

Anything is Possible with Books!

2011 READERS' CHOICES FOR GRADES 7-8 • WINDHAM COUNTY READS

Compiled and annotated by Mary Linney

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*. 2007. Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. National Book Award winner.

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*. 1999. A traumatic event near the end of the summer has a devastating effect on Melinda's freshman year in high school.

Asher, Jay. *Thirteen Reasons Why*. 2007. When high school student Clay Jenkins receives a box in the mail containing thirteen cassette tapes recorded by his classmate Hannah, who has committed suicide, he spends a bewildering and heartbreaking night crisscrossing their town, listening to Hannah's voice recounting the events leading up to her death.

Collins, Suzanne. *Mockingjay*. 2010. Against all odds, Katniss Everdeen has survived the Hunger Games twice. But now that she's made it out of the bloody arena alive, the Capitol wants revenge... and President Snow has made it clear that no one is safe!

Cormier, Robert. *The Chocolate War*. 1974. Jerry Renault is forced into a psychological showdown with Trinity School's gang leader, Archie Costello, for refusing to be bullied into selling chocolates for annual fund raising.

Dessen, Sarah. *Along for the Ride*. 2009. When Auden impulsively goes to stay with her father, stepmother and new baby sister the summer before she starts college, all the trauma of her parents' divorce is revived, even as she is making new friends and having new experiences such as learning to ride a bike and dating.

Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. 2010. Considered by many to be mentally retarded, a brilliant, impatient young girl with cerebral palsy discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time. DCF Nominee 2011-2012.

Erskine, Kathryn. *Mockingbird*. 2010. Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, struggles to understand emotions, show empathy and make friends at school, while at home she seeks closure with regard to her brother's death by working on a project with her father. This book was the 2010 National Book Award winner.

Hartinger, Brent. *Project Sweet Life*. 2009. When their fathers insist that they get summer jobs, three fifteen-year-old friends in Tacoma, Washington, dedicate their summer vacation to fooling their parents into thinking they are working. This proves to be even harder than having real jobs would have been.

Kimmel, Elizabeth Cody. *The Reinvention of Moxie Roosevelt*. 2010. On her first day of boarding school, a thirteen-year-old girl who feels boring and invisible decides to change her personality to match her unusual name. DCF Nominee 2011-2012.

Klass, David. *Stuck on Earth*. 2010. On a secret mission to evaluate whether the human race should be annihilated, a space alien inhabits the brain of a bullied fourteen-year-old boy. DCF Nominee 2011-2012; the author will be speaking in Brattleboro in mid-October.

London, Jack. *White Fang*. 1906. London tells the story of a wolf-dog who endures great cruelty before he comes to know human kindness.

Lore, Pitticus. *I Am Number Four*. 2010. In rural Ohio, friendships and a beautiful girl prove distracting to a fifteen-year-old who has hidden on Earth for ten years waiting to develop the Legacies, or powers, he will need to rejoin the other six surviving Garde members and fight the Mogadorians who destroyed their planet, Lorien.

Lupica, Mike. *The Big Field*. 2008. When fourteen-year-old baseball player Hutch feels threatened by the arrival of a new teammate named Darryl, he tries to work through his insecurities about both Darryl and his remote, silent father, who was once a great ballplayer too.

Mackler, Carolyn. *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big, Round Things*. 2005. Feeling like she does not fit in with the other members of her family, who are all thin, brilliant and good-looking, fifteen-year-old Virginia tries to deal with her self-image, her first physical relationship, and her disillusionment with some of the people closest to her.

McMullan, Margaret. *Sources of Light*. 2010. In 1962, fourteen-year-old Samantha and her mother move to Jackson, Mississippi, after her father is killed in Vietnam. During the year they spend there, Sam encounters both love and hate as she learns about photography from a new friend of her mother's and witnesses the prejudice and violence of the segregationists of the South. DCF Nominee 2011-2012.

Potter, Ellen. *Slob*. 2009. Picked on and overweight genius Owen tries to invent a television that can see the past to find out what happened the day his parents were killed.

Riordan, Rick. *The Lost Hero*. 2010. Jason, Piper and Leo, three students from a school for "bad kids," find themselves at Camp Half-Blood, where they learn that they are demigods and begin a quest to free Hera, who has been imprisoned by Mother Earth herself.

Shusterman, Neal. *Unwind*. 2007. In a future world where those between the ages of thirteen and eighteen can have their lives "unwound" and their body parts harvested for use by others, three teens go to extreme lengths to uphold their beliefs--and, perhaps, save their own lives.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *After Ever After*. 2010. Jeff and Tad make a deal to help one another overcome the after-effects of their cancer treatments in preparation for eighth-grade graduation, but Jeff still craves advice from his older brother Stephen, who is studying drums in Africa. DCF nominee 2011-2012.

Students in Windham County are also reading the **Mortal Instruments** series by Cassandra Clare, the **Ranger's Apprentice** series by John Flanagan, the **Alex Rider** series by Anthony Horowitz, Derek Landy's **Skulduggery Pleasant** series, and **The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel** series by Michael Scott.