



CompassLearning®

CompassLearning Reading/Language Arts

Levels 5-6

Suggested Literature List

Reading/Language Arts - Level 5

An American Safari

Launch a Study of Grasslands

Grasslands: A Franklin Watts Picture Atlas by Casey Horton

(Ages 9–12) This book uses photographs and maps to describe the animals and plants that are found in grasslands around the world. It describes how animals and humans depend on and shape the grasslands.

My America (series). *For This Land: Meg's Prairie Diary* (Book 1) and *As Far As I Can See: Meg's Prairie Diary* (Book 2) by Kate McMullan

(Ages 8–12) History is brought to life through the eyes of nine-year-old Meg Wells. Meg keeps a personal diary that relates hardships of life on the prairie in 1856, such as fire and illness. Students also learn some of the politicking involved in deciding whether to make Kansas a free or a slave state.

Prairie River: A Journey of Faith by Kristiana Gregory

(Ages 9–13) At age 13, Nessa Clemens is the oldest girl in the orphanage. She escapes on a stagecoach to Prairie River, Kansas, a town in the middle of nowhere. She is alone, and discovers it hard to find anyone who will trust a person with no family or past. Life on the prairie is very hard both physically and spiritually. But Nessa's courage, charisma, and faith carry her through.

Tall Grass and Trouble: A Story of Environmental Action by Ann E. Sigford

(Ages 10–14) This book explains the need to preserve prairies.

Launch a Study of Prairie Animals

Black-Footed Ferret by Denise Casey

(Ages 9–12) Throughout the book, there are many photographs of this most endangered prairie animal, the black-footed ferret. It tells the history of this "masked bandit of the prairie," shows how the ferret hunts and how it cares for its young, and it explains the hope for its survival. Photos include prairie dogs and other prairie animals.

Buffalo: The American Bison Today by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent

(Ages 9–12) This book explains the history of the buffalo up to the present day. It describes both the aggressive and gentle behaviors of the buffalo.

Discovering Badgers by Martin Banks

(Ages 8–11) This book uses color photographs to tell about the badger family. It explains how to analyze where a badger habitat might be, and it describes badger habits, food, family life, and enemies.

Prairie Dogs in Prairie Dog Town by Irmengarde Eberle

(Ages 11–14) This book describes the characteristics and behaviors of prairie dogs in detail. It includes drawings that go with the text and plenty of prairie dog action.

Launch a Study of Photography

Dorothea Lange: Life Through the Camera by Milton Meltzer

(Ages 9–12) Dorothea was determined to become a photographer although women in the early 1900s did not work as photographers, and she did not even have enough money to buy a camera. Despite tremendous odds, Dorothea pursued her dream and became a famous photographer.

How to Be a Wildlife Photographer by Joe Van Wormer

(Ages 10–13) An experienced wildlife photographer explains that you can get good photographs without expensive equipment. You can practice on pets or farm animals or animals in zoos. He explains techniques such as how to get close to animals, how to capture action, viewpoints, lighting, and more.

Photography Basics: An Introduction for Young People by Vic Owens–Knudsen

(Ages 10–15) This book tells the story of photography and gives a description of various cameras in use today.

Birchbark House

Launch a Study of Woodland Indians

Indians of the Northeast: Traditions, History, Legends and Life by Lisa Sita

(Ages 9–12) The book is part of “The Native American” series. It describes the woodland terrain, weather, plants, and animals and how the Indian people have used those resources. Text and color photographs also explain many aspects of the Indian culture such as ceremonies and community life.

The Legend of Leelanau by Kathy-Jo Wargin (Ages 8–12) Leelanau, a young maiden, is not supposed to be going into the Spirit Woods. But when she listens very hard to the forest whispers, she can hear little fairies. She so enjoys playing with these little fairies that she risks going to the forest repeatedly. She would rather stay in the enchanted forest than marry the man her parents have chosen for her.

Native American Peoples: Ojibwe by Sierra Adare

(Ages 9–13) This book describes the lifestyle of the Ojibwe Indians today. The Ojibwe are a united group of people who are trying to convince the government to honor its treaties. Colorful photographs help present both the traditional and modern cultures.

The Ojibwe by Raymond Bial

(Ages 9–13) This book gives thorough accounts of the Ojibwe origins and explains in detail the many aspects of the Ojibwe lifestyle.

Woodland Indians by Elaine Hansen Cleary

(Ages 9–12) This book presents the history and culture of the Indians who inhabited the forest wilderness when the Europeans first arrived. The perforated pages include several learning activities and ideas for student projects.

Launch a Study of Forest Animals

Black Bears (Our Wild World Series) by Kathy Feeney

(Ages 8–12) This book presents fun questions and answers, colorful photographs, and a list of Internet sites about the black bear. Readers learn about conservation while studying the black bear, found only in North America. They also learn about the black bear's behavioral traits such how it eats, sleeps, and raises its young.

Fat Man in a Fur Coat: And Other Bear Stories by Alvin Schwartz

(Ages 10–14) Bears are respected as intelligent animals, yet they are often abused and misunderstood. This book is a collection of both factual and fictional information on bears.

A Walk in the Deciduous Forest by Rebecca L. Johnson

(Ages 8–12) Color photographs and informative text give a view of forest trees that lose their leaves in autumn. It includes a variety of animals and explains how they depend on each other for survival.

Whitetail Deer (Our Wild World Series) by Laura Evert

(Ages 8–12) This book describes and provides colorful photographs of the physical characteristics, habits, and behaviors of this most common deer found in North America. It teaches conservation and answers questions that children most often ask about deer.

Launch a Study of Sibling Relationships

Maudie in the Middle by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

(Ages 7–12) Maude is a middle child growing up in Iowa in the early 1900s. She wants to be good, yet she seems to always be getting into trouble. She especially wants to be noticed. During a family crisis, Maude finds that she is noticed when she must care for her baby sister.

My Brother Ange by Mary McCaffrey (Ages 8–12) Eleven-year-old Mick fights with his younger brother. The brother is then hit by a car. Mick is sorry for fighting with his brother and wants to be good to him in the future.

Operation: Dump the Chump by Barbara Park

(Ages 8–12) Ten-year-old Oscar plans to get rid of his seven-year-old brother, Robert, who is a real pest. He has an ingenious and humorous eight-step plan.

The Giver

The Giver provokes thought about the effects of modern science on the future of our society. The story lends itself to a study of science fiction, the benefits and disadvantages of technology, and the importance of being free to make one's own choices. The books below are related to the themes in *The Giver*, although many others are also available.

Launch a Study of Freedom

Lincoln: A Photobiography by Russell Freedman

(Ages 10–14) This book uses more than eighty photographs and text to provide a description of the boyhood, self-education, marriage, and professional life of Abraham Lincoln. It focuses on Lincoln's years as the President and the issues that led our deeply divided nation into Civil War. Abraham Lincoln advocated freedom through his speeches and the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation.

A Picture of Freedom by Patricia C. McKissack

(Ages 9–12) Readers relate to the hardships of slavery through the character Clotee, an intelligent and determined twelve-year-old girl. Clotee is an orphaned house slave who learns to read by looking over the shoulder of young William as he is being tutored. She is only allowed to fan William, so she must keep her own reading skills a secret. She practices reading and writing by keeping a diary given to her by William's new tutor, an abolitionist. Eventually, Clotee helps some of her friends escape to the North, but she remains behind as a conductor on the Underground Railroad.

Riding Freedom by Pam Munoz Ryan

(Ages 9–12) This is a fictionalized biography of Charlotte Parkhurst. In the 1860s, she is the only female in an orphanage and is never adopted because she must work in the kitchen. Charolette spends her spare time in a stable learning about freedom from the elderly man who works there. He tells her about his escape from slavery. She also discovers that she has a knack for communicating with horses. Charolette cuts off her hair, dresses in boys' clothing, and gets a job as a stagecoach driver. "Charley" lives her entire life disguised as a man. She even votes in a California presidential election. Many consider her to have been the first woman to vote in the United States.

Launch a Study of Future Technology

Airplanes of the Future by Don Berliner

(Ages 9–13) Future planes will most likely be faster, quieter, and will use less fuel. This book takes a look at a wide range of aircraft and their various functions. It predicts probable designs for commercial, military, and personal use.

Future (Eyewitness series) by Michael Tambini

(Ages 9–12) This book looks ahead to future technological, environmental, and biological developments. It tells of weather changes, how people might get around, and the possibility of having a robotic pet. Readers decide for themselves whether or not these changes are improvements.

How the Future Began: Machines by Clive Gifford

(Ages 10–14) This book explores the origins of the machinery that is affecting our lives today. It also suggests future developments in machinery, including mass production, computers, robots, micro-engineering, and communications technology. It gives specific examples such as self-repairing clothing, robots that learn from experience, and computers that regulate climate.

The Science of Artificial Intelligence by Fred D'Ignazio and Allen L. Wold

(Ages 10–14) This book compares human intelligence with artificial intelligence. It explains how artificial intelligence is used to improve technology. It also considers ethical conflicts.

Launch a Study of Science Fiction

Below the Root (part 1 of the Green Sky trilogy) by Zilpha Keatley

(Ages 11–13) Thirteen-year-old Raamo is part of a society that has survived almost total destruction of the world. He learns of an underground civilization and sets out to explore it. Raamo uses telepathy to uncover startling truths about the priestly class who control the government.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne

(Ages 11–14) This classic adventure tale is one of the first science fiction stories ever written. Jules Verne used the newest inventions of his day to predict machinery of the future with amazing accuracy. Verne puts a character, Captain Nemo, in a futuristic submarine, and he describes how men live in an ecosystem under the sea.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle

(Ages 11–14) The father of Meg and Charles Wallace is on a secret mission of time-travel experimentation when he suddenly disappears for a year. He is lost in a wrinkle in time. This science fiction story is about the sister and brother—and their friend Calvin—in search of their father. They travel through space where they discover many foreign lands. As in *The Giver*, they find places where everything is in order and everyone is the same.

Mother and Daughter

Launch a Study of Mexico

A Family in Mexico by Tom Moran

(Ages 8–12) This book gives text and photographs that describe school and play, foods, religion, and family customs.

Mexico: Giant of the South by Eileen Latell Smith

(Ages 9–12) Chapters about Mexico present geography, education, sports, and social customs. Included is a chapter on Mexican Americans and immigration to the United States.

Passport to Mexico by Carmen Irizarry

(Ages 9–12) Readers get a “tour” of Mexico through photographs, charts, and maps that help introduce them to the geography, natural resources, industries, and people of Mexico.

Launch a Study of Family

All Kinds of Families by Norma Simon

(Ages 9–12) This book explores and celebrates family love and features various kinds of families and their problems.

Amber Brown Is Green with Envy by Paula Danziger

(Ages 9–11) Amber feels that her parents are making her life difficult. They are not acting the way she thinks parents should act, because they go their separate ways and often leave her out. She thinks that kids whose parents are together have no problems. She envies kids who can stay in the same school and keep the same friends.

In My Family/En mi familia by Carmen Lomas Garza

(Ages 9–12) The author talks to the reader about her paintings. Each painting portrays memories of her childhood and the important events and traditions that were practiced by her Mexican American family. This book is a follow-up to *Family Pictures/Cuadros de familia* and is written in both English and in Spanish.

When Grownups Drive You Crazy by Eda LaShan

(Ages 9–13) This book deals with family and relationships and tries to foster understanding between children and their parents.

Launch a Study of Occupations

And What Do You Do? A Book About People and Their Work by George Ancona

(Ages 7–11) This book gives a description of more than 20 careers that do not require a college degree.

How to Be an Inventor by Harvey Weiss

(Ages 10–14) This book takes a look at different types of inventors and their inventions. It explores the process of inventing and gives advice on becoming an inventor.

Jobs for Kids by Carol Barkin and Elizabeth James

(Ages 9–12) There are many ways for kids to earn money. This book gives ideas for what kids can do for work, tips on selling, and how to set prices.

The Piñata Maker/El piñatero by George Ancona

(Ages 9–12) Colorful photographs accompany the text that explains each step to making a piñata. The book features an experienced piñata maker and shows a variety of his works. It also shows how finished piñatas are used. This book is written in both English and Spanish.

The Black Stallion

Launch a Study of Horses

Eyewitness: Horse by Juliet Clutton-Brock

(Ages 9–14) Colorful photographs and text provide a wealth of information about horses including their breeds, behavior, evolution, and their importance in history. This book also gives facts about other animals that are closely related to the horse such as the zebra and the mule.

A Horse to Love by Nancy Springer

(Ages 10–13) Erin is a shy eleven-year-old girl who wants a horse to call her own. She wants the horse to love her and to be her best friend. Then she gets a horse. Spindrifft is just a stubborn and cranky horse, and he doesn't even seem to like Erin. Now Erin is lonelier than ever. However, she finally gains self-confidence when she learns to love and provide care for the horse.

How to Draw Horses by Carrie A. Snyder

(Ages 9–13) This book provides step-by-step instructions on how to draw horses. It includes eleven different breeds of horses and tells interesting facts about them.

Taking Care of Yoki (formerly titled *A Girl Called Bob and a Horse Called Yoki*) by Barbara Campbell

(Ages 8–12) This is the story of an old horse, named Yoki, who pulls the milk delivery wagon in St. Louis at the time of the Second World War. Barbara Ann, called Bob, makes secret plans to save the horse when she hears that he will be destroyed. The horse is a friend who has listened to her when no one else would. Now Bob is faced with a conflict: she wants to help the horse escape, but is that stealing?

A Very Young Rider by Jill Krementz

(Ages 8–12) Ten-year-old Vivi Malloy relates her experiences as she and her pony train and prepare for a riding competition. The author includes black-and-white photographs that bring the characters to life.

Launch a Study of Survival on a Deserted Island

Baby Island by Carol Rylie Brink

(Ages 9–12) This is an adventure story of two sisters, twelve-year-old Mary and ten-year-old Jean, who escape a sinking ship en route to Australia. They rescue one infant and three toddlers from the ship and, after bobbing around in a lifeboat for a few days, reach a seemingly deserted tropical island. The girls plan a home for themselves and their babies.

Island: Shipwrecked by Gordon Korman

(Ages 8–12) This is the suspenseful tale of six children who try to survive off the land after their ship sinks. Luke, Lyssa, Ian, J.J., Charla, and Will have no food and very few supplies. They think they are alone on the island but, unfortunately, they are not. This book is part of a trilogy of *Island* stories: *Shipwrecked*, *Survival*, and *Escape*.

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe

(Ages 10–14) This classic story about being shipwrecked and marooned on an island was not written for children. However, some versions have been adapted for children. Robinson Crusoe lived in isolation on an island for many years and survived off the land with just a few items that he saved from the shipwreck.

Launch a Study of Caring for Animals

Black Beauty by Anna Sewell

(Ages 9–12) This is an enjoyable classic story for children, and the first horse story written with the hope of making the reader aware of the suffering that some horses endure at the hands of their cruel owners. It is narrated in the first person by the horse, which helps the reader develop sensitivity toward harsh treatments and the importance of kind, sympathetic, and caring people.

From Pests to Pets: How Small Animals Became Our Friends by John Zeaman

(Ages 9–11) This book tells how several small mammals such as mice, rats, gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, and ferrets are being kept as pets. As wild animals, they are considered by many people to be pests.

Protecting Our Feathered Friends by Dean T. Spaulding
(Ages 9-12) This book teaches respect for the natural environment, discusses extinction, and explains how conservation applies to birds. It gives suggestions to the readers for ways they can become more involved in bird conservation.

Reading/Language Arts - Level 6

My Brooklyn Grandmother

Launch a Study of Chinese Americans

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Bao Lord
(Ages 9–12) This is the story of a girl who leaves China to join her father in Brooklyn, New York, in 1947. She becomes Americanized in her apartment building, at school, and through her love of baseball.

Chinese New Year by Tricia Brown
(Ages 8–11) This book describes the celebration of a very old Chinese holiday. It provides color photographs and text to show the Chinese New Year being celebrated by Chinese Americans in San Francisco's Chinatown.

The Chinese Americans by William Daley
(Ages 11–14) This book gives the history and explains the culture and religion of immigrants from China. It also discusses their adjustment to life in America and their acceptance as an ethnic group.

The City by the Bay: A Magical Journey Around San Francisco by Patricia Haddock
(Ages 10–14) This book explains the main attractions of San Francisco, beginning with Chinatown. It includes a time line of the city's history; fun facts about the city; and colorful, vivid illustrations that show several popular places to visit.

Launch a Study of Grandmothers

The Lucky Stone by Lucille Clifton
(Ages 8–11) The power of a stone links several stories in the life of Tee's great-grandmother. The lucky, shiny black stone had provided good fortune for its various owners for over a hundred years. First it had helped a runaway slave win her freedom. It had also helped Tee's great-grandmother to meet her husband. Can the stone help Tee?

The Night Journey by Kathryn Lasky
(Ages 9–13) This book tells the story of Rachel's great-grandmother's terrifying escape from Czarist Russia. The book compares the life of Rachel, who is thirteen years old, to the life of her great-grandmother when she was young.

The Remembering Box by Eth Clifford
(Ages 9–12) Joshua's grandmother shares with him memories of her childhood. She has a "remembering box" filled with items that she has saved, and she can tell a story about each one. She puts a picture of herself inside the box, and gives it to Joshua so that he will remember her after her death.

The Trouble with Gramary by Betty Levin

(Ages 10–14) The townspeople think that Merkka's grandmother, who makes huge welded sculptures, is weird. But Merkka understands and supports her grandmother, and she learns about principles and family love.

Launch a Study of Authors

Boy: Tales of Childhood by Roald Dahl

(Ages 10–14) The author tells several of Roald Dahl's memorable childhood experiences and introduces the reader to his family. Dahl has written many popular children's books including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach*, and *Matilda*.

Conversations with J.K. Rowling by Lindsey Fraser

(Ages 9–14) The author conducts an in-depth interview with J.K. Rowling and asks several questions about her family, childhood, school days, and career as a writer. Rowlings' answers are thorough, entertaining, and informative. A section of the book is also devoted to her explanations of how she got her ideas to write the Harry Potter books.

Mark Twain: The Story of Samuel Clemens by Jim Hargrove

(Ages 9–12) This is the biography of the great American author, Mark Twain. Throughout *The Lost Garden*, Laurence Yep writes that Mark Twain worked in San Francisco as a reporter. Laurence Yep later wrote *The Mark Twain Murders* and *The Tom Sawyer Fires*.

Once upon a Time: A Story of the Brothers Grimm by Robert Quackenbush

(Ages 8–11) This is the biography of the world-famous men who collected fairy tales in order to preserve them.

Far North

Launch a Study of Canada

Canada by Jack Brickenden

(Ages 9–12) This book gives an informative overview of Canadian history, geography, and culture.

It provides descriptions of home life and school life. It includes photographs and maps.

Canada's Kids by Sabra Holbrook

(Ages 11–14) This book tells stories of Canadian children throughout the ten provinces and two territories. Some are written from the perspectives of Eskimo and Indian children.

From Anna by Jean Little

(Ages 9–12) To avoid Nazi persecution, Anna's family emigrates from Germany to Canada. Anna's doctor discovers that she is partially sighted, but that doesn't prevent Anna from discovering a wonderful new world in Canada.

I Be Somebody by Hadley Irwin

(Ages 9–13) This is the story of a black family who relocates to northern Canada during the early 1900s. The boy, Rap, searches for his identity and is determined to "be somebody."

Launch a Study of Wild Animals

How Animals Behave: A New Look at Wildlife by Donald J. Crump

(Ages 10–13) This National Geographic book explains how animals find food and protect themselves.

Julie of the Wolves by Jean Craighead George

(Ages 10–14) Julie is a 13-year-old Eskimo girl who runs away from home and walks all alone across the arctic tundra. She is saved by a pack of wolves. This book teaches aspects of the Eskimo culture, the habits of animals, and the pains of growing up.

Moose by Jack Denton Scott

(Ages 9–12) This informative book introduces the moose family.

Sketching Outdoors in Winter by Jim Arnosky

(Ages 9–13) This book gives detailed instructions for how to draw animal tracks and other natural signs of winter. It requires an interest in art and careful observation.

White Fang by Jack London

(Ages 10–14) A wolf cub finds himself alone in the frozen wilderness of northwest Canada. He is thrown into a savage world where each day is a struggle to survive.

Launch a Study of American Indians

American Indian Music and Musical Instruments by George S. Fichter

(Ages 9–14) This book gives information about American Indian music and instructions for making your own musical instruments.

Growing Up Indian by Evelyn Wolfson

(Ages 10–13) This book explains what it was like to grow up in an Indian tribe before the white man had any influence on the culture.

Science of the Early American Indians by Beulah and Harold E. Tannenbaum

(Ages 10–13) This book gives an account of the discoveries and contributions of Native Americans in fields such as astronomy, agriculture, architecture, and art.

The Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare

(Ages 11–14) Matt is twelve years old in 1768 when his dad leaves him in the cabin in Maine to get the rest of his family. When bees attack Matt, he is rescued by Indians. He makes friends with the chief's grandson and is invited to move north with the Beaver tribe. This book gives the reader a comparison of cultures.

Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner

(Ages 8–12) This is the story of a young boy who competes in a dog sled race against great odds. Stone Fox is a large Indian who is taking part in the race, and he has never lost. The boy wants to win the prize so he can pay taxes on his grandfather's farm. Readers learn, along with the boy, about determination and integrity.

Growing Up in Coal County

Growing Up in Coal Country teaches about coal miners and their way of life in the late 1800s and early 1900s. It can be used to effectively teach about inventions that

have changed the way coal is mined and the way we live today. The book lends itself to many other themes such as the history and uses of coal, labor unions, one-room schoolhouses, growing up at the turn of the twentieth century, careers, cultures, ethnic groups, community life, manufacturing, and immigration. The books below are related to the concepts presented in *Growing Up in Coal Country*, although several others are available.

Launch a Study of Coal Mining

Danger at the Breaker by Catherine A. Welch

(Ages 9–12) This is the story of eight-year-old Andrew who does not want to leave school to work in the backbreaking coal mines of Pennsylvania in the 1800s. It tells of the dangers he encounters on his first day and an explosion that almost kills his coal-miner father.

Emmy by Connie Jordan Green

(Ages 9–12) Eleven-year-old Emmy faces grave hardships when her father loses an arm in a coal mining accident and is evicted from his shack. This book teaches cooperation and coping skills as Emmy and her family work together to keep themselves fed.

In Coal Country by Judith Hendershot

(Ages 9–12) This book includes many photographs of a coal-mining town in Ohio during the 1930s. It tells about the daily life of growing up in a town owned by the company. It describes the father's role of going to work in the coal mines and the mother's role of working in the home. It also explains how human labor revolved around the four seasons.

Together in Pinecone Patch by Thomas Y. Yeserski

(Ages 9–12) This book is about two immigrant families: Keara Buckley's from Ireland and Stefan Pazik's from Poland. Both families, in search of a better life outside the old countries, find themselves living in the coal-mining town of Pinecone Patch, Pennsylvania. The families do not like each other, but when Keara and Stefan fall in love, the families overcome prejudice and learn to get along.

Launch a Study of Inventions

Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women by Catherine Thimmesh

(Ages 10–14) This is a collection of biographies of women and girls who used hard work and creative ideas to change the world. It tells how the inventions were converted from unique ideas into realities that made people's lives simpler and better.

Nature Invented It First by Ross E. Hutchins

(Ages 9–10) This book shows how many inventions have been copied from nature itself.

The Story of Thomas Alva Edison (Landmark Books) by Margaret Cousins

(Ages 9–12) This is the biography of the great inventor who contributed to the convenience and comfort of people all over the world. The reader learns about his life and how his great inventions, such as the light bulb, phonograph, and motion pictures, changed the way people communicate.

The Thomas Edison Book of Easy and Incredible Experiments by James G. Cook (Ages 9–14) This book offers a collection of science experiments and projects. It provides a wide range of activities, from easy to difficult, in the fields of chemistry, physics, and environmental studies. The projects are inexpensive and practical.

Launch a Study of One-Room Schools

One-Room School by Raymond Bial

(Ages 8–13) This book uses many pictures to tell the history of the one-room schoolhouse. The author explains how the demands of farming had a big impact on the functioning of schools.

A One-Room School (Historic Communities) by Bobbie Kalman

(Ages 9–12) This book describes the rural school building and then tells about the school rules, the routines, and the supplies.

The One-Room School at Squabble Hollow by Rosemarie Hausherr

(Ages 9–12) Over a hundred years ago, this one-room Vermont school had one teacher and the students learned to read and write from a blackboard and a few books. It had an outhouse, a wood stove, and no electricity. After a fire in 1929, the school was modernized with an indoor bathroom, electricity, a piano, and larger windows. One teacher still taught grades 1–8. This book includes many photographs and brings the story of the school to the present day.

Lupita Mañana

Lupita Mañana teaches some of the problems endured by illegal immigrants and also addresses the triumph of the human spirit during difficult times. The story lends itself to a study of Mexico and its culture, immigration, and the ability of people to cope with problems. The books below are related to the themes in *Lupita Mañana*. Many others are also available.

Launch a Study of Mexican Culture

Fiesta! Mexico's Great Celebrations by Elizabeth Silverthorne

(Ages 8–12) This book describes many fiestas and explains how history molded those celebrations. It also gives directions for crafts and some recipes for traditional foods.

Focus on Mexico: Modern Life in an Ancient Land by Louis B. Casagrande and Sylvia A Johnson

(Ages 9–12) This book gives a history of Mexico and shows how the past and present have come together to create a variety of cultures. It focuses on four Mexican youth as examples of people trying to improve their lives and their employment opportunities.

Mexico in Pictures by Janice Hamilton

(Ages 9–13) This book gives many facts and shows photographs, maps, and drawings of Mexico's land, people, culture, economy, history, and government.

Launch a Study of Immigrants

Hector Lives in the United States Now: The Story of a Mexican–American Child by Joan Hewett

(Ages 8–11) This book tells about the daily happenings in the life of a young Mexican boy whose family has immigrated to the United States.

Immigrant Kids by Russell Freedman

(Ages 8–13) This book shows many real-life photographs and tells the stories of immigrant children who lived in New York between 1880 and 1990. Students learn about immigration in the past and how it has changed.

A Migrant Family by Larry Brimner

(Ages 8–12) This book tells about the daily life of twelve-year-old Juan Medina who lives with his family in a migrant camp in Southern California. It tells of some of the family's difficulties such as learning to speak English and having to change schools.

Quilted Landscape: Conversations with Young Immigrants by Yale Strom

(Ages 9–15) The immigrants in this book are twenty-six children who range in age from 11 to 17. They tell how the United States compares to their homelands. Some like it here, but some would rather go back to their old country. Most of them feel the pain of prejudice because they are different.

Launch a Study of Personal Problems

Dear Mr. Henshaw by Beverly Cleary

(Ages 9–13) A young boy, Leigh Bott has difficulties and concerns with growing up. He is also very worried about his parents' divorce and his relationship with his father. He tells his problems in letters to his favorite author, Mr. Henshaw.

J. T. by Jane Wagner

(Ages 8–12) J.T. Gamble's mother is upset with him for stealing and lying. She says that he has just "gone bad." Ten-year-old J. T. shows his good side when he finds a stray one-eyed cat and expresses his love for it in a way that he was unable to do with people. This book encourages compassion.

Plain Girl by Virginia Sorensen

(Ages 8–12) An Amish girl fears that she will stand out in her plain clothes against the other children in the public school. She must learn how to accept both her cultural heritage and the different world around her.

Sidewalk Story by Sharon Bell Mathis

(Ages 8–11) This book tells of loyalty and determination in a friendship as a young girl, Lilly Etta, puts up a fight to prevent her friend's family from being evicted from their apartment.

Poems by Langston Hughes

Launch a Study of Black Americans

Afro-Bets Book of Black Heroes: An Introduction to Important Black Achievers by Wade Hudson and Valerie Wesley

(Ages 9–13) This book provides biographies of forty-nine black men and women who accomplished outstanding feats. It includes the most famous black Americans such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman.

Bill Cosby (Junior World Biographies) by Bruce W. Conord

(Ages 9–13) This biography tells about one of the most successful comedians in recent time. It narrates Bill Cosby's childhood in Philadelphia and explains how his mother and grandfather contributed to his upbeat look on life. It also talks about the hardships he endured to make a name for himself. It puts a focus on how this famous entertainer's work as a comedian and an actor has come to symbolize good values.

Black Pioneers of Science and Invention by Louis Haber

(Ages 9–12) This book tells of fourteen gifted black Americans who changed the course of our country's history. They all overcame hardships to play important roles in scientific and industrial progress. It includes the lives of Benjamin Banneker, George Washington Carver, and many others.

The Empty Schoolhouse by Natalie Savage Carlson

(Ages 8–11) A 10-year-old black girl in a small Louisiana town in the 1960s is the first to integrate her school. She endures many hardships, including being threatened at gunpoint and shot in the ankle.

Marching to Freedom: The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr., by Joyce Milton

(Ages 10–13) This is the biography of the famous black American whose philosophy and practice of nonviolent civil disobedience helped American blacks win many battles for civil rights. The book begins with the childhood of Martin Luther King, Jr., and continues through his becoming a Baptist minister and a civil rights leader.

Launch a Study of Poetry

Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices by Paul Fleischman

(Ages 9–12) This comical book of poetry is all about the sounds of insects. Each poem is written in two columns so that children can sit together and take turns reading aloud.

Life Doesn't Frighten Me by Maya Angelou

(Ages 8–12) This is a poem about having courage when scary things are all around. An African American poet laureate writes the poem and illustrates it with primitive paintings by a Haitian-American artist. The rhythmic, read-aloud verse explores a wide range of human emotions.

Teaching 10 Fabulous Forms of Poetry by Paul B. Janeszko

(Ages 9–14) This book provides insights, materials, and ideas for teaching ten forms of poetry that children love, such as haiku, tanka, limerick, and concrete.

Launch a Study of the Harlem Renaissance

Black Stars of the Harlem Renaissance by Jim Haskins

(Ages 9–12) The author writes about several people who are typically associated with the Harlem Renaissance, and some who are lesser known. All of these great people used hard work and courage to overcome obstacles and reach their goals.

Extraordinary People of the Harlem Renaissance by P. Stephen Hardy and Sheila Jackson Hardy

(Ages 10–14) This book tells of more than fifty people whose work is associated with the Harlem Renaissance. It includes poets, musicians, painters, sculptors, dancers, activists, and reformers. It tells how these contributions have enriched American culture.

The Harlem Renaissance (African-American Achievers) by Veronica Chambers

(Ages 10–13) This book explains the rise of the Harlem Renaissance by describing the various philosophies of the artists who lived in Harlem and created there. It tells of their talents and the importance of the people who supported their work.