Literary Genre Bibliography:  Realistic Fiction

Grades K-2


**Summary:** Chloe doesn’t believe her classmate Adrian’s story about having a horse. She can’t see beyond being correct. When she explains to her mother that he can’t possibly have a horse her mother suggests a dog walk that takes Chloe into Adrian’s world. She sees him in a different way. The author’s powerful message is accomplished in the end, through illustrations and sparse text.

**Curricular use:** Poverty, Bullying, Kindness & Empathy, Imagination, Friendship.

**Audience:** While this book would be enjoyed with K-2 audiences, the subtle messages and topics are powerful in grades 3-6 as well.


**Summary:** Omu, pronounced AH-moo, generously dishes up her scrumptious stew to passersby that smell it wafting from her apartment. The resulting empty pot does not disappoint in the end as her appreciative and kind neighbors return the favor with gifts of their own. The ending may bring applause from listeners!

**Curricular use:** Family, Neighborhoods, Communities, Kindness, Generosity, Loving Relationships.

**Audience:** Picture book, K-6.

Grades 3-4


**Summary:** The story centers on Louie, a kind hearted boy intent on saving the life of a mini-donkey from his uncle’s nearby farm. Along the way he draws in Nora, an unlikely friend who also becomes a mini-donkey enthusiast. There is much tenderness in the story, between family members, Louie and Nora and of course in care of the struggling donkey, Winslow.

**Curricular use:** Family, Friendship, Kindness, Country/Rural Living.

**Audience:** Written in short chapters for readers first taking on jFic. Would make a good read-aloud.


**Summary:** Lucy is changed forever after surviving a lightning strike. The lasting effects are her genius ability with numbers and her OCD tendencies, like sitting down three times each time she settles in. The story centers on how Lucy navigates public school, after being homeschooled by her guardian grandmother. She and her new found friends are amazing as individuals. Readers will relate to and love the relevancy of Lucy’s somewhat quirky middle school experience.

**Curricular use:** Friendship, Belonging, Kindness, Family, strong female protagonists.

**Audience:** Middle grade readers 4+ grades. Great as a read-aloud.
Grades 5-6


**Summary:** This book starts out as Louisiana and her guardian grandmother flee in the night from their home at her grandmother’s insistence. They encounter many obstacles on the journey, all the while Louisiana’s fierce and witty character is developed. The story brings answers that are unexpected while focusing on important examples of hope, kindness and the ability to forgive people amidst an array of hard situations.

**Curricular Use:** Strong female protagonist, family, forgiveness, love, friendship, acceptance.

**Audience:** A page turner for middle grade readers. This makes a great read aloud, almost with an almost mythical journey feel. It is a companion novel to DiCamillo’s *Raymie Nightingale*.


**Summary:** Mia is a determined, funny, creative 10 year old living and working in a motel that her Chinese immigrant parents manage. The book moves quickly as problems crop up. Mia and her parents overcome much and are optimistic and hard working, holding firmly to their dreams of having a better life. The author’s real life experiences as a Chinese immigrant shape many of the plot turns involving poverty, prejudice, homelessness, and the perseverance it takes to to overcome these.

**Curricular Use:** Strong female protagonist, immigrant issues, poverty, resiliency, friendship.

**Audience:** Middle grade readers.

**Additionally Recommend:**


**Summary:** Zoey’s life is piled high with adversity compared to many kids her age. While living with her mom and her mom’s bully boyfriend, caretaking for her younger siblings, feeling daily worry for food, clean clothes she tries to get through school by going unnoticed. When a teacher sees her potential and invites her to join the school debate team Zoey’s intellect and unique capacity to handle much more than she thought she could is displayed. A really difficult story about the strength and perseverance of children living in distress, the reader definitely will feel what life is like as Zoey.

**Curricular use:** Poverty, resiliency, bullying, abuse, advocacy, strong female protagonist.

**Audience:** Mature middle grade readers.