

## “How High the Moon” by Karyn Parsons



**About *How High the Moon*:** In the small town of Alcolu, South Carolina, in 1944, 12-year-old Ella spends her days fishing and running around with her best friend Henry and cousin Myrna. But life is not always so sunny for Ella, who gets bullied for her light skin tone and whose mother is away pursuing a jazz singer dream in Boston. So Ella is ecstatic when her mother invites her to visit for Christmas. Little does she expect the truths she will discover about her mother, the father she never knew and her family's most unlikely history. And after a life-changing month, she returns South and is shocked by the news that her schoolmate George has been arrested for the murder of two local white girls.



**About The Author:** Karyn Parsons is best known for her role as Will Smith's cousin Hilary Banks on NBC's *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*. After leaving acting behind, Karyn has gone on to found and produce *Sweet Blackberry*, an award-winning series of children's animated films, to share stories about unsung black heroes in history, featuring narration from stars such as Alfre Woodard, Queen Latifah, and Chris Rock. It's been screened on HBO and Netflix, and enjoyed by schools and libraries across the country. *How High the Moon* is Karyn's self-authored debut novel.



### Read Aloud Tips:

- Introduce the book by talking about predictions or inferences students may have after reading the synopsis.
- Ask students if they connect to any characters throughout the book and why that might be.
- Use this book to help with discussion around bullying, racial injustices, individual differences, and inclusivity.

### Additional Resources:

Find more information on other books that can be used in your class library at [literacy.roosevelt.edu](http://literacy.roosevelt.edu).

