

## **Suggested Fiction for Middle School "Seeking Justice" Unit**

Found in the Young Adult collection at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library

### **ANIMAL RIGHTS, CULTS, CHILD LABOR, PERSECUTION, WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

**Bread and Roses, Too**, by Katherine Paterson, 2006. (historical, child labor) (Lexile: 810)

Jake and Rosa, two children, form an unlikely friendship as they try to survive and understand the 1912 Bread and Roses strike of mill workers in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

**Half Brother**, by Kenneth Oppel, 2010. (historical, animal rights) (Lexile: NA)

In 1973, a behavioral psychologist pursues his latest research project--an experiment to determine whether chimpanzees can acquire advanced language skills--he brings home a baby chimp named Zan & asks his 13 year old son to treat Zan like a little brother.

**Incantation**, by Alice Hoffman, 2006. (historical, religious persecution) (Lexile: 730)

During the Spanish Inquisition, sixteen-year-old Estrella, brought up a Catholic, discovers her family's true Jewish identity, and when their secret is betrayed by Estrella's best friend, the consequences are tragic.

**Leaving Fishers**, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, 1997. (contemporary, cults) (Lexile: 790)

After joining her new friends in the religious group called Fishers of Men, Dorry finds herself immersed in a cult from which she must struggle to extricate herself.

**The Loud Silence of Francine Green**, by Karen Cushman, 2006. (historical, McCarthyism) (Lexile: 750)

In 1949, thirteen-year-old Francine goes to Catholic school in Los Angeles where she becomes best friends with a girl who questions authority and is frequently punished by the nuns, causing Francine to question her own values.

**No Shame, No Fear**, by Ann Turnbull, 2004. (historical, religious persecution, romance) (Lexile: 730)

In England in 1662, a time of religious persecution, fifteen-year-old Susanna, a poor country girl and a Quaker, and seventeen-year-old William, a wealthy Anglican, meet and fall in love against all odds.

**Sister Wife**, by Shelley Hrdlitschka, 2008. (contemporary, cults) (Lexile: 680)

In a remote polygamist community, 15 year old Celeste struggles to accept her destiny while longing to be free to choose how to live her life.

**Uprising**, by Margaret Peterson Haddix, 2007. (historical, women's rights) (Lexile: 790)

In 1927, Mrs. Livingston recalls her experiences at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory, including miserable working conditions that led to a strike, then the fire that took the lives of her two best friends. Includes historical notes.

**Wicked Girls: A Novel of the Salem Witch Trials**, by Stephanie Hemphill, 2010. (historical) (Lexile: 700)

A fictionalized account, told in verse, of the Salem witch trials, told from the perspective of three of the real young women living in Salem in 1692--Mercy Lewis, Margaret Walcott, and Ann Putnam, Jr.

### **HOLOCAUST**

**After the War**, by Carol Matas, 1996. (historical) (Lexile: 840)

After being released from Buchenwald at the end of World War II, fifteen-year-old Ruth joins the underground organization Berihah, and risks her life to lead a group of children across Europe to Palestine.

**Annexed**, by Sharon Dogar, 2010. (historical) (Lexile: NA)

Retells the story of Anne Frank from the perspective of Peter, who overcomes an initial loathing for the precocious young diarist before falling in love with her and questioning his faith in light of frightening persecutions.

**The Book Thief**, by Markus Zusak, 2006. (historical) (Lexile: 730)

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death relates the story of Liesel--a young German girl whose book-stealing and story-telling talents help sustain her family and the Jewish man they are hiding, as well as their neighbors.

**The Boy in the Striped Pajamas**, by John Boyne, 2006. (historical) (Lexile: 1080)

Bored and lonely after his family moves from Berlin to a place called "Out-With" in 1942, Bruno, the son of a Nazi officer, befriends a boy in striped pajamas who lives behind a wire fence.

**Milkweed**, by Jerry Spinelli, 2003. (historical) (Lexile: 510)

Captures the hardships and cruelty of life in the ghettos of Warsaw during the Nazi occupation of World War II, through the eyes of a Jewish orphan who must use all his wits and courage to survive unimaginable events and circumstances.

**Tropical secrets: Holocaust refugees in Cuba**, by Margarita Engle, 2009. (historical) (Lexile: 1170)

Escaping from Nazi Germany to Cuba in 1939, a young Jewish refugee dreams of finding his parents again, befriends a local girl with painful secrets of her own, and discovers that the Nazi darkness is never far away.

## Suggested Fiction for Middle School "Seeking Justice" Unit – page 2

Found in the Young Adult collection at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library

### PEER PRESSURE, BULLYING

**Buddha Boy**, by Kathe Koja, 2003. (contemporary, realistic) (Lexile: 1090)

Justin spends time with Jinsen, the unusual and artistic new student whom the school bullies torment and call Buddha Boy, and ends up making choices that impact Jinsen, himself, and the entire school.

**The Chocolate War**, by Robert Cormier, 1974. (contemporary, realistic) (Lexile: 820)

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 the annual fund raising.

**Freefall**, by Ariela Anhalt, 2010. (contemporary, realistic) (Lexile: 590)

Briar Academy senior Luke prefers avoiding conflict & letting others make his decisions, but he is compelled to choose whether or not to stand by the best friend whose reckless behavior has endangered Luke & may have caused another student's death.

**Jake, reinvented**, by Gordon Korman, 2003. (contemporary, realistic) (Lexile: 800)

Rick becomes friends with the popular new boy, Jake Garrett, football player and host of superlative parties, and in the process discovers the true nature of his schoolmates and uncovers the mystery of Jake's past. Re-imagines "The Great Gatsby" with a cast of characters from Fitzgerald High.

### CIVIL RIGHTS, RACISM

**Black and White**, by Paul Volponi, 2005. (realistic, sports) (Lexile: 710)

Two star high school basketball players, one black and one white, experience the justice system differently after committing a crime together and getting caught.

**Bone by Bone by Bone**, by Tony Johnston, 2007. (historical) (Lexile: 680)

In 1950s Tennessee, ten-year-old David's racist father refuses to let him associate with his best friend Malcolm, an African American boy.

**Code Talker**, by Joseph Bruchac, 2005. (historical) (Lexile: 910)

After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue.

**The Cruisers**, by Walter Dean Myers, 2010. (contemporary, realistic, freedom of speech) (Lexile: NA)

Friends Zander, Kambui, LaShonda, and Bobbi, caught in the middle of a mock Civil War at DaVinci Academy, learn the true cost of freedom of speech when they use their alternative newspaper, The Cruiser, to try to make peace.

**Guardian**, by Julius Lester, 2008. (historical) (Lexile: 870)

In a rural southern town in 1946, a white man and his son witness the lynching of an innocent black man. Includes historical note on lynching.

**Mississippi Trial, 1955**, by Chris Crowe, 2002. (race relations) (Lexile: 870)

In Mississippi in 1955, a sixteen-year-old finds himself at odds with his grandfather over issues surrounding the kidnapping and murder of a fourteen-year-old African American from Chicago.

**My Mother the Cheerleader**, by Rob Sharenow, 2007. (historical) (Lexile: 820)

Thirteen-year-old Louise uncovers secrets about her family and her neighborhood during the violent protests over school desegregation in 1960 New Orleans.

**Riot**, by Walter Dean Myers, 2009. (historical) (Lexile: NA)

In 1863, fifteen-year-old Claire, the daughter of an Irish mother and a black father, faces ugly truths and great danger when Irish immigrants, enraged by the Civil War and a federal draft, lash out against blacks and wealthy "swells" of New York City.

**To Kill a Mockingbird**, by Harper Lee, 1960. (historical, race relations) (Lexile: 870)

Scout's father defends a black man accused of raping a white woman in a small Alabama town during the 1930s.

## Suggested Fiction for Middle School "Seeking Justice" Unit - page 3

Found in the Young Adult collection at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library

### SLAVERY

**Chains**, by Laurie Halse Anderson, 2008. (historical) (Lexile: 780)

After being sold to a cruel couple in New York City, a slave named Isabel spies for the rebels during the Revolutionary War.

**Copper Sun**, by Sharon Draper, 2006. (historical) (Lexile: 820)

Two fifteen-year-old girls--one a slave and the other an indentured servant--escape their Carolina plantation and try to make their way to Fort Moses, Florida, a Spanish colony that gives sanctuary to slaves.

**The Door of No Return**, by Sarah Mussi, 2008. (adventure) (Lexile: 710)

16 year old Zac never believed his grandfather's tales about their enslaved ancestors being descended from an African king, but when his grandfather is murdered & the villains come after Zac, he sets out for Ghana to find King Baktu's long-lost treasure before the murderers do.

**The Glory Field**, by Walter Dean Myers, 1994. (historical) (Lexile: 800)

Follows a family's 241 year history, from the capture of an African boy in the 1750s through the lives of his descendants, as their dreams and circumstances lead them away from and back to the small plot of land in South Carolina that they call the Glory Field.

**Days of Little Texas**, by R.A. Nelson, 2009. (paranormal) (Lexile: NA)

Sixteen-year-old Ronald Earl King, who has been a charismatic evangelist since he was ten years old, is about to preach at a huge revival meeting on the grounds of an old plantation, where, with confusing help from the ghost of a girl he could not heal, he becomes engaged in an epic battle between good and evil.

## Suggested NonFiction for Middle School "Seeking Justice" Unit

Found in the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library Young Adult Collection

**An Unspeakable Crime: The Prosecution and Persecution of Leo Frank**, by Elaine Marie Alphin, 2010. (Lexile: 1210) (Y 364.15 ALP) In 1913, Mary Phagan, a 13-year-old employee at an Atlanta pencil factory was found murdered. Police suspected Leo Frank, who was a northerner and a Jew. His trial captured national attention. A mob stormed the prison where Frank was being held and lynched him. Leo Frank thus became the only known Jew lynched in American history.

**They Called Themselves The K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group**, by Susan Campbell Bartoletti, 2010. (Lexile: 1180) (Y 322.42 BAR) This is the story of how a secret terrorist group took root in America's democracy. Filled with chilling and vivid personal accounts unearthed from oral histories, congressional documents, and diaries.

**Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice**, by Phillip Hoose, 2009. (biography) (Lexile: 1000) (Y B COLVIN)

Based on extensive interviews with Claudette Colvin and many others, Phillip Hoose presents the first in-depth account of an important yet largely unknown civil rights figure, skillfully weaving her dramatic story into the fabric of the historic Montgomery bus boycott and court case that would change the course of American history.

**The Force Born of Truth : Mohandas Gandhi and the Salt March, India, 1930**, by Betsy Kuhn, 2011.

(Lexile: NA) (Y 954.03 KUH) Young Gandhi -- Gandhi in South Africa -- Gandhi returns to India -- Setting the stage -- The Salt March -- Gandhi breaks the salt laws -- The end of the Raj -- "A message for the whole world."

**Kids On Strike!**, by Susan Campbell Bartoletti, 1999. (Lexile: 920) (Y 331.892 BAR)

Describes the conditions and treatment that drove workers, including many children, to various strikes, from the mill workers strikes in 1828 and 1836 and the coal strikes at the turn of the century to the work of Mother Jones on behalf of child workers.

**Open the Jail Doors -- We Want to Enter: The Defiance Campaign Against Apartheid Laws, South Africa, 1952**, by Stuart A. Kallen, 2010. (Lexile: NA) (Y 323.16 KAL)

Discusses apartheid in South Africa and the fight for its prohibition, including notable protests, arrests, and anti-apartheid leaders that eventually brought the downfall of the system.

**Maus: A Survivor's Tale**, by Art Spiegelman, 1986. (biography, graphic novel) (Lexile: NA) (Y B GRAPHIC SPI)

The author-illustrator traces his father's imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp through a series of disarming and unusual cartoons arranged to tell the story as a novel.

Subject search terms to use to find similar nonfiction in the Library's online catalog (at [www.hwlibrary.org](http://www.hwlibrary.org)) :  
civil rights, emancipation, equality, freedom, human rights, justice, labor movement, revolutions, social justice.

This bibliography was compiled by Kim Claire, Young Adult/Reference Librarian, Hamilton-Wenham Library, January 2011.