

SCHOLASTIC BELIEVES that a lasting culture of literacy begins with connecting children with books that enrich, educate, and entertain. We understand the importance of cultivating a love of reading at an early age and we strive to provide teachers, librarians, and parents with the tools to help students boost reading skills, have discussions, and connect with the world around them. Participating in a community reads program provides support for essential reading skills while developing empathy and comradery with classmates and neighbors. That’s why we want to help make your community read as successful as possible!

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY- OR SCHOOL-WIDE READ?

A community-wide read is a shared reading experience where members of the community all read and discuss one book. A community can range from a single grade level, to a whole school or district, to an entire city or beyond.

Benefits of a community-wide reading event include:

- Builds community across ages, socioeconomic levels, and various backgrounds
- Inspires and encourages readers of all abilities and levels
- Creates excitement about books and discussion topics and nurtures a culture of literacy
- Provides opportunities for meaningful conversations about ideas, social issues, and historical legacies

MAP OUT A TIMELINE

Everything runs more smoothly with a thoughtfully created timeline that includes ample time to prepare and plan. Here’s a sample timeline.



MONTH 1: IDENTIFY PROGRAM GOALS

A successful community-wide read begins with clearly identifying your program goals and your target audience. Here are just a few important questions to consider:

- What do you want the program to accomplish? Is your goal to build community; address a certain topic in a community space; or boost academic achievement?
- What issues and experiences are relevant to your school or community?
- Are there ways your program could address a need in the community?
- What do you want your audience to take from the program? How do you want them to benefit directly as a result?
- Are there community organizations that might share your goals? Can you make changes to your plans that will make it possible for them to join and support you in your efforts?

"Increases in literacy lead to higher self-esteem and a willingness to participate in community groups. It is in the best interest of the individual and society to provide and support resources and literacy programs to improve the literacy levels throughout our communities."

(National Institute for Literacy)

MONTH 2: SELECT A BOOK

At the heart of any community-wide read is the selected book title. This book will define the tone for the whole program and is the vessel through which your program will achieve its goals. When considering a book, keep these questions in mind:

- What kind of book might appeal to our target audience? (Be sure to do your research and learn about your target audience before selecting a book!)
- How does this book connect with the goals of our program?
- Does this book open up a conversation about the certain social issues, historical eras, or themes we want the community to discuss?
- How accessible is this book? (This can include availability in different languages and formats, reading level and physical availability at bookstores and libraries.)
- Does this book offer any support for struggling readers? (Consider illustrations, short chapters, simple text, glossary, etc.)
- How inclusive is this book? Does it reflect a variety of experiences and backgrounds?
- Is the book in paperback and affordably priced?
- Is there an opportunity to build on existing pop culture knowledge like popular movies, TV shows, or games with this book?

MONTH 3: INVITE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Grow the impact of your community-wide read through strategic partnerships that spread the word about your program while also helping grow the breadth and depth of the experience you're able to offer your readers. Community partners can contribute programming to bring the book to life, assist in reaching your target audience, and provide support through sponsorship and in-kind donations.

- Connect with your local bookstore or library to plan community events and book clubs.
- Contact your state and regional arts and humanities councils. They often provide opportunities for libraries to apply for special project grants.
- Reach out to local businesses and corporations for a corporate sponsorship. Explore companies with a similar mission statement to your programming.

"The One Book, One School program has become a vital practice and has built a positive culture not only in our school but also in the entire community."

– Maureen Doyle Kemmett, Principal of Furnace Brooks Middle School (NASSP.org)

MONTH 4-5: BRING THE BOOK TO LIFE WITH PROGRAMMING

Increase engagement, excitement, and community participation through activities and events inspired by the selected book. Part of the magic of a community-wide read is inviting the community to connect to a text through more than just reading and discussion, but through shared experiences.

Begin by identifying important themes, character details, places, and activities mentioned in the book. How can you make your programming not only relevant to the book, but also relevant and inviting to the community? Much of the magic of a community-wide read comes from the participation of people from a broad spectrum of society; the ability of the programming to transcend social boundaries and bring people together. Get creative! Some programming concepts include:

- Hands-on workshops
- Music concerts
- Contests that encourage community engagement
- Film screenings
- Special guest lectures

Once you've identified a list of possible text connections and considered the types of events that might best suit your audience, it's time to create a list of possible programming partners. Some possible partners could include: libraries, cultural centers, museums, performing arts groups, and local businesses.

In addition to the programming during the community-wide read period, many program organizers kick-off their event with a festive announcement of the selected title to build buzz and excitement.

INVITE THE AUTHOR

Take your community-wide read to the next level by giving readers a chance to connect with the author. It's an inspiring experience and gives everyone a chance to learn more about the processes of writing, developing characters, and expressing one's creativity! Scholastic can help you facilitate an author visit through our Author Visits program. **Learn more at www.scholastic.com/authorvisits.**

MONTH 6-7: USE A DISCUSSION GUIDE

Help readers get the most out of a text and facilitate community discussions with a discussion guide. Scholastic offers thousands of grab-and-go lesson plans, unit plans, discussion guides, extension activities, and other teaching ideas for many of our popular titles which you can find on our author visit page.

5 Discussion Questions for Any Title

1. What was your initial reaction to this book?
How did your thoughts about the book change as you read it?
2. Which character in the book would you most like to meet?
3. Why do you think the author wanted to write this book?
What ideas was he or she trying to get across?
4. How does this book connect to your life and experiences?
5. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?

MONTH 8-9: SPREAD THE WORD

Raising awareness about your community-wide read is essential to achieving your audience participation goal. Being savvy about marketing begins with understanding how to best reach your audience. Where do they gather? Are there community organizations that could help get the word out? Your promotional strategies will also be determined by your budget. When funds are limited, keep in mind how powerful person-to-person marketing can be and how your social network can help you reach a larger audience. Traditional marketing materials could include flyers, posters, bookmarks, and press releases sent to local media.

MONTH 10: CONFIRM DETAILS

Don't forget to reconnect with the publisher to confirm details of the event—especially if you've booked an author visit—and ask about any additional promotional materials that the publisher may be able to share with you.

MONTH 11: STAFF TRAINING

Staff orientation and training will help your event run smoothly and assist in presenting a unified message. A month before launching your event is an optimal time to insure your staff knows all of the details of the event including author visit information, important dates, how you're promoting the event, and even logistical training such as best practices for a book signing line!

MONTH 12: THREE, TWO, ONE, LAUNCH!

It's finally the day to launch your community-wide read. Assemble your volunteers, distribute the books and discussion guides, kick-off the activities, and celebrate the exciting moment when your community comes together to read, discuss, experience, connect, and grow!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Scholastic Author Visits: Scholastic.com/AuthorVisits

The Power of Story Catalog: Scholastic.com/PowerofStory

One Book, One Community Guide: <http://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/onebook/files/onebookguide.pdf>

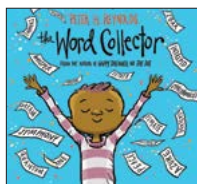
Book Group Discussion Question: <https://bookriot.com/2017/08/21/book-club-discussion-questions/>

Youth One Book, One Denver: <http://www.artsandvenuesdenver.com/events-programs/youth-one-book-one-denver>

The Library of Congress Center for the Book: <http://www.read.gov/cfb/>

POPULAR SELECTIONS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY-WIDE READ

K-2

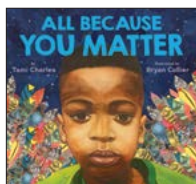


The Word Collector by Peter H. Reynolds

Jerome discovers the magic of the words around him—Words that connect, transform, and empower.

Themes:

- Language Arts
- Reading
- Friendship

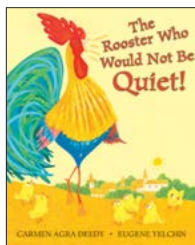


All Because You Matter by Tami Charles illustrated by Bryan Collier

A poetic, lyrical text that is part love letter, part anthem, assuring readers that they have always mattered, and they always will.

Themes:

- Love
- Community
- Prejudice & Racism

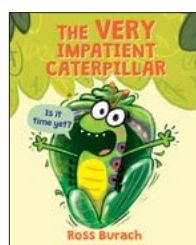


The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet! by Carmen Agra Deedy illustrated by Eugene Yelchin

The mayor of the noisy city of La Paz institutes new laws forbidding all singing, but a brave little rooster decides he must sing, despite the progressively severe punishments he receives.

Themes:

- Bravery & Courage
- Individuality & Identity
- Determination & Perseverance



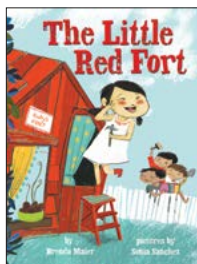
The Very Impatient Caterpillar by Ross Burach

This hilarious, tongue-in-cheek exploration of metamorphosis will make you flutter with glee, while also providing real facts about how caterpillars transform into butterflies.

Themes:

- Patience
- STEAM
- New Experiences

K-2



The Little Red Fort by Brenda Maier illustrated by Sonia Sánchez

This modern spin on the timeless favorite The Little Red Hen celebrates the pluck and ingenuity of young creators everywhere!

Themes:

- STEAM
- Creativity & Imagination
- Determination



Dog Man by Dav Pilkey

Crime is overtaking the city, luckily Dog Man has a real nose for justice!

Themes:

- Creativity, Art, & Writing
- Empathy, Kindness, & Persistence
- Bravery & Courage



Front Desk by Kelly Yang

Mia Tang and her immigrant parents live and work in a motel. Mia has dreams of being a writer someday. Can she realize her dreams?

Themes:

- Setting Goals
- Culture & Diversity
- Immigration Experiences
- Empathy, Kindness, & Compassion



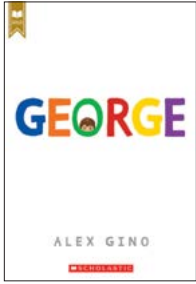
Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis

Eleven-year-old Elijah Freeman tells the humorous yet touching story of the free slaves who established a settlement in Buxton, Canada in 1860.

Themes:

- Equality, Fairness, & Justice
- Confronting Fears
- Culture & Diversity

MIDDLE GRADE

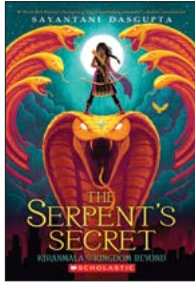


George by Alex Gino

George really, really, REALLY wants to play Charlotte in this year's class play of Charlotte's Web. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part . . . because she's a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte—but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all.

Themes:

- Identity & Acceptance
- Empathy
- Bullying
- LGBTQ+

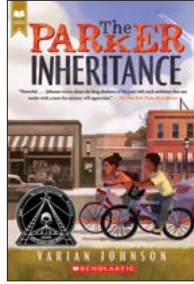


The Serpent's Secret by Sayantani DasGupta

On the morning of her twelfth birthday, Kiranmala's parents mysteriously vanish and a drooling rakkhosh demon slams through her kitchen. Now it's up to Kiranmala to find her parents and save the world.

Themes:

- Challenges & Overcoming Obstacles
- Culture & Diversity
- Confronting Fears

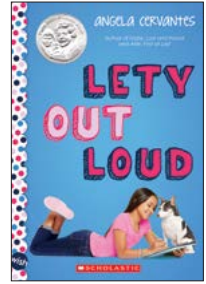


The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson

When Candice finds a letter in an old attic she isn't sure she should read it. It's addressed to her grandmother, who left the town in shame. But the letter describes a young woman. An injustice that happened decades ago. A mystery enfolding its writer. And the fortune that awaits the person who solves the puzzle.

Themes:

- Prejudice & Racism
- Family & Friendship
- History

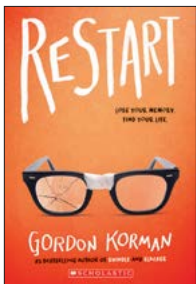


Lety Out Loud by Angela Cervantes

Lety Muñoz's first language is Spanish, and she likes to take her time putting her words together. She loves volunteering at the Furry Friends Animal Shelter because the dogs and cats there don't care if she can't always find the right word. When a not-so-friendly competition with another volunteer threatens her place in the program, Lety will have to find her voice before it's too late.

Themes:

- Immigration Experiences
- Friendship
- Volunteering

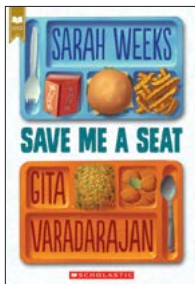


Restart by Gordon Korman

A bully gets a new start after losing his memory. But can someone really change?

Themes:

- Bullying
- Friendship
- Second Chances



Save Me a Seat by Sarah Weeks & Gita Varadarajan

Classmates Ravi and Joe alternately tell the story of their first week of fifth grade.

Themes:

- Bullying
- Friendship
- Identity & Fitting In
- Immigration Experiences

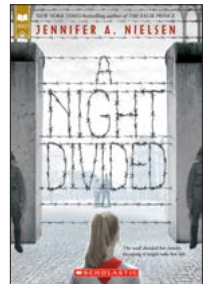


Refugee by Alan Gratz

Separated by continents and decades, the harrowing escape stories of refugees Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud intertwine.

Themes:

- Challenges & Overcoming Obstacles
- Immigration Experiences
- Survival



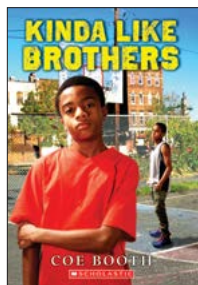
A Night Divided by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Twelve-year-old Gerta must find a way to freedom after the Berlin Wall divides her family between East and West Berlin.

Themes:

- Family & Conflict
- Separation
- History & The Cold War

MIDDLE GRADE

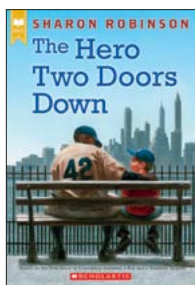


Kinda Like Brothers by Coe Booth

Eleven-year-old Jarrett is frustrated when he learns he has to share his room with a new foster brother, Kevon. Everyone thinks they should be friends, but the two boys really don't get along. Can they find common ground or forever be enemies?

Themes:

- Blended Families
- Foster Care
- Culture & Diversity
- Sibling Rivalry



The Hero Two Doors Down by Sharon Robinson

Steven Satlow, an eight-year-old boy living in Brooklyn, love the Dodgers. When an African American family moves into his all-Jewish neighborhood, he can't believe it's his hero Jackie Robinson!

Themes:

- Tolerance & Acceptance
- Prejudice & Discrimination
- Culture & Diversity
- Historical Figures

YOUNG ADULT



Pinned by Sharon G. Flake

A powerful novel about a teen boy and girl, each tackling disabilities. Autumn and Adonis have nothing in common and everything in common. Through their unlikely friendship they begin to see that these perceived weaknesses might actually be assets that make them stronger.

Themes:

- Friendship
- Self-discovery
- Differences & Tolerance



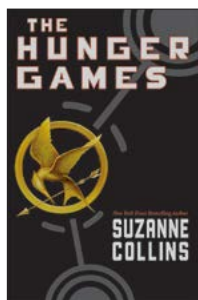
Marcelo in the Real World by Francisco X. Stork

When Marcelo Sandoval, who has a highly functioning form of Asperger's Syndrome, goes to work in a mailroom, he soon learns reality isn't easy.

Themes:

- Mental Health & Other Abilities
- Empathy
- Hard Work & Perseverance
- Love & Friendship

YOUNG ADULT

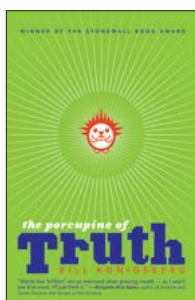


The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

16-year-old Katniss Everdeen regards it as a death sentence when she takes her sister's place in the Hunger Games. But for her, survival is second nature.

Themes:

- Courage & Bravery
- Strategy & Survival
- Family
- Personal Growth & Identity

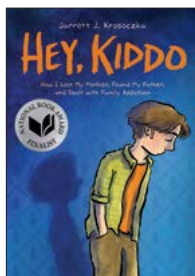


The Porcupine of Truth by Bill Konigsberg

An epic road trip involving family history, gay history, the girlfriend our hero can't have, the grandfather he never knew, and the Porcupine of Truth.

Themes:

- Family & Intergenerational Relationships
- LGBTQ+ Experiences
- Identity



Hey, Kiddo by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

A powerful graphic memoir about growing up with a drug-addicted mother, a missing father, and two opinionated grandparents.

Themes:

- Family & Intergenerational Relationships
- Addiction
- Art & Creativity

"Youth One Book, One Denver really brings books and reading to life in the minds of our children, and because of it, students gain a life-long love for reading as they participate in the book-related events and activities."

– Michael Handcock,
Mayor, Denver,
Colorado
(denvergov.org)