



Created by the  
ALA Public Programs Office and YALSA  
with cooperation from YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee

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## Introduction

The Great Stories CLUB is a book club grant program organized by the American Library Association Public Programs Office (PPO) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), with a grant from Oprah's Angel Network, to provide troubled teens with the opportunity to discuss books relevant to the challenges in their lives. Complete information, including updates on future grant opportunities for libraries, is available online at [www.ala.org/greatstories](http://www.ala.org/greatstories).

This resource guide was put together by the ALA Public Programs Office, the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), and YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee. The purpose of this guide is to provide a framework of tips, advice, and resources for librarians holding Great Stories CLUB book discussions in their communities.

We hope to learn and hear from you as project directors. Please let us know how your programs are going by e-mailing [publicprograms@ala.org](mailto:publicprograms@ala.org). We welcome all feedback.

Sincerely,

ALA Public Programs Office  
Young Adult Library Services Association

## Program Credits

### **American Library Association**

The American Library Association promotes the highest quality library and information services and public access to information. The oldest and largest library association in the world, ALA has more than 65,000 members, representing all types of libraries and librarians as well as trustees, publishers, and other library supporters.

### **ALA Public Programs Office**

The mission of the ALA Public Programs Office is to foster cultural programming as an integral part of library service in all types of libraries. The unit provides leadership, resources, training, and networking opportunities that help thousands of librarians and libraries nationwide develop local cultural opportunities for adults, young adults, and families. Since 1983, major donors have awarded more than \$15 million to the Public Programs Office to support library programming initiatives.

### **Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of ALA**

The mission of the Young Adult Library Services Association is to advocate, promote, and strengthen service to young adults as part of the continuum of total library service, and to support those who provide service to this population. YALSA is the fastest growing division of ALA.

### **YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee**

The function of YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee is to address the needs of young adults who do not or cannot use the library because of socioeconomic, legal, educational, or physical factors; to serve as a liaison between these groups and their service providers; and to identify and promote library programs, resources, and services that meet the special needs of these populations.

### **Oprah's Angel Network**

Funding for the Great Stories CLUB was provided by a grant from Oprah's Angel Network. The network is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to make a difference in the lives of others.

## Program, Theme, and Titles

The Great Stories CLUB is a national book club program targeting troubled teens, organized by the American Library Association Public Programs Office (PPO) and Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), with a grant from Oprah's Angel Network. The goal of the program is to provide troubled teens with the opportunity to discuss books relevant to the challenges in their lives.

Book selections, theme, and program support materials are developed by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee.

The theme for the Great Stories CLUB is "Breaking Boundaries." Boundaries can take many forms in life. They often make life difficult by dividing us and preventing us from seeing the essence of one another. These stories are about teens who overcame the boundaries in their lives.

The primary titles are:

### ***Luna by Julie Anne Peters, 2006***

Fifteen-year-old Liam is a transsexual who is able to live as a girl named Luna with the help of his sister Regan. When Liam announces his plans to live as Luna full-time, Regan dreads what will happen.

### ***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Alexie Sherman, 2006***

Thirteen-year-old Junior is a budding cartoonist who leaves his school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend a "mainstream" school where he is the only Native American, other than the school mascot.

### ***Black and White by Paul Volponi, 2005***

Marcus is black, Eddie is white. The two high school seniors are close friends everyone refers to as "Black and White." When they get involved in an armed robbery with tragic consequences, the wrong one is charged. Will his friend come clean?

## Tips for Project Directors

### Running a Great Stories CLUB Book Discussion for Teens

- Remember that the purpose of the Great Stories CLUB is to reach out to troubled teens by encouraging a love of reading and books. The discussion should be lively and engaging.
- Prior to meeting with the teens, read the book you are discussing carefully—often it requires two readings. Keep notes on characters and plot so that if there is a question or someone needs reminding you can fill in the gaps.
- If you get to choose the time when the discussion is taking place, try to pick a time of day when the teens will be alert and active. First thing in the morning and just after a meal are generally the most ideal times.
- Think of a fun way to have the teens introduce themselves and get to know you.
- Introduce simple rules and expectations that the group will follow (for example, read and finish the book, raise your hand to speak and wait to be recognized, respect each other's opinions). If working with a detention facility, make sure that your rules are in line with the institutional rules.
- Try to create a comfortable, open atmosphere. Remember, and remind the teens, that the discussion is not a test and they won't be judged or graded in any way.
- Food encourages informality and conversation. Check with the staff where you will be holding the group to see if food is allowed. If the food becomes a distraction, serve it at the end.
- Set up the room so that all participants can see each other (in a circle if possible).
- Use open-ended, personal questions (for example, How did it make you feel? What do you think about ...? What would you do if ...?). At the same time try to steer away from purely personal digressions. Avoid questions that can be answered with a yes or no.
- If discussion has completely stalled, or if students haven't read the book, try reading a passage or chapter out loud and discussing just that section.
- Use the Great Stories CLUB discussion questions provided in this guide or help the teens to create their own discussion questions and let group members each ask and facilitate a question. This will encourage participation and take the focus off you.

- Your role is one of facilitator: keep the discussion rolling and keep it on track. Don't let yourself become a "leader" or "teacher," remain a guide.
- Incorporate a writing exercise, activity, craft, or fun quiz that is related to the book. Sometimes busy hands help get the mind working. Check to see what is allowed in the setting where you are working.
- Continuing discussions: If you are able to continue the program with the same group of teens, be prepared with several read-a-likes for the book you discussed. See pages 17–20 for a related reading list, or consult the resource guide for other "best of" lists for teens. Also, you may provide the teens with the related reading brochure (in PDF format online) at the end of the series. This way teens may read more on their own afterwards, or you can choose the next discussion book together as a group.
- Explore the access the teens will have to related reading books and try to expedite that access through your library.

## **DOs and DON'TS for Running a Discussion Program**

### **DO**

- Maintain discipline and focus.
- Prepare more questions and activities than you need in case discussion stalls.
- Keep it fun.
- Keep the discussion rolling.
- Encourage everyone to contribute.
- Empower the teens as much as possible by soliciting their ideas and opinions for carrying out the program.

### **DO NOT**

- Prod too much or lead answers in a certain direction.
- Contribute significantly to the discussion.
- Lecture on the book.
- Make it seem like school.
- Force anyone to talk.
- Allow one teen to dominate the discussion.

## Establishing an Outreach Partnership

- If your library is not located within an organization that serves troubled teen populations, you will need to establish an outreach partnership with another organization in your community that does.
- Appropriate partner organizations include, but are not limited to, juvenile justice facilities, drug rehabilitation centers, nonprofits serving teen parents, alternative high schools, agencies serving teenaged foster children, shelters serving homeless and runaway youth, and other agencies. If you have questions about the appropriateness of a possible partner organization, please contact the ALA Public Programs Office at [publicprograms@ala.org](mailto:publicprograms@ala.org) prior to completing your Great Stories CLUB application.
- Create a list of potential community partners, and decide which agency to approach. If you are not familiar with the agencies in your community that serve troubled teens, consult the yellow pages or the Internet. You may wish to search for local social service agencies, the department of juvenile justice, the department of children and family services, or any area alternative schools.
- Once you've selected a potential community partner, identify a contact person at the facility, keeping in mind who the players are and what the politics may be like. Possible contacts include directors, teachers, librarians, supervisors, counselors, and so on. There may be a Friends of the Juvenile Hall group that may be of help, a board member at your library who volunteers at a local shelter or social service agency, a reading teacher at an alternative school, or another person who can help make your case within the organization.
- Depending on what your research has yielded, speak with the director of juvenile hall, the principal of the school inside the hall, or the director of programs in the juvenile hall, for example. Potential partners may be interested to know that, by participating in the Great Stories CLUB, they will be part of a national teen services initiative of the American Library Association that is being supported by Oprah's Angel Network.
- Present your contact with a clear and simple proposal describing the program and activities you would like to implement. For a sample project proposal form, see page 9. You may also wish to use this form to gain your library director's support of the program and your participation in it.
- Work with your contact to create a workable program plan, taking into consideration such factors as institutional procedures (security clearance, authorization, and so on).



## Sample Project Proposal Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Library: \_\_\_\_\_

Library Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Library City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project description and justification:** Include statement of importance of project to the community and beyond, and links to library mission and goals.

**Intended audience and potential use:** Whom will the project serve and how?

**Collaborative partnerships:** Describe the nature of the proposed collaboration and what major responsibilities would fall to each partner.

**Budgetary contribution:** Indicate whether budgetary support exists for this project and how the partner might contribute in terms of budget or staffing.

**Timeline:** Describe any preferred start and end dates or other deadlines.

**Assessment:** Indicate measures that might be used in evaluating the impact of the project.

Please provide any additional information that might be appropriate, including letters of support, links to any special event, thoughts on project organization.

## Working in Juvenile Facilities

The following guidelines will help you to establish credibility and respect with the facility administrators, staff, and, most importantly, the teens. All are necessary components for a successful juvenile detention center partnership and program.

- Identify an internal contact: Possible contacts include directors, teachers, librarians, supervisors, and counselors. There may be a Friends of the Juvenile Hall group. Think about finding someone who has a role similar to yours in the way they interface with probation staff/youth, such as a teacher. This person can help to lead you through the process of starting the group and working with the teens. If you are unable to identify someone on staff at the institution, speak with one of the librarians already providing services to this population for support/feedback.
- Listen more than you talk. As Patrick Jones, nationally known young adult librarian and author of several critically acclaimed books for librarians and educators, says, "When partnering with correctional facilities, we must understand the need to support the goals of that institution even if they may conflict with our values" ("Reaching Out to Young Adults in Jail," *Young Adult Library Services* [Fall 2004]:14–17). Remember that you are a guest in this institution and be respectful of that.
- Be aware of the issues that are likely to be prevalent in these institutions. They include:
  - Security: It may take time to get into the institution and set up the program. There are a lot of processes to go through, such as security clearances. The institution's main concern is most likely security, and there are a great many things that fall under "security issues" that may surprise you.
  - Power and Control: Within the institution, you will need to be able to know what to stand up for and what to concede. It will be important to access that skill under pressure.
  - Change: The youth can be greatly affected by changes in things like staffing and routine. There can be a lot of change and turnover of youth. Youth may be removed in the middle of your program, in the middle of their most profound moment, or at other critical times. Learn to be more flexible and develop an even better sense of humor. Depending on what is happening that day with the staff and/or youth, your program may or may not happen. Some times there will be nothing you can do about it, and other times there may be something you can do. You will need to learn to tell the difference between those situations.

- Remember that your “new” ideas may have been tried or implemented before. Make sure you ask staff as well as administrators about any history. Staff may have been there longer than the administrators and know more about what has gone on in the past and also the actual daily operations.

## **Working with Troubled Teens**

- Write up simple expectations and rules for the book discussion. Keep them short and simple (no more than five). Make sure it is something they have basic control over and that abides by the policies of the institution (for example, they may not be able to attend each session in some situations, due to a lockdown, court appearances, and so on). Ask the youth for input when developing these expectations.
- Familiarize yourself with the institution’s reward and penalty system and incorporate it into your program rules.
- One of the best ways to deal with disruptive youth is to walk toward them, maintaining eye contact, while you continue with the lesson plan. If a youth is needy (for example, acting out, asking a million questions, and in general making sure they are the center of attention), stand by them so that all eyes of the class are on them. Rather than have their unmet needs run the show, keep your focus and give them the attention they need by standing near them, walking among them, or looking them in the eye.
- Be sure to establish boundaries and to enforce them consistently. Ask the staff what the consequences are for inappropriate behavior. Often the youth get “room time,” then a write up. There will be different wording/levels in different institutions. It is likely that you will need to send a youth out of the room, give them room time, and otherwise show them that you understand and will enforce the rules. Often this population will test you until you follow through with the stated consequences. Once you do this, and don’t try to reason with them or give them multiple chances, but instead show that you mean business and will do what it takes to have a successful class, they will generally respect you, calm down, and your session will proceed.
- Some youth may possess personas that you find intimidating or scary. Although it is true that you are working with youth who have little impulse control and can be violent, for the most part, if you relate to them as a caring human being, they will respond in kind.
- If the youth are having a hard time relating to a book, help them build connections with simple activities such as a writing exercise where they write about themselves. Make sure you tell them not to worry about things like spelling and grammar.

- Remember confidentiality. In general, use first names only when speaking about the youth.
- Before you give anything to the youth, check with a supportive staff person first. This includes items such as paper, envelopes, food—things you would never think you'd have to check with staff first about. Check with staff to see if bringing food is ok, and have that as a reward for after the program.
- Allow extra time to pass out paper and pencils. In most institutions you will have to count the pencils and make sure you have them all back in your possession before you leave.
- Staff may interrupt your program by participating in ways that are contrary to your goals, such as lecturing the youth or writing a youth up. Over time you will find a balance between respecting the staff actions and maintaining the integrity of the group session.
- Many youth in institutions have a history of abuse. Remember that these youth may not have a lot of family or other support and be mindful of that when guiding discussions.
- Plan for the future. After you are established in the institution (having worked to establish your credibility by your excellent programming and attitude), you will have unlimited choices and options of whom to work with and how your program runs.

*The Tips for Project Directors section was prepared by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee.*

## Sample Discussion Questions

### ***Luna***

- In what ways/at what times have you felt like your inside is different than what others see of you from the outside? Have you, or how have you, dealt with it?
- What is the hardest part of standing up for yourself or what you think when it's different from your friends/parents/teachers?
- Regan feels both useful to Luna and used by her. She also feels confused and guilty about the different emotions. How would you feel in a similar situation? What things would you have done similarly to Regan, and what would you have done differently?
- Regan often feels she is all alone. Is that true? Do you think her situation, or what she thinks is her situation, happens at all because of her behaviors?
- What do you think about Regan and Luna's parents? Compare them to the couple for whom Regan babysits.
- Did you identify with a particular character? Why?
- What do you think will happen next for the characters?
- What did you like most about the story? Least?
- Do you feel that "Luna" perpetuated stereotypes? In what ways? Which character or characters surprised you?
- Liam wants to remake himself drastically. If you could change yourself even slightly, what would you change?

*Luna discussion questions were compiled by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee. With questions about source material, contact [yalsa@ala.org](mailto:yalsa@ala.org).*

***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian***

- How is Junior's life similar to/different than your ideas about life on a reservation?
- Would Junior's life have been different if he didn't have hydrocephalus ("water on the brain")?
- Discuss how alcoholism and violence impact life on the Spokane Reservation.
- Discuss the roles Mr. P and Coach play in Junior's life.
- When Junior asks Gordy for advice about getting Penelope to like him, Gordy comes back and tells Junior he's a racist just like everybody else. Is he?
- Junior loses three people he loves to alcohol-related accidents in a very short time. How do these losses affect him and shape his views about life?
- What do you think about "The Unofficial and Unwritten (but you better follow them or you're going to get beaten twice as hard) Spokane Indian Rules of Fisticuffs"?
- Why do you think Roger and his friends think it's okay to call Junior names but freak out that he responds with a punch?
- Reardan is just 22 miles from the reservation but seems to Junior like a whole other world. What are some of the major differences?
- Junior explains Rowdy's anger and sense of betrayal by saying that "Some Indians think you become white if you try to make your life better." Gordy argues that if that were true, all white people would be successful. Who do you think is right, Rowdy or Gordy?

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian *discussion questions were compiled by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee. With questions about source material, contact [yalsa@ala.org](mailto:yalsa@ala.org).*

***Black and White***

- Why do you think the author chose to title this book “Black and White?” Does the title have more than one meaning? If so, what?
- What did you like best about this book? Least?
- What character could you relate to the most? Why?
- Why do you think Eddie (“White”) and Marcus (“Black”) decided to rob people rather than work a “real” job?
- Why did they only rob adults and not other kids?
- Why do you think the author chose to have the chapters written in the alternating voices of White and Black? Did it make the story more difficult or easier to understand?
- Why didn’t Eddie confess to his involvement in the robbery after Marcus was arrested? What would you do if you were in a similar situation?
- Why didn’t Marcus give Eddie up after he was arrested? What would you have done if you were Marcus?
- Do you think it was right for Eddie to accept a scholarship right after Marcus was arrested? Why or why not?
- If the third robbery victim hadn’t have identified Marcus, do you think Marcus and Eddie would have continued robbing people? Why or why not?
- Do you think Eddie did the right thing by throwing the gun away? Why or why not?
- Why is Marcus’ mom so upset with Eddie and his family?
- How do the events of Marcus’ arrest change his and Rose’s relationship? What about Eddie and Rose’s relationship?
- How has Marcus’ and Eddie’s relationship changed? Are they still best friends? Why or why not?
- Do you think the book leaves you hanging?
- What do you think happens to Marcus? Eddie? Rose?
- What do you think the moral of the story is?

- If you had been the author, would you have changed the ending? Why or why not?
- Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?

*Black and White discussion questions were compiled by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee. With questions about source material, contact [yalsa@ala.org](mailto:yalsa@ala.org).*



## Related Reading for Participating Teens

**Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*.** Puffin, 2001. \$11.56 (ISBN-10: 014131088X; ISBN-13: 978-0141310886). Melinda, a freshman in high school finds that it has been getting continually harder for her to speak. There are many possible reasons for this problem, but she knows the real reason, and it's something that nobody else knows.

**Atkins, Catherine. *Alt Ed*.** Puffin, 2004. \$6.99 (ISBN-10: 0142402354; ISBN-13: 978-0142402351). A group of six high school kids find themselves in an after-school alternate education class as a result of their serious infractions that would normally get them expelled. The class involves group therapy sessions, in which the students' lives outside of their everyday fronts are revealed, as they connect with one another.

**Brooks, Terry. *Magic Kingdom for Sale—SOLD!*.** Del Rey, 1987. \$7.99 (ISBN-10: 0345317580; ISBN-13: 978-0345317582). Against the wishes of his friends, Ben decides to throw caution to the wind and purchase a supposedly magic kingdom.

**Carlson, Lori Marie. *Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States*.** Henry Holt & Co., 2005. \$11.96 (ISBN-10: 0805076166; ISBN-13: 978-0805076165). A collection of poems about being bicultural in the United States.

**Clarke, Judith. *One Whole and Perfect Day*.** Front Street, 2007. \$11.53 (ISBN-10: 1932425950; ISBN-13: 978-1932425956). Lonnie's eccentric family comes together and finds happiness through a series of interconnected random events.

**Dessen, Sarah. *Just Listen*.** Puffin, 2008. \$8.99 (ISBN-10: 0142410977; ISBN-13: 978-0142410974). Annabel Greene is beginning her junior high school year alone, after being caught with her best friend's boyfriend. The incident turned out to be an attempt at rape. Annabel's family refuses to acknowledge her problem, but a new and unlikely friend helps Annabel speak honestly and listen to her heart.

**Draper, Sharon M. *Romiette and Julio*.** Simon Pulse, 2001. \$6.99 (ISBN-10: 0689842090; ISBN-13: 978-0689842092). A retelling of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, where two teens, Romiette and Julio meet in a chat room. They have the problem of racial misunderstandings, along with the issue of confronting their parents. The story has many similarities and differences to Shakespeare's original.

**Franco, Betsy. *You Hear Me? Poems and Writing by Teenage Boys*.** Candlewick, 2001. \$6.99 (ISBN-10: 076361159X; ISBN-13: 978-0763611590). A collection of writings by teenage boys in which they express their emotions, experiences, and desires.

**Franco, Betsy, and Nina Nickels. *Things I Have to Tell You: Poems and Writing by Teenage Girls*.** Candlewick, 2001. \$8.99 (ISBN-10: 0763610356; ISBN-13: 978-0763610357) A collection of poems for and by teenage girls.

**Gallo, Donald. *First Crossing: Stories about Teen Immigrants*.** Candlewick, 2007. \$8.99. (ISBN-10: 0763632910; ISBN-13: 978-0763632915). This book tells stories of teens that have immigrated to the United States for many different reasons, and what it's like for them to go to such a foreign place without knowing a whole lot about it.

**Garden, Nancy. *Annie on My Mind*.** Farrar, 2007. \$8.00 (ISBN-10: 0374400113; ISBN-13: 978-0374400118). A tale of two teenage girls falling in love with one another.

**Going, K.L. *Saint Iggy*.** Harcourt Paperbacks, 2008. \$6.95 (ISBN-10: 0152062483; ISBN-13: 978-0152062484) Iggy is an eighteen-year-old freshman who is trying to make a better life for himself. Hope helps him through his life, as he tries to make it in the projects of New York City.

**Hartinger, Brent. *The Last Chance Texaco*.** HarperTeen, 2005. \$7.99 (ISBN-10: 0060509147; ISBN-13: 978-0060509149). Fifteen-year-old Lucy Pitt is sent to Kindle Home, a sort of foster home for teenagers. Lucy's parents died in a car accident when she was seven, and she has one more chance before she is sent to a punishment center. In the story, Lucy speaks of herself and the others she lives with, as they try to find out who is setting the neighborhood cars on fire, because whoever it is wants the home shut down.

**Hill, Stuart. *Cry of the Icemark*.** Scholastic, 2006. \$8.99 (ISBN-10: 043968627X; ISBN-13: 978-0439686273). When a thirteen-year-old princess's father dies, she becomes queen of the Icemark, her small country. Unfortunately, this event happens just as a much larger empire invades her country. She sets off with a warlock looking for allies during the invasion and finds them among neighboring realms, including werewolves, vampires, and snow leopards.

**Hobbs, Valerie. *Letting Go of Bobby James: Or How I Found My Self of Steam*.** Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004. \$12.80 (ISBN-10: 0374343845; ISBN-13: 978-0374343842). Jody is a sixteen-year-old whose husband abandoned her in Florida with almost no money. She manages to find a job working in a café. Over time, she ends up with a sort of family. Jody tells the story, and tells what taking a chance can do to a girl.

**James St. James. *Freak Show*.** Dutton Juvenile, 2007. \$12.91 (ISBN-10: 0525477993; ISBN-13: 978-0525477990). Teenage drag queen Billy Bloom suddenly finds himself attending a conservative school where he must find a way to fit in.

**Kerr, M.E. *Deliver Us from Evie*.** HarperTeen, 1995. \$6.99 (ISBN-10: 0064471284; ISBN-13: 978-0064471282). Evie Burrman is a seventeen-year-old farmer and mechanic on her family's Missouri farm. She doesn't like the assumptions that others make about her life. Her brother, Parr, observes her and tells her story.

**Kidd, Sue Monk. *The Secret Life of Bees*.** Penguin, 2008. \$11.20 (ISBN-10: 0143114557; ISBN-13: 978-0143114550). Lily and her "stand-in" mother escape a town filled with racial hatred to a place that holds the secret to her mother's past.

**Myers, Walter Dean. *Autobiography of My Dead Brother*.** Amistad, 2006. \$7.99 (ISBN-10: 0060582936; ISBN-13: 978-0060582937). Jessie and Rise are best friends and blood-brothers in Harlem. Rise begins to drift away, and gains a new persona. Jessie tries to find his friend, and during his search, he begins creating art. He makes pictures of Rise—his biography.

**Nye, Naomi Shihab. *19 Varieties of Gazelle*.** HarperTeen, 2005. \$6.99 (ISBN-10: 0060097633; ISBN-13: 978-006009097660). A collection of the author's own poems, all about the Middle East and Arab-Americans.

**Nye, Naomi Shihab. *What Have You Lost?*** HarperTeen, 2001. \$8.79 (ISBN-10: 0380733072; ISBN-13: 978-0380733071). A book with a collection of poems all about losses; anything ranging from a glove to a husband.

**Ohba, Tsugumi. *Death Note*.** VIZ Media LLC, 2005. \$7.99 (ISBN-10: 1421501686; ISBN-13: 978-1421501680). A student finds a notebook called the Death Note that was dropped by a death god. The notebook contains a list of people, all of whom die. The student, Light, decides to get rid of the world's evil using the Death Note's powers. Criminals begin dying, and the authorities send a detective to find the killer.

**Riordin, Rick. *The Lightning Thief*.** Miramax, 2006. \$7.99 (ISBN-10: 0786838655; ISBN-13: 978-0786838653). Percy Jackson is twelve, and different from everyone else. After a few strange occurrences, he learns exactly how he is different. He discovers that he is the son, if only half-blood, of an Olympian god.

**Schmidt, Gary D. *Trouble*.** Clarion Books, 2008. \$10.88 (ISBN-10: 0618927662; ISBN-13: 978-0618927661). When Henry's older brother Franklin is hit by a Cambodian refugee in an automobile accident, it sparks racial tension in the Maine town his family has lived in for generations.

**Vaughan, Brian K. *Runaways*.** Marvel Comics, 2006. \$23.09 (ISBN-10: 0785118764; ISBN-13: 978-0785118763). A group of six friends find that their parents are all secret super-villains. The teenagers run away from home with the support of one another, and they end up involved in a very big adventure, as they try to change their evil legacy.

**Weis, Margaret, and Tracy Hickman. *Dragons of Autumn Twilight: Dragonlance Chronicles Vol. I*.** Devil's Due Publishing, 2006. \$12.21 (ISBN-10: 1932796509; ISBN-13: 978-1932796506). A group of old friends reunite after years of traveling the fantasy world of Krynn. With new comrades they embark upon a journey—both physical and spiritual—to change the world.

**Westerfeld, Scott. *Midnighters #1: The Secret Hour*.** Eos, 2005. \$8.99 (ISBN-10: 0060519533; ISBN-13: 978-0060519537) Jessica Day moves to Bixby, Oklahoma. She wakes up to find the whole world to be frozen a few nights later. A few teens who call themselves Midnighters are the only ones besides herself that are awake. Jessica is haunted by evil, dark things with an unexplained interest in her at the hour of midnight.

**Wittlinger, Ellen. *Parrotfish*.** Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2007. \$11.55 (ISBN-10: 1416916229; ISBN-13: 978-1416916222). Angela McNair is a junior in high school, and she firmly believes that she is a boy. As a result, she changes her outside appearance and changes her name to Grady. The story tells about the reactions of those around him, how he deals with them, and about how he goes about his life as a teenage boy.

**Woodson, Jacqueline. *Feathers*.** Putnam Juvenile, 2007. \$10.87 (ISBN-10: 0399239898; ISBN-13: 978-0399239892). Frannie's middle school classroom is changed forever when the only white student suddenly shows up.

**Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*.** First Second, 2007. \$19.95 (ISBN-10: 1596433736; ISBN-13: 978-1596433731). Chinese folk hero Monkey King tries to be accepted as a god. Middle school student Jin Wang attempts to fit in with his classmates. All-American Danny is embarrassed by his Chinese cousin. With graphic art, courage, and sensitivity all three plot lines come together in a tale about accepting oneself and helping others.

*The Great Stories Club related reading list was compiled by YALSA's Outreach to Young Adults with Special Needs Committee.*

## Related Resources for Project Directors

### Suggested Reading for Anyone Working with Incarcerated Teens

Allen, Bud. *Games Criminals Play: How You Can Profit by Knowing Them*. Rae John Publishers, 1981

Anderson, Elijah. *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

Anderson, Shelia. *Extreme Teens: Library Services to Nontraditional Young Adults*. Libraries Unlimited, 2005.

Baca, Jimmy Santiago. *A Place to Stand: the Making of a Poet*. Grove, 2002.

Bernstein, Nel. *All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated*. New Press, 2005.

Gruwell, Erin. *Freedom Writer's Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*. Main Street Books, 1999. (Also released as a motion picture in 2006.)

Hubner, John. *Last Chance in Texas: the Redemption of Criminal Youth*. Random House, 2005.

Lerner, Jimmy. *You Got Nothing Coming: Notes from a Prison Fish*. Broadway, 2003.

Louise, Regina. *Somebody's Someone: a Memoir*. Warner, 2003.

Mondowney, Jo Ann G. *Hold Them in Your Heart: Successful Strategies for Library Services to At-Risk Teens*. Neal-Shuman publishers, 2001.

Prothrow-Stith, Deborah. *Deadly Consequences: How Violence Is Destroying Our Teenage Population and a Plan to Begin Solving the Problem*. HarperCollins, 1991.

Saltzman, Mark. *True Notebooks: A Writer's Year at Juvenile Hall*. Knopf, 2003.

### Web Sites about the Juvenile Justice System and Troubled Youth

**The Beat Within:** An excellent program that provides writing and publishing for incarcerated youth. Check out the Write to Read Section, for lists of books written by a Juvenile Hall librarian.

**Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice:** CJCJ is a private non-profit organization whose mission is to reduce society's reliance on the use of incarceration as a solution to social problems. In 1997, CJCJ formed the Justice Policy Institute (JPI), a policy development and research body which promotes effective and sensible approaches to America's justice system. This website offers reliable information on juvenile justice statistics, study reports, and several policy reports

**National Council on Crime and Delinquency:** NCCD is a non-profit devoted to reducing delinquency and improving the lives of young people. The group also includes the Children's Research Center. There are several resources listed on this website, including studies, policy papers, and other related agencies and how to access their resources.

**Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:** [www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/). OJJDP, a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, accomplishes its mission by supporting states, local communities, and tribal jurisdictions in their efforts to develop and implement effective programs for juveniles. The website provides information on grant opportunities, state level programs, links to relevant statistical information, and more.

**Tolerance.org:** <http://www.tolerance.org>. A web project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. Their mission is to "Fight Hate and Promote Tolerance." The website provides information on tolerance teaching resources for teachers, parents, teens and children.

*Compiled by YALSA's Outreach for Young Adults with Special Needs Committee.*