like Jabari. People who liked *Jabari Jumps* would probably like *Jabari Tries*. I like least that he kicked his machine, because he might have broken it and then he would have been sad. My favorite part was when he said his sister could help.

Picture Below:

This picture is Jabari and his sister when their flying machine flies and they are really happy!

