

Journey to Topaz / Yoshido Ushida

Yuki, her mother, and her brother are sent to a Japanese-American internment camp in the Utah desert.

USA, World War II

Burying the Sun / Gloria Whelan

During the terrible siege of Leningrad in 1941, a fourteen-year-old Russian boy tries to help his family and his city during that time of war and starvation.

Russia, 1940s

The Ravenmaster's Secret: Escape from the Tower of London / Elvira Woodruff

The eleven-year-old son of the Ravenmaster at the Tower of London befriends a Jacobite rebel being held prisoner there.

England, 1700s

Bat 6 / Virginia Euwer Wolff

In post World War II Oregon, sixth grade girls must face up to bigotry during a softball game.

USA, World War II

Breaking Stalin's Nose / Eugene Yelchin

In the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union, ten-year-old Sasha idolizes his father, a devoted Communist, but when police take his father away and leave Sasha homeless, he is forced to examine his own perceptions, values, and beliefs.

Soviet Union, 1900s

Dragonwings / Laurence Yep

A Chinese immigrant in San Francisco successfully builds and flies a biplane.

USA, 1900s

The Devil's Arithmetic / Jane Yolen

A young Jewish girl, tired of hearing her grandparent's stories of the Holocaust, is sent back in time to a small Jewish village in Nazi-occupied Poland.

Poland, 1940s

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HISTORICAL FICTION

For 5th grade and up

Suggestions from the Mt. Lebanon Public Library

The following titles may be found in juvenile fiction unless otherwise noted.

Before We Were Free / Julia Alvarez

In the early 1960s in the Dominican Republic, twelve-year-old Anita learns that her family is involved in the underground movement to end the bloody rule of the dictator, General Trujillo.

Dominican Republic, 1960s

Fever, 1793 / Laurie Halse Anderson

In 1793 Philadelphia, sixteen-year-old Matilda Cook copes with the horrors of the yellow fever epidemic.

USA, 1700s

Crispin: At the Edge of the World / Avi

In the Middle Ages a boy and his friend face danger and find adventure as they flee from their enemies in order to find freedom and safety. *Sequel to Crispin: The Cross of Lead.*

England, 1300s

Carrie's War / Carrie Bawden

At the start of World War II, a brother & sister are evacuated from war-torn London to a village in Wales, where they live with a stern shopkeeper and his lonely sister.

England, World War II

The Shakespeare Stealer / Gary Blackwood

A young orphan boy is ordered by his master to infiltrate Shakespeare's acting troupe in order to steal the script of "Hamlet," but he discovers instead the meaning of friendship and loyalty.

England, 1600s

The Examination / Malcolm Bosse

Two brothers face famine, flood, and pirates on their journey through China as one pursues his calling as a scholar and the other becomes involved with a secret society.
China, 1400s

Code Talker / Joseph Bruchac

Although in school they were taught by white teachers that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, who will send secret messages during World War II in their native tongue.
USA, World War II

Blood on the River: James Town 1607 / Elisa Carbone

The 12 year old page to Captain John Smith adjusts to life in the new colony of James Town where he must learn to distinguish between friend and foe.
USA, 1600s

Revolution is Not a Dinner Party / Ying Chang Compestine

In 1972 the 9 year old daughter of two doctors struggles to make sense of the communists' Cultural Revolution, which empties stores of food, homes of appliances deemed "bourgeois," and people of laughter.
China, 1970s

The Misadventures of Maude March / Audrey Coulombis

When two orphaned teenage sisters run away they find themselves in one rollicking Western adventure after another.
USA, 1800s

Elijah of Buxton / Christopher Paul Curtis

Eleven year old Elijah, whose parents were slaves, is a free child living in Canada when he embarks on a dangerous journey into America in order to find a lying preacher who stole money that was meant to free a slave family.
USA/Canada, 1850s

The Midwife's Apprentice / Karen Cushman

A homeless medieval girl tries to find her place in the world.
England, Middle Ages

The Game of Silence / Louise Erdrich

Nine year old Omakayas, of the Ojibwa tribe, must leave her beloved home on the Lake Superior shore when her family and tribe move west. *Sequel to The Birchbark House.*
USA, 1840s

The Slave Dancer / Paula Fox

In 1840, a 13 year old boy is kidnapped and forced to make music on board a slave ship so the slaves can keep their muscles strong by "dancing."
USA, 1840

Dogboy / Christopher Russell

An orphaned boy raised with hunting dogs at an English manor, accompanies his master and his prize dogs to France where they join a battle in the Hundred Years War.
England, 1300s

Under the Blood Red Sun / Graham Salisbury

Life for a young boy's Japanese family in Hawaii changes drastically after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941.
Hawaii, World War II

A Drowned Maiden's Hair / Laura Amy Schlitz

An eleven year old orphaned girl, adopted by three sisters moonlighting as mediums, is given a part to play in their fraudulent seances.
USA, Early 1900s

Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy / Gary D. Schmidt

In 1911, a white minister's son befriends a girl from a poor, island community founded by former slaves that the town fathers- and Turner's- want to change into a tourist spot.
USA, Early 1900s

The Witch of Blackbird Pond / Elizabeth George Speare

After moving from Barbados to Connecticut in 1697, a young girl's safety is endangered by her friendship with an old woman thought to be a witch.
USA, 1600s

A True and Faithful Narrative / Katherine Sturtevant

In London of the 1680s, a 16 year old aspiring writer debates whether to marry either of the two men who are courting her, one a bookseller's apprentice and the other a seafarer recently returned from being captured in Algiers.
London, 1600s

The Land / Mildred Taylor

The son of a plantation owner father and a slave mother dreams of owning his own land. *Prequel to Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry.*
USA, Post-Civil War

One Came Home / Amy Timberlake

In 1871 Wisconsin, thirteen-year-old Georgia sets out to find her sister Agatha, presumed dead when remains are found wearing the dress she was last seen in, and before the end of the year gains fame as a sharpshooter and foiler of counterfeiters.
USA, 1800s

Sing Down the Moon / Scott O'Dell

In this moving story, a Navaho Indian girl tells of the two years in her life when her tribe was forced to travel 300 miles to Fort Sumner with the rest of the Navajo Nation.

USA, 1800s

Lydia, Queen of Palestine / Uri Orlev

A young Rumanian Jewish girl describes her childhood in pre-World War II Romania, her struggles to understand her parents divorce amid the chaos of the war, and her life on a kibbutz in Palestine.

Europe and Palestine, 1900s

A Single Shard / Linda Sue Park

After he accidentally breaks a piece of exquisite pottery, an orphaned and homeless boy is given a chance at a better life when he begins to assist the master potter Min.

Korea, 1100s

Soldier's Heart: A Novel of the Civil War / Gary Paulsen

Charley Goddard lies about his age in order to join the First Minnesota Volunteers, and after four years of fighting amidst the horrors of the war, returns home aged and "deadened."

USA, Civil War

On the Wings of Heroes / Richard Peck

An Illinois boy remembers the homefront years of World War II when his world was filled with rationing, sacrifice, and heroes.

USA, World War II

A Long Way From Chicago / Richard Peck

A boy recounts his annual summer trips to rural Illinois with his sister during the Great Depression to visit their larger-than-life grandmother.

USA, 1930s

Castle Diary / Richard Platt

As a page in his uncle's castle in thirteenth-century England, eleven-year-old Tobias records in his journal his experiences learning how to hunt, play games of skill, and behave in noble society.

England, 1200s

The Ruby in the Smoke / Philip Pullman

When a 16 year old girl sets out to solve the mystery surrounding her father's death, she becomes involved in a deadly search for a mysterious ruby. The first of a trilogy.

England, 1800s

The Education of Patience Goodspeed / Heather Vogel Frederick

Although she loves her job as assistant navigator on her father's whaling ship, when the ship heads into dangerous waters her father forces Patience to enter a boarding school for girls in Hawaii. Funny and exciting.

Hawaii, 1800s

A House of Tailors / Patricia Reilly Giff

Thirteen year old Dina's skills as a seamstress help her adapt to her new home in Brooklyn even though she longs to return to her family home in Germany.

USA, 1870s

The Summer of My German Soldier / Bette Greene

In Arkansas, a lonely Jewish girl becomes friends with a German prisoner of war.

USA, World War II

Tom Cringle: The Pirate and the Patriot / Gerald Hausman

A fourteen-year-old lieutenant in the British navy faces pirates, an uncharted wilderness, man-eating sharks, and brutal battles in Jamaica.

Jamaica, War of 1812

Out of the Dust / Karen Hesse

Fifteen year old Billie Jo relates the hardships her Oklahoma family faces during the Dust Bowl years of the Great Depression.

USA, 1900s

Bo at Ballard Creek / Kirkpatrick Hill

It's the 1920s, and Bo was headed for an Alaska orphanage when she won the hearts of two tough gold miners who set out to raise her, enthusiastically helped by all the kind people of the nearby Eskimo village.

Alaska, 1920s

Penny from Heaven / Jennifer Holm

As she turns twelve during the summer of 1953, Penny gains new insights into herself and her family while also learning a secret about her father's death.

USA, 1950s

The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn / Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler

A fourteen year old boy who wants to be a samurai sets out on a dangerous journey in order to solve the mystery of a stolen jewel.

Japan, 1700s

Across Five Aprils / Irene Hunt

With one brother in the Union Army and the other in the Confederacy, Jethro Creighton and his family face the cruel reality of war.

USA, Civil War

The Star of Kazan / Eva Ibbotson

After twelve year old Annika inherits a trunk of costume jewelry, a woman claiming to be her mother takes her to live in a decrepit mansion in Germany.

Vienna, 1800s

Cracker!: The Best Dog in Vietnam / Cynthia Kadohata

A young soldier and his specially trained dog search for mines, sniff out enemy locations, and rescue missing soldiers during the Vietnam War.

Vietnam, 1960s

A Million Shades of Gray / Cynthia Kadohata

In 1975 after American troops pull out of Vietnam, a thirteen-year-old boy and his beloved elephant escape into the jungle when the Viet Cong attack his village.

Vietnam, 1970s

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate / Jacqueline Kelly

In central Texas in 1899, eleven-year-old Callie Vee Tate is instructed to be a lady by her mother, learns about love from the older three of her six brothers, and studies the natural world with her grandfather, the latter of which leads to an important discovery.

USA, 1900s

The Green Glass Sea / Ellen Klages

In 1943 an eleven-year-old girl moves west to be with her scientist father who is working on a top secret government program- the atomic bomb.

USA, 1940s

The Storyteller's Beads / Jane Kurtz

During the political strife and famine of the 1980's, two Ethiopian girls, one Christian and the other Jewish and blind, struggle to overcome many difficulties, including their prejudices about each other, as they make the dangerous journey out of Ethiopia.

Ethiopia, 1980s

Worth / A. LaFaye

After breaking his leg, eleven-year-old Nate feels useless because he cannot work on the family farm in nineteenth-century Nebraska, so when his father brings home an orphan boy to help with the chores, Nate feels even worse.

USA, 1800s

Hattie Big Sky / Kirby Larson

In 1918, sixteen-year-old orphan Hattie Brooks moves to the Montana prairie, where she struggles to make an inherited homestead her own.

USA, 1900s

The Convicts / Iain Lawrence

After a thirteen year old boy is convicted of murder, he is sentenced to seven years on a prison ship for boys and is eventually transported to Australia. An exciting historical adventure.

London, 1800s

The Lions of Little Rock / Kristin Levine

In 1958 Little Rock, Arkansas, painfully shy twelve-year-old Marlee sees her city and family divided over school integration, but her friendship with Liz, a new student, helps her find her voice and fight against racism.

USA, 1950s

The Art of Keeping Cool / Janet Taylor Lisle

Two cousins befriend a German artist who lives on the outskirts of their grandparent's Rhode Island town and who is suspected of being a spy.

USA, World War II

Good Night, Mr. Tom / Michelle Magorian

When he is evacuated from war-torn London, an abused boy finds affection and friendship for the first time.

England, World War II

The Kite Rider / Geraldine McCaughrean

In this fast-paced adventure, a 12-year-old boy joins the circus as a kite rider.

China, 1200s

Mara, Daughter of the Nile / Eloise Jarvis McGraw

An Egyptian slave girl becomes a spy in the royal palace of Thebes.

Egypt, 1400s BC

Miss Spitfire: Reaching Helen Keller / Sarah Miller

Twenty one year old Annie Sullivan travels from Massachusetts to Alabama to try and teach six-year-old Helen Keller, deaf and blind since age two.

USA, 1900s

The Glory Field / Walter Dean Myers

The memorable two hundred forty-one year history of one African-American family.

USA, 1700s, 1800s, 1900s

The King of Mulberry Street / Donna Jo Napoli

A young Jewish boy from Italy arrives in America on a cargo ship, and although he longs to return home, he begins to make a new life for himself on the streets of New York.

USA, 1890s