

Book Voyagers

Catalog of Themes & Books



**Reading & Adventures
for Families & Children
in Connecticut Libraries, Schools
and Community-based Organizations**



37 Broad Street
Middletown, CT 06457
www.ctculture.org

Connecticut Humanities Council

The Council's mission has always been a broad and imposing one:

“To provide opportunities for all the people of Connecticut to rediscover the joy of lifelong learning, to see themselves in the full context of their history and heritage, and to explore the infinite variety of human thought and experience contained in the humanities that give shape and direction to our lives.”

The Council's achievements over the years flow from a decision two decades ago to focus its available resources carefully and do a few things well and in depth. Consequently, the CHC organizes its work around the two most significant and publicly relevant humanities disciplines – history and literature.

In both these program strands, we act both as grant-makers and as program initiators. Our choice has always been to narrowly concentrate our available resources to have a true statewide impact in bringing these two core humanities disciplines to the public. And, in both, our emphasis is on strengthening organizational capacity and ensuring long-range stability rather than simply funding individual projects.

Book Voyagers

CATALOG OF THEMES AND BOOKS Reading Adventures for families and children

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What is Book Voyagers?

Book Voyagers is the Connecticut Humanities Council's "reading for meaning" book discussion program that invites families, children and teens to explore important life development themes through award-winning literature under the guidance of a skilled discussion leader. Programs are organized around a related theme and age-appropriate readings selected for their appeal, literary value, and thematic content. The discussion leaders who facilitate Book Voyagers come from a wide range of backgrounds and include storytellers, children's librarians, and teachers.

The goal of Book Voyagers is to help children and adolescents ages 5 through 14 develop an appreciation for the ideas and themes inherent in good literature, sharpen their critical thinking skills through analysis and discussion of good books and stories, and incorporate reading into their daily lives.

Families are encouraged to read together before joining in a group discussion. The discussion leader, using the Book Voyagers program guide, asks open-ended questions to help participants explore key themes and concepts intrinsic to the readings, engage in a healthy dialogue, and share ideas in a group environment.

Book Voyagers has been a successful and valuable component of Children's programming at public libraries since 1999 and its flexible format makes it a great choice for any structured gathering of children such as after-school programs, Boys & Girls Clubs and other children's services organizations. The program's diverse menu of themes enables host organizations to make choices that meet programming needs while ensuring that repeating organizations can offer fresh material to their audiences. Currently there are 20 series to select as well as approximately 40 individual titles. Lexile Framework for Reading levels have been included to help match reading level with target audiences. (See www.lexile.com for further information on this system.)

Book Voyagers has been enthusiastically embraced by librarians, teachers and others, who find it a valuable resource to provide high-quality literature programs for young constituents. Parents and children praise Book Voyagers as well, noting that it offers them the chance to spend time together in an educational, but relaxed, environment while demonstrating that reading for pleasure and insight is a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

The Connecticut Humanities Council received the 2009 Mary E. Ives Award from the New Haven Free Public Library in recognition of its dedication and support to lifelong learning and reading. In 2003, Book Voyagers received the 2003 Faith Hektoen Award from the Connecticut Library Association for its contribution to children's programming.

The Connecticut Humanities Council (CHC) is one of the largest humanities council's in the nation and has been an active "reading for meaning" advocate in Connecticut for over three decades. CHC offers a wide variety of high-quality reading programs for adults, children and families in partnership with libraries, schools, community centers and other cultural organizations. To find out more about all our programs, visit us at www.ctculture.org.

Book Voyagers is made possible through the generous support of many state, federal and independent foundations and corporations.

Public Libraries

How to Apply:

Book Voyagers are offered seasonally:
Summer (June 15 – August 15)
Fall (September 15 – December 15)
Spring (January 15 – May 15)

A *Library Interest Form* is mailed to all Connecticut libraries in September to solicit program interest for the following fiscal year (July-June). You may also find a copy of this form on our website at www.ctculture.org. Libraries can also contact the Book Voyagers office to request programs during the year.

Program selection:

Libraries select a four-session series or a single title from our Book Voyagers Catalog of Themes and Books (updated annually). There are currently 20 series and approximately 40 individual titles to choose from. Themes range from multi-cultural picture books, to self-esteem, to fantasy and beyond. Books are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Libraries submit their program preference, dates and times.

Library partners will receive:

- *20-30 copies of each book in the series
- *an experienced Book Voyagers discussion leader to facilitate each session
- *300 custom publicity flyers to help recruit participants
- *series specific discussion guide, questions, activities and bibliographies
- *publicity materials (poster, bookmarks, etc.)

Libraries are responsible for:

- *recruitment (a minimum of 12 participants per session is required)
 - *hosting the program
 - *returning program evaluations and forms
 - *a cash cost-share based on your library's annual budget
- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Annual budget/Cost-share | 1 or 4-session series |
| \$0-\$200,000 | \$37.50/\$150.00 |
| \$200,000-\$1,000,000 | \$75.00/\$300.00 |
| \$1,000,000+ | \$100.00/\$400.00 |

Books and Materials:

Books and materials are shipped out approximately six weeks before the first program date and are to be returned within two weeks after the last program.

School/Community Organizations

How to Apply:

Schools and community organizations are selected and invited to participate based on grant funding. For 2009/10 through 2011/12 Urban Reading Initiative will focus on Hartford, New Haven and New London *based on a three year grant from NEH*.

Those interested in hosting Book Voyagers may contact the office for more information.

Most programs are hosting in spring, although some sites have requested summer or fall discussions.

Program selection:

Schools and community organizations may choose a one, four or eight session series, depending on their specific needs. In most cases, each discussion will focus on a single title. For series with only four books, each book will be discussed for two meetings of an eight-session series. Many discussions have been designed to reinforce CMT skills to make Book Voyagers a natural partner in reading comprehension.

Partners will receive:

- *15 copies of each book in the series to give to participants to keep
- *an experienced Book Voyagers discussion leader to facilitate each session
- *100 custom publicity flyers with permission slips
- *series specific discussion guides, questions, activities and bibliographies
- *publicity materials (poster, bookmarks, etc.)

School/community partners are responsible for:

- *recruitment (series target is 15 participants)
- *hosting the program
- *returning evaluations and forms (including a PRE & POST assessment of each student)

Note: currently there is no cost-share for school and community partners.

Books and Materials:

Books and materials are shipped out about 3 weeks prior to the start of the program. Note: books do not need to be returned. Participants can take them home to add to their personal collection.

All programs are contingent upon grant funding and the site's ability to host a successful discussion.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Conflict and Its Resolution

What is conflict? How can it be resolved? Find answers in this Book Voyagers series for children ages 6-9 (with a parent or caregiver) to help define the everyday disagreements and how the choices we make can affect our relationships with others. Through reading these eight picture books together, children and adults will take a look at the major conflicts minor differences can cause.

Part one: Teasing

Kevin Henkes, CHRYSANTHEMUM – 460L
Helen Lester, HOOWAY FOR WODNEY WAT – AD360L

Part two: Bullying

Alexis O’Neill, THE RECESS QUEEN- AD450L
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, KING OF THE PLAYGROUND – 310L

Part three: Friendship

Steven Kellogg, BEST FRIENDS – AD550L
N. Joy, THE SECRET OLIVIA TOLD ME – 350L

Part four: Acceptance

Jacqueline Woodson, THE OTHER SIDE – AD300L
Patricia Polacco, MR. LINCOLN’S WAY –405L

Family Book Voyage I

A library-based family reading program serving families (targeting children ages 6 - 10 **and** a parent or caregiver) by teaching them how to talk about books and by encouraging voluntary reading. The program encourages parents and children to read and talk about books as a family activity; shows families how to identify and discuss ideas and values in children’s books; and helps parents and children feel comfortable in the library and use it as a resource.

Oral Tradition

After introductions, an overview of the series, and receipt of the materials, a discussion leader begins with an ice breaker and introduces participants to the rich tradition of oral literature. This will include counting rhymes, jump rope rhymes, hand clapping rhymes, tongue twisters, schoolyard rhymes and games. Handouts with a sampling of the above selections of oral literature will be available for participants before the first session.

Fairness: Do the Right Thing

Jon Scieszka, THE TRUE STORY OF THE THREE LITTLE PIGS – AD570L
Judith Viorst, ALEXANDER AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY – 970L

Greed: What’s in it for Me?

Retold by Eric Kimmel, ANANSI AND THE MOSS-COVERED ROCK – 380L
John Steptoe, MUFARO’S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS – AD720L

Courage: No Guts, No Glory

Maurice Sendak, WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE – AD740L
Ed Young, LON PO PO – 670L

Family Book Voyage II

This series can either be scheduled as a follow-up to Family Book Voyage I or as a stand-alone series.

Dreams: *Dare to Dream*

Barbara Brenner, WAGON WHEELS – 380L
Mary Hoffman, AMAZING GRACE – 68L

Cleverness: *Find a Way*

Pat McKissack, FLOSSIE AND THE FOX – 610L
William Steig, DOCTOR DE SOTO – AD560L

Coping: *Deal With It*

Bernard Waber, IRA SLEEPS OVER – 310L
Mem Fox, WILFRID GORDON MCDONALD PARTRIDGE – AD760L

Determination: *Just Do It*

Shel Silverstein, THE GIVING TREE – 530L
Jeanette Winter, FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD – AD630L

Keep it Green!

This series offers a delightful literary experience in a mix of genre (fantasy, realistic fiction, and nonfiction) while bringing awareness to the importance of being “green.” How can we lessen our impact on the earth? What can we do about litter, pollution, global warming, endangered animals, trash, and recycling? Discussion supports critical thinking skills such as text-to-text and text-to-self.

You will meet a worm with a sense of humor, a pink house that misses the country, and the impetuous and delightful Judy Moody and her brother Stink. You will also meet the wizard who wants to get rid of trash forever and Miss Rumphius who wants to make the world more beautiful. You will visit the world of the whimsical wumps before and after the invasion of the Pollutians, read why the earth is getting warmer, and then compute math with the Maple Street School Save-the-Planet Club. Though a serious topic, this collection of books handles being “green” in a positive manner showing how even kids can make a change to be “green.” (For ages 6-9 and a parent or caregiver).

Trash

Don Madden, THE WARTVILLE WIZARD - NA
Stuart Murphy, EARTH DAY-HOORAY! - NA

Changes

Anne Rockwell, WHY ARE THE ICE CAPS MELTING? - NA
Bill Peet, THE WUMP WORLD – 930L

Cycles

Virginia Lee Burton, THE LITTLE HOUSE – AD890L
Barbara Cooney, MISS RUMPHIUS – 680L

Everyone Can Help

Doreen Cronin, DIARY OF A WORM – AD360L
Megan McDonald, JUDY MOODY SAVES THE WORLD – 500L

My Brothers' and Sisters' Keeper (Aligned with CMT reading comprehension strands)

Offering a rich and varied literacy experience for ages 6-10, this series facilitates positive social development by highlighting books in which the characters demonstrate empathy and good interpersonal skills. The discussion enables students to explore the deep structure of a story, engage in meaningful dialogue with peers, and make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections, as well as examine the authors' style of writing.

A Caring Community

Vera B. Williams, *A CHAIR FOR MOTHER* – 640L
Patricia Polacco, *MRS. KATZ AND TUSH* – 530L

Family Memories

Ezra Jack Keats, *PETER'S CHAIR* – 390L
Tomie dePaola, *THE LEGEND OF THE BLUEBONNET* – 740L

Helping a Friend

James Marshall, *WINGS: A TALE OF TWO CHICKENS* - NA
Alexander Stadler, *BEVERLY BILLINGSLEY TAKES A BOW* - NA

Caring for Those in Need

Dr. Seuss, *HORTON HEARS A WHO* – 490L
Bob Graham, *MAX* – AD420L

Turning Obstacles Into Opportunity (Aligned with CMT reading comprehension strands)

This series explores the theme of turning obstacles into opportunity, making the most of a bad situation. These books highlight the benefits of problem solving, being optimistic and having tenacity. Often-times when bad things happen to people, or when problems arise, people give up hope. They believe that things or situations won't improve. In reality, people must work to make things better and attitude plays a major part in solving life's problems. (For ages 6-10.)

Arnold Lobel, *MING LO MOVES THE MOUNTAIN* – AD600L
Harriet Rhomer, *UNCLE NACHO'S HAT* – 410L
Albert Blanco, *ANGEL'S KITE* - NA
Pete Seeger, *ABIYOYO* – 610L
Pete Seeger, *ABIYOYO RETURNS* – 210L
William Steig, *SYLVESTER & THE MAGIC PEBBLE* – AD700L
Baba Wagué Diakité, *THE HATSELLER AND THE MONKEYS* – AD650L
Margot Zemach, *IT COULD ALWAYS BE WORSE* – AD650L

Villains in the Valley (Aligned with CMT reading comprehension strands)

This series explores the theme of good overcoming evil in eight books. Through the genre of folktales, the authors provide lessons on the rewards of demonstrating patience, compassion, kindness, hard work and courage. They also depict the consequences of greed, selfishness, and laziness. Folktales have been told throughout many generations and have a common language; which is repetitive, filled with imagery and figurative language and setting. The characters include animals that are personified through their ability to perform human actions. (For ages 6-9.)

James Marshall, *GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS* – 520L
Pat McKissack, *FLOSSIE AND THE FOX* – 610L
Robert San Souci, *THE TALKING EGGS* – AD490L
Paul Galdone, *THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF* – 500L
Anne Isaacs, *SWAMP ANGEL* – AD1020L
Julius Lester, *JOHN HENRY* – AD720L
Robert Munsch, *THE PAPER BAG PRINCESS* – 740L
Margaret Hodges, *SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON* – AD1080L

The World We Build

Children, ages 6-9 years, accompanied by a parent or caregiver, are invited to attend this family book discussion program on ecology. Read and discuss children's literature that expresses an appreciation and concern for all aspects of nature. This collection of literature, which includes fantasy, realistic fiction and non-fiction, gives us the opportunity to discuss and react to the challenges and pleasures of protecting the environment.

Every Little Thing

Susan Jeffers, BROTHER EAGLE, SISTER SKY – 740L
Dr. Seuss, THE LORAX – 560L

The Rainforest and Protecting Nature

Kristen Joy Pratt, A WALK IN THE RAINFOREST – 1G950L
Lynne Cherry, THE GREAT KAPOK TREE – 670L

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Linda Lowery, EARTH DAY – 670L
Phoebe Gilman, SOMETHING FROM NOTHING – BR

Change

Chris Van Allsburg, JUST A DREAM - 550L
Jane Yolen, LETTING SWIFT RIVER GO – 860L

ADVENTURE AND FANTASY PROGRAMS

Dimwood Forest

The Tales from the Dimwood Forest by Avi captures the readers' attention from the beginning. The characters have a wide range of appeal from the adventurous Ragweed, to the courageous Poppy, the irritable Ereth, to the cunning Marty the fisher. The animals in this series have their own identities and readers will find their own favorites. The plots are not complicated, but offer a wide variety of themes that engage the reader as he or she follows the adventures of Ragweed, Poppy and Ereth as they overcome the obstacles Avi has presented for them.

(For grades 3-5.)

Avi, RAGWEED – 690L
Avi, POPPY – 670L
Avi, POPPY AND RYE – 620L
Avi, ERETH'S BIRTHDAY – 610L

Enduring Friendships

Animals hold a very special place in our hearts. Whether it's a beloved pet dog, cat or hamster – or the devout respect of nature's wildlife—animal friendships enrich us and teach life lessons through their indomitable spirits, loyalty and devotion. Come explore the exciting adventures of four such animals: two dogs; one wolf; and a rat – who forever change the lives of the young people whom they befriend. Each book is a Newbery Medal winner, an award given to the best American children's book each year, *Sunder*, the story of a very special dog who shares his strength, courage and hope, won in 1970. *Shiloh*, about an abused dog's journey to the arms of a loving family, won in 1992. *Julie of the Wolves*, the 1973 winner, is the story of an orphan adopted by a wolf pack. In 1972 the award was given to *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*, which explores the controversial topic of animal research.

William Armstrong, SOUNDER – 900L
Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, SHILOH – 890L
Jean Craighead George, JULIE OF THE WOLVES – 860L
Robert C. O'Brien, MRS. FRISBY AND THE RATS OF NIMH – 790L

Fantastic Fantasies

Fantasy has always been one of the most popular genres of children's fiction. The overwhelming success of the *Harry Potter* books proves that children will flock to well-written fantasy over and over again. With its unique mix of the surreal and the real, fantasy stimulates imagination and simultaneously addresses real-life issues that children can relate to their own lives. This discussion series will introduce children to four critically-acclaimed fantasy series. Two classic series which have been read by generations of fantasy lovers: **The Time Quartet** by Madeleine L'Engle and **The Prydain Chronicles** by Lloyd Alexander. The other two series are fast-becoming contemporary fantasy favorites: **Artemis Fowl** by Eoin Colfer and **A Series of Unfortunate Events** by Lemony Snicket. Each session will focus on one series' first installment. Themes covered will include the universal struggle between good and evil, courage, loyalty, and love. (For grades 4-6.)

Madeleine L'Engle, **The Time Quartet**
Book 1: A WRINKLE IN TIME – 740L

Lloyd Alexander, **The Prydain Chronicles**
Book 1: THE BOOK OF THREE – 770L

Eoin Colfer, **Artemis Fowl**
Book 1: ARTEMIS FOWL – 600L

Lemony Snicket, **A Series of Unfortunate Events**
Book 1: THE BAD BEGINNING – 1010L

School Stories: Everyday is an Adventure

The books in this series are from the realistic fiction genre. They all have characters that are young children in 3rd or 4th grade and take place within the school setting. The characters encounter problems in school that, while not life threatening, are very real and serious to many children in school. These books show positive relationships between children and adults in both the home and school. You will first meet Horrible Harry, a third grader, and full of mischief. After all he is horrible, or is he? In addition you will meet Lucas Cott, the 3rd grade Class Clown. No doubt great discussions will arise as the children debate how these two characters change and evolve over the course of the story. Our young readers may relate to Robbie who is trying desperately to be cool as he is starting third grade. He has some obstacles though, including his mom, who wants to keep kissing him good-bye at the bus stop and his teacher who assigns him to be a reading buddy with the class bully. Jake Drake, the teacher's pet, will help explore the teacher/student relationship from the perspective of an incredible fourth grader. Song Lee, an immigrant from Korea, is very shy and doesn't speak English well yet. This makes the oral report her teacher assigns the class very difficult. Third grader Jake Drake is determined to win the science fair. In order to do this, he has to become a know-it-all and keep a secret from his best friend. Is winning really worth it? Jake figures it out in the end. Next meet third grader Maggie Schultz, who doesn't like being told what to do. When her teacher makes learning cursive writing mandatory, Maggie revolts and things get really exciting! Finally, Marvin Redpost, another third grader, gets an unexpected chance of a lifetime when the President of the United States visits his classroom. With all the excitement this creates, Marvin forgets to meet his mom right after school and instead stays late to play with his friends. Wow, is he in trouble when he gets home – but not to worry, the President steps in to help Marvin out of this jam.

Suzy Kline, HORRIBLE HARRY MOVES UP TO THIRD GRADE - 460

Johanna Hurwitz, CLASS CLOWN – 670L

Betsy Duffy, HOW TO BE COOL IN THE THIRD GRADE – 470L

Andrew Clements, JAKE DRAKE TEACHER'S PET – 690L

Suzy Kline, SONG LEE IN ROOM 2B – 470L

Andrew Clements, JAKE DRAKE KNOW-IT-ALL – 570L

Beverly Cleary, MUGGIE MAGGIE – 730L

Louis Sachar, MARVIN REDPOST CLASS PRESIDENT – 430L

Percy Jackson and the Olympians

Percy Jackson is just your typical teenager, plagued by the ordinary, everyday teenage problems like difficulty in school, girls, friendships, oh, and possibly the fate of the world balancing on his shoulders. Is he the one the prophecies speak of? Unfortunately, he won't know until he turns sixteen and is either the champion of the gods or brings about their total downfall. That's if he can escape being killed by the monsters who hunt him or being used as a pawn by the gods, and, of course, live to see his 16th birthday. This series follows young Percy on his quest as he stays loyal to his friends, true to his character and tries to survive all the challenges the gods send him. Join him on his journey as Greek Mythology meets modern times in this action-packed, humorous and well written series.

Rick Riordan, THE LIGHTENING THIEF – 740L

Rick Riordan, THE SEA OF MONSTERS – 740L

Rick Riordan, THE TITAN'S CURSE – 630L

Rick Riordan, THE BATTLE OF THE LABRYINTH – 590L

A Visit to Narnia

Magic continues to fascinate us as we find hidden doorways between our world and others. No author has come up with a more perfect doorway than C. S. Lewis who takes us on amazing adventures in the world of Narnia, an incredible land of talking beasts and challenges everywhere. Join the unique cast as the interaction between the characters and their magical surroundings intrigues and astounds us. This series discusses books 1-4 of the series. (For grades 4-6) NOTE: The anthology, THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA, contains all seven books.

C. S. Lewis, THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW – 790L

C. S. Lewis, THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE – 940L

C. S. Lewis, THE HORSE AND HIS BOY – 970L

C. S. Lewis, PRINCE CASPIAN – 870L

The World of Harry Potter

J. K. Rowling's books about a young boy who attends a remarkable school for wizardry have captured the imagination of readers young and old. In this discussion series participants will explore the world of Hogwarts and all of Harry Potter's adventures to discover the underlying themes and reasons for the series' popularity. Each session will concentrate on one book and will explore why Harry Potter has gained a world-wide reputation in just a few years.
(For grades 4 and up.)

- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE – 880L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS – 940L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN – 880L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE – 880L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX – 950L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE – 1030L
- J. K. Rowling, HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS – 980L

PARENT/CHILD PROGRAMS

Courage Under Fire (Mother/Daughter Series)

Read and discuss the stories of four girls whose lives are affected by World War II, both during and just after the war. These girls are challenged by changes in their lives, new homes, and new responsibilities. Each girl faces her changing situation with great aplomb and grace, even when things are not particularly easy. These books give mothers and daughters the opportunity to talk about how to meet life's challenges. (For grades 3-4.)

Valerie Tripp, MEET MOLLY: AN AMERICAN GIRL – 740L
Amy Hest, LOVE YOU, SOLDIER – 540L
Lois Lowry, NUMBER THE STARS – 670L
Bette Bao Lord, IN THE YEAR OF THE BOAR AND JACKIE ROBINSON – 730L

Reading Adventures (Parent/Child Series)

Kids will be kids, whether they are fighting dragons, boredom at school, bad characters in their neighborhoods, or modern day treasure hunters. These four books offer boys and girls (with a parent or caregivers) a chance to talk about how they might face some of the scrapes and challenges in their lives. They also are a lot of fun to read! Each of these boys faces adventure in his own style. Joe relies on his friendships and his cleverness to get back home. Nick creates his own adventure with great wit and good humor. Junebug's sweet nature guides him to do what is right as he faces tough choices. Tony's curiosity does get him into trouble, but his calm thinking helps get him out again! (For grades 3-4.)

Jon Scieszka, KNIGHTS OF THE KITCHEN TABLE – 630L
Andrew Clements, FRINDLE – 830L
Alice Mead, JUNEBUG – 570L
Avi, WINDCATCHER – 540L

We Are Family (Parent/Child Series)

The eight books in this series help participants give thought to what makes a family and how these special relationships shape our lives. Parents and children are encouraged to use these stories as a springboard to share their own family traditions and adventures and to see just where and how they fit in. This series looks back to see how we got where we are today and peers into the future to what lies ahead. We Are Family celebrates life, family and the power of the story! (For children ages 6-9.)

Ina R. Friedman, HOW MY PARENTS LEARNED TO EAT – 450L
Riki Levinson, WATCH THE STARS COME OUT – 460L
Gloria Jean Pinkney, BACK HOME – 500L
Chih-Yuan Chen, GUJI GUJI – AD650L
Margaree King Mitchell, UNCLE JED'S BARBERSHOP – AD710L
Patricia Polacco, THE KEEPING QUILT – 920L
Cynthia Rylant, WHEN I WAS YOUNG IN THE MOUNTAINS – AD980L
Leslie Connor, MISS BRIDIE CHOSE A SHOVEL – AD1170L

Wings To Fly (Mother/Daughter Series)

The books in this series were chosen because of the strength displayed by the young female characters as they face danger and learn to conquer their fears. Abbie Burgess and Sarah Noble were real little girls. Abbie Burgess was the daughter of a lighthouse keeper in Matinicus Rock, Maine in 1853. She is left in charge of the lights when a tremendous storm challenged Abbie to muster all of her strength and courage as she struggled to keep the lights burning. Sarah lived in New Milford, Connecticut in the early 1700's and faced dangers inherent to undeveloped areas. Amber Brown and Ramona Quimby are modern day girls who face fears which are more psychological, but nevertheless very real, as they move into new schools and family situations. Guided interpretive questioning encourages dialogue about these books. The questions will focus on the strengths of the female characters and the methods they used to master their fears. (For grades 3-4.)

Peter and Connie Roop, KEEP THE LIGHTS BURNING, ABBIE – 260L
Alice Dalgliesh, THE COURAGE OF SARAH NOBLE – 610L
Paula Danziger, AMBER BROWN GOES FOURTH – 630L
Beverly Cleary, RAMONA QUIMBY, AGE 8 – 860L

ONE - SESSION BOOK DISCUSSIONS

ACCIDENTAL LOVE, Gary Soto – 780L

Nutmeg Nominee

Boy meets girl (accidental), girl falls for boy (love). But they're from two different schools, two different neighborhoods, and truly two different worlds. The odds of them making it are slim to none in this well-crafted story of young love.

AL CAPONE DOES MY SHIRTS, Gennifer Choldenko – 600L

Nutmeg Nominee

Moose Flanagan's dad takes a job as a prison guard and moves the family to Alcatraz so his sister, who is autistic, can go to a special school in San Francisco. When Natalie is not accepted, they must rethink their plans. Moose becomes Natalie's afternoon caretaker and finds he has to look beyond his own needs to help meet hers. The story really heats up when Piper, the prison warden's daughter, involves Moose in a money-making laundry scheme, attracting business by telling folks that Al Capone is washing their clothes. This gives Moose an idea and he secretly writes asking Al Capone to help Natalie. Four weeks later, she is accepted to a brand-new school for autistic children. Compiled from Moose's diary entries dated January 4 through June 12, 1935, we see how this twelve-year-old boy adjusts to his new life and the responsibility of his sister.

ATHLETIC SHORTS, Chris Crutcher – 1010L

In *Athletic Shorts*, Chris Crutcher gives further insight into the lives of five characters who have appeared previously in his novels, and one character who is entirely new. As Crutcher says in his introduction to the book, "Some of these stories take place before the time of the book in which the characters appeared, some after, but all are enriched, in my mind, by that character's history in fiction." The stories included deal with some of the tough issues both teens and adults face today: homosexuality; death; revenge; racism; and bigotry; among others. They are a reflection of life as Chris Crutcher sees it, combining humor with difficult and serious situations, with athletics always playing an important part in the story and in the lives of his characters.

A BEAR NAMED TROUBLE, Marion Dane Bauer – 820L

Nutmeg Nominee

Jonathan, a ten year old with a passion for animals, is devastated when a brown bear kills his favorite animal at the zoo in Anchorage, Alaska. He vows to get even with the bear, and then finds revenge isn't all it's cracked up to be.

BLOOD ON THE RIVER, Elisa Carbone – 820L

Nutmeg Nominee

When 11-year old Samuel Collier is chosen to be Captain John Smith's page aboard the *Susan Constant* bound for the New World, it is the chance of a lifetime! He's heard that gold washes ashore with every tide, just there for the taking! But beginning with a stormy crossing, the experience of living in the cramped "tween deck" with the gentlemen recruited for the journey, and his first encounter with the native people, Samuel realizes that this New World is nothing like what he imagined. When the summer of 1607 brings a mysterious illness and winter brings starvation, it's soon clear to Samuel that the settlers need to adapt new ways if they are to survive. As he matures and observes Captain Smith's wise diplomacy, Samuel begins to see that he can be whoever he wants to be in the new land. (For grades 4-8.)

BOOK OF DRAGONS, Michael Hague – 1170L

For thousands of years, the legendary dragon has inspired awe and wonder in cultures the world over. Now Michael Hague, one of America's most beloved painters of fantasy, boldly captures seventeen classic dragon tales. Within these pages are the stories of heroic dragon slayers such as Perseus, St. George, and Sigurd, as well as the magical writings of J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis. The mythical dragon will be very real indeed for all who read these enchanting tales.

BUD, NOT BUDDY, Christopher Paul Curtis – 950L

In this Newbery Award winning book we are asked to believe that a ten-year-old boy, without resources other than his own self-constructed list of rules "To Have a Funner Life and Make a Better Liar Out of Yourself", will find love, a home and a real family. Such is the skill of Christopher Paul Curtis that we take all that and more with hardly a nod toward the percentages. Meet Bud, not Buddy, one of the most delightful young people you'll ever know. He belongs right in there with Maniac Magee and others of their ilk who enlighten the human experience for readers and make us wish we could step into the action to help.

THE CITY OF EMBER, Jeanne Duprau – 680L *Nutmeg Winner 2006*

The city of Ember was built as a last refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that light the city are beginning to flicker. When Lina finds part of an ancient message, she's sure it holds a secret that will save the city. She and her friend Doon must decipher the message before the lights go out on Ember forever!

CRASH, Jerry Spinelli – 560L

John Patrick "Crash" Coogan got his nickname when he was a toddler by crashing into everything, including his cousin Bridget. Now in the 7th grade and on the football team, Crash still mows down everything in his path, including Penn Webb, his "nerdy" vegetarian neighbor. When Penn becomes a cheerleader, and starts campaigning to halt the construction of a new mall, Crash and his best buddy, Mike Deluca, decide to make his life miserable. Crash, however, begins to question what they are doing, and ultimately has to choose which side he's on and who he really wants to be.

DAY OF TEARS, Julius Lester – NP *Nutmeg Nominee*

Based on the largest slave auction in American history known as "The Weeping Time", *Day of Tears* takes you into the minds of the slaves and masters. Their tragic stories are tied together through the central character Emma who journeys from slavery to freedom, and lives to tell her grandchildren the story of "The Weeping Time". (For grades 4-8.)

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE, Peter Abrahams – 680L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Welcome to Echo Falls. Home of a thousand secrets, where Ingrid Levin-Hill, super sleuth, never knows what will happen next. Ingrid is in the wrong place at the wrong time. Or at least her shoes are. Getting them back means getting involved in a murder investigation rivaling those solved by her idol, Sherlock Holmes, and Ingrid has enough on her plate with club soccer, school, and the plum role of Alice in the Echo Falls production of Alice in Wonderland. Echo Falls has turned into a nightmare, and Ingrid is determined to wake up.

DRUMS, GIRLS, AND DANGEROUS PIE, Jordan Sonnenblick – N/A *Nutmeg Nominee*

What is the most annoying thing in the world? For Steven, the answer is obvious; his little brother Jeffrey. When Steven finds out that Jeffrey is sick, however, he must use all of his skills as a drum-playing, girl-crushing, friend-finding, parent-manipulating teenager to help his family keep laughing through this heartbreaking year.

EAGER, Helen Fox – 690L *Nutmeg Nominee*

It's the end of the 21st century and Gavin Bell and his teenage sister, Fleur, take it for granted that robots care for their every need. Robots wake you in the morning, turn on the lights, clean the house, baby sit and even talk to you. When their much-loved, old fashioned robot is slowing down, a family friend loans them EGR3, known as Eager, a brand-new, experimental robot. But when a new generation of ultra-high-tech, eerily human robots begin to act suspiciously, the Bells and Eager are drawn into a great adventure which test Eager's abilities to the limit and has him questioning what it means to be alive. (For grades 4-8.)

THE FRIENDS, Kazumi Yumoto – 710L

Sixth-graders Kiyama and his friends Kawabe and Yamashita become curious about death when Yamashita's grandmother dies. Hoping to see death firsthand, they spy on an old man who looks like he will die soon. When the old man notices them, their curiosity turns into friendship, and they learn valuable lessons that will change their lives forever.

THE GATHERING, Virginia Hamilton – 620L

The First Unit – Justice, the Watcher and balance of the unit's strength; her identical twin brothers, Thomas, the magician, and Levi, the sufferer; and Dorian, the healer – return to the oppressive Dustland, a place in the distant future, to lead the thirsty Slakers from the desert. In doing so, they discover other life-forms gathered at the water hole and lead them all out of Dustland and into a high-tech city of domes, where, while battling an evil force known as Mal, the unit learns the ultimate fate of the earth and discovers the purpose of their journey.

THE GHOST'S GRAVE, Peg Kehret – 790L *Nutmeg Nominee*

When twelve-year-old Josh apprehensively spends the summer in Washington state with his eccentric Aunt Ethel, he encounters the ghost of a one-legged coal miner. After stumbling upon a metal box of buried treasure, he solves the mystery of the box and finds out more about himself and his family.

THE GIVER, Lois Lowry – 760L

In her Newbery Award-winning science fiction novel, *The Giver*, Lois Lowry imagines a future without conflict, where everything, even fear and pain, are nonexistent. Utopian-like in feel, this future world offers its inhabitants no choices, and even assigns them roles in the community --- roles to which they are consigned for a lifetime. When Jonas, Lowry's main protagonist, reaches the age of 12, he is chosen by the Committee of Elders to receive special training. In his role as The Receiver, he is to take on all the memories of his society, past and present. In his sessions with The Giver, a man he grows to love, Jonas soon learns his society's horrible secrets and must make one of the most important decisions of his young life

HALF AND HALF, Lensey Namioka – 800L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Fiona is half and half: her father is Chinese and her mother is Scottish. Since Fiona looks more like her father, people expect her to be more interested in her Chinese heritage. But what about her Scottish half? When both pairs of grandparents visit at the same time, things really get complicated. And when forced to choose between dancing the Highland Reel or appearing with her father as the Chinese heroine of one of his children's books, Fiona becomes confused about whom she really is. How do you balance being "half and half" and still feel like yourself? Come celebrate the diversity of cultures that blend together to make each of us so special.

(For grades 4-6.)

THE HOMEWORK MACHINE, Dan Gutman – 680L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Four 5th graders at the Grand Canyon School are bound together by one very big secret: the homework machine! But when the machine, code-named Belch, does all their homework, these students suddenly have a problem. Too much free time on their hands attracts a lot of attention - and attention is just what you don't want when you are trying to keep a secret! Can these four unlikely friends keep their secret when the going gets rough? Join us for a lively discussion of this 2009 Nutmeg Award Nominee! (For kids in grades 4-6.)

HOOT, Carl Hiaasen – 760L *Nutmeg Winner 2006*

Middle Schooler Roy Eberhardt and his family have just moved to Coconut Grove, Florida. As the "new kid," Roy is fresh prey for the local bully, who decides to attack him on the school bus. With his face mashed up against the window, Roy sees a curious sight-- a boy running away from the bus, not carrying books and not wearing shoes. Sensing intrigue, Roy sets on the boy's trail uncovering the plight of miniature owls whose lives are endangered when a restaurant is scheduled to be built over their burrows. Join us as Roy and his two friends try their best to save the owls, which leads to the adventure of a lifetime. (Grades 4-8)

HUSH, Jacqueline Woodson – 640L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Toswiah Green's life ended the moment her policeman father decided to testify against a fellow officer. The Greens had to change their identities and move to a different city. Now Toswiah is Evie Thomas, and that is the least of the changes. Her defeated father spends his days sitting by the window. Her mother can no longer work as a teacher, and now puts all her energy into their new church. Her only sister is making secret plans to leave. And Evie, struggling to find her way, wonders who she is now and how she can make her future as bright as her past once was.

IN DARKNESS, DEATH, Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler – 760L *Nutmeg Nominee*

In the world of ninjas and the shogun, honor is everything. So when the Samurai Lord Inaba is discovered murdered in his sleep while under the protection of the shogun, the ruler is honor-bound to find the killer. Desperate for justice, he turns to the famous Judge Ooka – the Sherlock Holmes of eighteenth-century Japan – and his fourteen-year-old apprentice, Seikei, to investigate.

JOSHUA'S SONG, Joan Hiatt Harlow – 520L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Joshua's Song is the story of 13-year old Joshua who lives in Boston in 1919. As background, the reader is given a brief account of Joshua's life. He comes from an affluent family and lives in a world of privilege. His entire world, as he knows it, changes when his successful and loving father dies in the influenza pandemic of 1918-1919. We are also told that Joshua, sang with a boy's choir. He has not been able to sing since the loss of his father. His mother takes in boarders to make ends meet. Joshua's circumstances force him to quit his private school and go out to find work. Since his mother is so concerned with what other people will think, Joshua keeps his new job a secret from her, since he knows she would never approve.

LOCOMOTION, Jacqueline Woodson – NP *Nutmeg Nominee*

When Locomotion was seven years old, his life changed forever. Now he's eleven, and his life is about to change again. His teacher, Ms. Marcus, is showing him ways to put his jumbled feelings on paper. And suddenly, Lonnie has a whole new way to tell the world about his life, his friends, his little sister, Lili, and even his foster mom, Miss Edna, who started out crabby but isn't so bad after all. Nothing's the same after you see it through Lonnie's eyes – and hear it through his words.

MAZE OF BONES, Rick Riordan

What would happen if you discovered that your family was one of the most powerful in human history? What if you were told that the source of the family's power was hidden around the world, in the form of 39 clues? What if you were given a choice – take a million dollars and walk away...or get the first Clue? If you're Amy and Dan Cahill, you take the Clue – and begin a very dangerous race.

MY TEACHER IS AN ALIEN, Bruce Coville – 650L *Nutmeg Winner 1993*

Susan Simmons and the rest of the sixth grade return from spring vacation to find that Mrs. Schwartz, their teacher, has disappeared. However their new teacher, Mr. John Smith is very different: In fact, Susan discovers that he is an alien! At first, only Peter Thompson, the class brain, believes Susan, and the two set out to do something about Mr. Smith who seems to be plotting to kidnap five students. It is up to Susan and Peter to save themselves and the rest of their classmates.

ODDLY ENOUGH, Bruce Coville – 740L

In Bruce Coville's collection of short fantasies, *Oddly Enough*, readers confront a world in which unicorns and vampires exist, and where it is worth one's while not to leave things laying around or to create a mess. The stories in this collection unite reality and imagination in a variety of wild, sometimes riotous, sometimes scary ways.

ONCE UPON A MARIGOLD, Jean Ferris – 840L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Christian is gaga for Princess Marigold. But he's just a commoner, and no match for royalty. Heck, he lives in a cave with a troll! And now he's discovered another reason to put his love-soggy heart on ice: Queen Olympia is scheming to take over the kingdom--and she'll bump off her own daughter to do it. Can Christian foil her diabolical plans?

OUT OF THE DUST, Karen Hesse – NP

A terrible accident has transformed Billie Jo's life, scarring her inside and out. Her mother is gone. Her father can't talk about it. And the one thing that might make her feel better – playing the piano – is impossible with her wounded hands. To make matters worse, dust storms are devastating the family farm and all the farms nearby. While others flee from the dust bowl, Billie Joe is left to find peace in the bleak landscape of Oklahoma – and in the surprising landscape of her own heart.

THE OUTSIDE SHOT, Walter Dean Myers – 770L

Lonnie Jackson has a basketball scholarship to Montclare State College in Indiana, a big chance for a street smart kid from Harlem. College ball, though, is a lot different from the games he's played before. The first thing he discovers is that he has to make the team, something he had assumed he's already done. Then Lonnie meets the Fat Man, a local gambler who tempts him to help fix games. It takes not only Lonnie's own courage, but the support of his friend Sherry and some big time help for Lonnie to take his "outside shot" at a bright future.

PROJECT MULBERRY, Linda Sue Park – 690L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Julia Song and her friend Patrick want to team up to win a blue ribbon at the state fair, but they can't agree on the perfect project. Then Julia's mother suggests they raise silkworms as she did years ago in Korea. Julia wants to do something more American, but Patrick is excited by the idea and finally convinces her. They quickly realize that raising silkworms is tougher than they thought. Julia never suspected that she'd be discussing the fate of their project with Ms. Park, the author of this book!

RABBIT HILL, Robert Lawson – 1050L

"New Folks coming, Mother—Father, new Folks coming into the Big House!" shouted Little Georgie the Rabbit. All the animals of the Hill were very excited about the news and wondered how things would change. Will the new Folks bring dogs, traps, and guns? Or as George hopes, will they be planting Folks who would care for the land and grow rich crops? It had been years since there had been a garden at the House.

RULES, Cynthia Lord – 780L *Nutmeg Nominee*

If you have to tell your autistic brother “to keep his pants on in public,” how can you hope for a normal life? Catherine discovers that her own behavior with new neighbor Kristi and wheelchair-bound Jason make her look again at what “normal” really means.

THE SECRET GARDEN, Frances Hodgson Burnett – 970L

Mary is an unhappy orphan forced to live in the home of a wealthy guardian—a busy man who has no time at all for her. But when Mary meets her guardian’s mysterious son—and discovers a secret garden hidden on the estate—a startling change begins to come over her, and life for everyone is never quite the same!

SHAKESPEARE’S SECRET, Elise Broach – 620L *Nutmeg Nominee*

Sixth-grader Hero is captivated by the stories about her new home, especially the mystery of the missing million-dollar diamond and a 500-year-old necklace. As she searches for clues to their whereabouts she stumbles upon another perplexing question: Who was the real William Shakespeare?

THE SIN EATER, Gary D. Schmidt – 1020L

Moving to his grandparents’ centuries-old New Hampshire farm after the death of his mother, Cole becomes concerned as his father’s grief continues to deepen. But the family stories he hears about a mysterious “Sin Eater” enable him to find peace and to connect with his ancestors.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, Ray Bradbury – 820L

Will Halloway and Jim Nightshade, both thirteen years old, live in a small, peaceful town where nothing much seems to happen. But floating beneath the surface of the town are unfulfilled wishes and dreams, and when Cooger and Dark’s Pandemonium Shadow Show arrives just before Halloween, those wishes and dreams begin to surface. Will, Jim and Will’s father, Charles Halloway, who is feeling his age and lost opportunities more and more, seem to be the only ones who can see the evil behind Dark and his ominous show. The three watch as Dark grants wishes and fulfills dreams, trapping their friends in a nightmare. When Mr. Dark at last comes for Will and Jim, only Charles Halloway and his love for the boys can save them.

STAYING FAT FOR SARAH BYRNES, Chris Crutcher – 920L

Eric “Moby” Calhoun and Sarah Byrnes face the world together because they are both different. Eric sees himself as “twelve pounds of mashed potatoes in an eight pound bag”. Although he is big, swimming has toughened and slimmed him down. Sarah is “truly one of the ugliest human beings outside the circus. When she was three...she pulled a pot of boiling spaghetti off the stove onto herself, leaving horrible burn scars covering her face and hands”. United by their flaws, they have faced life together since grade school. But Eric’s friendship is suddenly no longer enough to support Sarah and he doesn’t know why. Sara has withdrawn into a world of silence. As Eric slowly discovers the reasons for this, an ugly picture of child abuse emerges, but with his help and humor, justice finally prevails.

TANGERINE, Edward Bloor – 680L

Paul Fisher not only grew up in the menacing shadow of his football star brother Eric, but he has a vision impairment. Paul wears thick glasses, and after the Fisher family moves to Florida, his school bars him from playing soccer because he is classified as handicapped. Then a sinkhole swallows part of Paul’s school and he must transfer to the middle school in nearby Tangerine. There, he seizes the opportunity to rid himself of the handicap label and play the game he loves. In the process, Paul learns strong lessons about prejudice, the treatment of the environment, individual courage, truth, and the nature of evil.

TONING THE SWEEP, Angela Johnson – 760L

Emily, who is fourteen years old, and her mother, Diane, travel from Cleveland to the California desert to visit Grandma Ola, who has cancer, and bring her back “home”. Representing three generations of African-American women, each of them shares their perspectives on life, death, and themselves. (“Toning the sweep” refers to an old custom Ola remembers from her childhood in North Carolina about striking a “sweep” – a kind of plow – to ring a dead person’s soul to heaven).

VAMPIRE HIGH, Douglas Rees – 620L *Nutmeg Winner 2007*

Cody and his family have just moved from California to Massachusetts and he is not happy at all. His plan is to flunk out of school so his parents will realize how miserable he is and decide to move back home so all will be well. Simple, right? Wrong! Instead, they send him to Vlad Dracula High School, where the teachers and students are all unusually tall, the principal has a pet wolf, and the school campus is posh beyond belief! When Cody sees a kid’s

fangs, the truth sinks in: his classmates are vampires! In fact, Cody and a handful of other non-vampires have only been accepted so they can swim on the state required water polo team (vampires are deathly afraid of water). Compete and Cody is guaranteed straight A's. Sounds like a great deal. So why does this cushy arrangement bother Cody so much? Join us as Cody adjusts to this weird school, stands up to bullies, falls in love with a vampire princess and finds a unique solution to a problem that changes things at Vlad Dracul forever. (*For grades 7 and 8.*)

WALK TWO MOONS, Sharon Creech – 770L

Thirteen year old Salamanca Tree Hiddle travels from Ohio to Idaho with her eccentric grandparents to visit her mother who left the year before and never returned. Along the way she tells them the story of her friend Phoebe, whose mother also left without explanation. Sharing this story is Sal's way of coping with her own sense of loss.

Z FOR ZACHARIAH, Robert C. O'Brien - 820L

After a nuclear holocaust destroys much of the United States, fifteen –year-old Ann Burden believes she is the only person left alive. Amazingly, the valley in which she lives has escaped devastation and she has been able to live comfortably alone for over a year. Ann's peaceful, if lonely, existence is interrupted when she notices a column of smoke in the distance moving closer. Uncertain who is approaching, Ann leaves her family home and retreats to a cave in the hills until she can be certain it is safe to return. From the cave, Ann watches a man wearing a plastic suit enter the valley. She remains in hiding until the stranger becomes ill and she feels compelled to nurse him back to health. Once he is well, he asserts his will almost immediately. Gradually, his behavior becomes increasingly erratic until Ann begins to fear for her life.

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