

Book Kits

These kits are available for check out at the La Crosse Public Library. Kits consist of multiple copies (8 – 15) of the books, discussion questions, author information, reviews and read alikes. Each kit will circulate for six weeks and cannot be reserved in advance for a specific date. Like books, holds can be placed on the kits. For more information call Mary Dunn at 789-7145 or email m.dunn@lacrosse.lib.wi.us.

Ackerman, Diane – *The Zookeeper's Wife*. *

Documents the true story of Warsaw Zoo keepers and resistance activists Jan and Antonina Zabinski, who in the aftermath of Germany's invasion of Poland saved the lives of hundreds of Jewish citizens by smuggling them into empty cages and their home villa. (Nonfiction)

Alcott, Kate – *The Dressmaker* *

A spirited woman survives the sinking of the Titanic only to find herself embroiled in the tumultuous aftermath of that great tragedy. Tess is one of the last people to escape into a lifeboat. When an enterprising reporter turns her employer, Lady Duff Gordon, into an object of scorn, Tess is torn between loyalty and the truth. (Historical)

Amirrezvani, Anita – *The Blood of Flowers*.

After her father dies without leaving her with a dowry, a seventeenth-century Persian teen becomes a servant to her wealthy rug designer uncle in the court of Shah Abbas the Great, where her weaving talents prove both a blessing and curse. (Historical)

Benjamin, Melanie – *The Aviator's Wife*. *

A story inspired by the marriage between Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh traces the romance between a handsome young aviator and a shy ambassador's daughter whose relationship is marked by wild international acclaim. (Historical)

Blake, Sarah – *The Postmistress* *

The stories of a small Cape Cod postmistress and an American radio reporter stationed in London collide on the eve of the United States's entrance into World War II, a meeting that is shaped by a broken promise to deliver a letter. (Historical)

Bohjalian, Chris – *The Light in the Ruins*. *

Hoping to safeguard themselves from the ravages of World War II within the walls of their ancient villa in Florence, the noble Rosatis family become prisoners in their home when eighteen-year-old Cristina's courtship by a German lieutenant prompts the Nazis to take over the estate, a situation that leads to a serial murder investigation years later. (Historical)

Bohjalian, Chris – *The Sandcastle Girls*. *

Parallel stories of a woman who falls in love with an Armenian soldier during the Armenian Genocide and a modern-day New Yorker prompted to rediscover her Armenian past. (Historical)

Caldwell, Ian – *The Rule of Four*.

Trying to decipher an ancient text that weaves a mathematical labyrinth within a love story, two researchers obtain a diary that may contain the key to the code, but when a fellow researcher is killed, they realize that the book contains a dangerous secret.

Chessman, Harriet Scott – *Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Newspaper*.

Using five paintings by Mary Cassatt of her older sister Lydia as inspiration, this lyrical and moving novel dramatizes the relationship between the Impressionist painter and her more conservative sister Lydia who is dying of Bright's disease. (Historical)

Christie, Agatha – *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*.

When a wealthy, elderly woman is poisoned, Belgian detective Hercule Poirot seeks the murderer among a large group of friends and relatives. First book introducing Hercule Poirot. (Mystery)

Clark, Mary Higgins – *We'll Meet Again*.

Years ago Molly Carpenter Lasch pled guilty to killing her husband even though she has no memory of it. Now out on parole, Molly's memory is slowly coming back. (Mystery)

Coel, Margaret – *The Eagle Catcher*.

This first book in the series introduces Arapaho attorney Vicky Holden and Jesuit priest Father John O'Malley joining forces in a tale of misappropriation of Indian lands. (Mystery)

Dallas, Sandra – *Whiter Than Snow*. *

When a devastating avalanche traps nine children walking home from school in 1920, the disaster has life-changing effects on the people who live in the small Colorado town where it occurs.

Diamant, Anita – *The Red Tent*.

Loosely based on Biblical stories, this novel recreates the life of Dinah, daughter of Leah and Jacob. (Historical)

Egan, Timothy – *The Worst Hard Time*. *

The dust storms that terrorized America's High Plains in the darkest years of the Depression were like nothing ever seen before or since, and the stories of the people that held on have never been fully told. Timothy Egan follows a half-dozen families and their communities through the rise and fall of the region,

going from sod huts to new framed houses to huddling in basements with the windows sealed by damp sheets in a futile effort to keep the dust out.
(Nonfiction)

Enger, Leif – *Peace Like a River*.

The quiet Midwestern life of the Land family is upended when Davy Land kills two teenage boys who have come to harm the family.

Fairstein, Linda – *Bone Vault*

A glittering reception featuring a controversial joint project between the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Natural History is clouded by the discovery of the body of a young woman in an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus.
(Mystery)

Ferraris, Zoe – *Finding Nouf*. *

When sixteen-year-old Nouf goes missing and is found drowned in the desert outside Jeddah, Nayir--a desert guide hired by her prominent family to search for her--feels compelled to find out what really happened. (Mystery)

Ferriss, Lucy – *A Sister to Honor*. *

Afia Satar is studious, modest, and devout. The young daughter of a landholding family in northern Pakistan, Afia has enrolled in an American college with the dream of returning to her country as a doctor. But when a photo surfaces online of Afia holding hands with an American boy, she is suddenly no longer safe--even from the family that cherishes her.

Finney, Jack – *Time and Again*.

Simon Morley moves into the Dakota apartments and returns to the year 1882.
(Science Fiction)

Flynn, Gillian – *Dark Places*. *

Libby Day was seven when her mother and two sisters were murdered in "The Satan Sacrifice of Kinnakee, Kansas". She escaped and survived to later testify that her 15-year-old brother Ben was the killer. Twenty-five years later she is contacted by "The Kill Club" and pumped for information they hope to use to free Ben. Libby hatches a plan to profit from her tragic past but ends up being chased by a killer.

Follett, Ken – *The Pillars of the Earth*. *

Set in twelfth-century England, this epic of kings and peasants juxtaposes the building of a magnificent church with the violence and treachery that often characterized the Middle Ages. (Historical)

Ford, Jamie – *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*. *

When artifacts from Japanese families sent to internment camps during World War II are uncovered during renovations at a Seattle hotel, Henry Lee embarks

on a quest that leads to memories of growing up Chinese in a city rife with anti-Japanese sentiment.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns – *No Ordinary Time*.

A superb dual portrait of the 32nd President and his First Lady, whose extraordinary partnership steered the nation through the perilous WW II years. (Nonfiction)

Gregory, Philippa – *The Constant Princess*.

A fictional portrait of Henry VIII's first wife, Katherine of Aragon, follows her through her youthful marriage to Henry's older brother, Arthur, her widowhood, her marriage to Henry, and the divorce that led to Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn. (Historical)

Hahn-Beer, Edith – *The Nazi Officer's Wife*. *

The author, a Jewish law student when the war broke out, recounts how she survived the Holocaust as the wife of a Nazi party member in Munich. (Nonfiction)

Hassler, Jon – *Simon's Night*.

Retired professor Simon Shea, decides to commit himself to Norman Home for the elderly after he accidentally causes a fire in his home.

Hillenbrand, Laura – *Seabiscuit*.

This is a chronicle of one of the most exciting horses in thoroughbred racing history. (Nonfiction)

Horan, Nancy – *Loving Frank*.

Fact and fiction blend in a historical novel that chronicles the relationship between seminal architect Frank Lloyd Wright and Mamah Cheney, from their meeting, when they were each married to another, to the clandestine affair that shocked Chicago society. (Historical)

Horan, Nancy – *Under the Wide and Starry Sky*. *

Imagines the unconventional love affair of Scottish literary giant Robert Louis Stevenson and American divorcée Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne, who after meeting in rural France take refuge from their unhappy lives and embark on two shared decades of international turbulence. (Historical)

Hosseini, Khaled – *The Kite Runner*.

Traces the unlikely friendship of a wealthy Afghan youth and a servant's son, in a tale that spans the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy through the atrocities of the present day.

Junger, Sebastian. *Perfect Storm*.

This book chronicles the impact of a storm that ravaged the eastern section of the United States in 1991. (Nonfiction)

Kinsella, Sophie – *Confessions of a Shopaholic*.

Financial journalist Rebecca Bloomwood seeks solace from the boredom and pressures in life with her shopping, a solution that brings her close to financial disaster, until she encounters a story that will change her life.

Kline, Christina Baker – *The Orphan Train*. *

Close to aging out of the foster care system, Molly Ayer takes a position helping an elderly woman named Vivian and discovers that they are more alike than different as she helps Vivian solve a mystery from her past. (Historical)

Krakauer, Jon – *Into the Wild*.

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. (Nonfiction)

Krakauer, Jon – *Under the Banner of Heaven*.

Traces the 1984 murder of a woman and her child by fundamentalist Mormons, exploring the belief systems and traditions that mark the faith's most extreme factions and what their practices reflect about the nature of religion in America. (Nonfiction)

Kurson, Robert – *The Shadow Divers*. *

Recounts the discovery of a sunken German U-boat by two scuba divers, tracing how they devoted the following years to researching the identities of the submarine and its crew, correcting historical texts and breaking new ground in the world of diving. (Nonfiction)

LaPlante, Alice – *Turn of Mind*. *

Implicated in the murder of her best friend, Jennifer White, a brilliant retired surgeon with dementia, struggles with fractured memories of their complex relationship and wonders if she actually committed the crime.

Larson, Erik – *The Devil in the White City*.

Bringing Chicago circa 1893 to vivid life, Erik Larson's spellbinding bestseller intertwines the true tale of two men--the brilliant architect behind the legendary 1893 World's Fair, striving to secure America's place in the world; and the cunning serial killer who used the fair to lure his victims to their death. (Nonfiction)

Larson, Erik – *Thunderstruck*. *

A portrait of the Edwardian era recounts two parallel stories--the case of Dr. Hawley Crippen, who murdered his wife and fled to America, and Guglielmo

Marconi, the inventor of wireless communication--as the new technology is used to capture a killer. (Nonfiction)

Laskin, David – *The Children's Blizzard*.

Describes the deadly 1888 snowstorm in the Great Plains that killed more than five hundred people including numerous schoolchildren, describing how the storm devastated immigrant families and dramatically affected pioneer advancement. (Nonfiction)

Lee, Harper – *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

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

Lowry, Lois – *The Giver*.

In a world with no poverty, crime, sickness or employment and where every family is happy, 12 year old Jonas is chose to be the community's Receiver of Memories. (Science Fiction)

McCall Smith, Alexander – *The #1 Ladies' Detective Agency*.

McCall Smith, a law professor and reference book writer, offers a gentle, humorous tale with a memorable private detective, Precious Ramotswe, the first female private detective in her native Botswana. (Mystery)

Maguire, Gregory. *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*.

When Dorothy triumphed over the Wicked Witch of the West in L. Frank Baum's classic tale, we heard only her side of the story. But what about her arch-nemesis, the mysterious witch? Where did she come from? How did she become so wicked? And what is the true nature of evil? (Fantasy)

Millard, Candice – *River of Doubt*. *

Chronicles the 1914 expedition of Theodore Roosevelt into the unexplored heart of the Amazon basin to explore and map the region surrounding a tributary called the River of Doubt, detailing the perilous conditions they faced. (Nonfiction)

Min, Anchee – *Pearl of China*. *

In the small southern town of Chin-kiang, in the last days of the nineteenth century, young Willow and young Pearl S. Buck, the headstrong daughter of zealous Christian missionaries, bump heads and embark on a friendship that will sustain both of them through one of the most tumultuous periods in Chinese history. (Historical)

Moriarty, Laura – *The Chaperone*. *

A novel about the friendship between an adolescent, pre-movie-star Louise Brooks, and the 36-year-old woman who chaperones her to New York City for a summer, in 1922, and how it changes both their lives. (Historical)

Morton, Kate – *The Forgotten Garden*. *

Abandoned on a 1913 voyage to Australia, Nell is raised by a dock master and his wife who do not tell her until she is an adult that she is not their child, leading Nell to return to England and eventually hand down her quest for answers to her granddaughter.

O'Brien, Stacey – *Wesley the Owl*. *

In this touching memoir, biologist and owl expert Stacey O'Brien introduces Wesley the Owl, a once-abandoned baby owl who was rescued by Stacey. Together, they've built a remarkable friendship over the past nineteen years.

Oliveira, Robin – *My Name is Mary Sutter*. *

Traveling to Civil War-era Washington, D.C., to tend wounded soldiers and pursue her dream of becoming a surgeon, headstrong midwife Mary receives guidance from two smitten doctors and resists her mother's pleas for her to return home. (Historical)

Patchett, Ann – *Bel Canto*.

When terrorists seize hostages at an embassy party, an unlikely assortment of people is thrown together, including American opera star Roxanne Coss, and Mr. Hosokawa, a Japanese CEO and her biggest fan.

Philbrick, Nathaniel – *In the Heart of the Sea*.

Recounts the story of the 1820 wreck of the whaleship Essex, which inspired Melville's classic "*Moby-Dick*," and describes its doomed crew's ninety-day attempt to survive whale attacks and the elements on three tiny lifeboats. (Nonfiction)

Picoult, Jodi – *Plain Truth*.

The discovery of a dead baby under a pile of old blankets in Aaron Fisher's barn sets off a scandal in Amish country and an investigation that could implicate Fisher's eighteen-year-old daughter.

Picoult, Jodi – *Second Glance*.

Hired as a "ghost hunter," over-the-edge Ross Wakeman is really hoping to encounter his long-dead fiancé. Instead, he encounters lovely Lia-and a crumbling gravestone carrying her name.

Powell, Margaret – *Below Stairs*. *

Chronicles the experiences of a 1920s maid working in the great houses of England, detailing the disparate lives of the upper class and their servants, the class struggles inherent in the relationship, and daily life as a servant. (Nonfiction)

Richards, Susan – *Chosen by a Horse*. *

Relates the story of a woman whose hurts from a difficult past are healed with the help of the companionship and affection of a formerly abused horse for which she has agreed to care. (Nonfiction)

Rogan, Charlotte – *The Lifeboat*. *

Forced into an overcrowded lifeboat after a mysterious explosion on their trans-Atlantic ocean liner, newly widowed Grace Winter battles the elements and her fellow survivors and remembers her husband, Henry, who set his own safety aside to ensure Grace's.

Rosnay, Tatiana de – *Sarah's Key*.

On the sixtieth anniversary of the 1942 roundup of Jews by the French police in the Vel d'Hiv section of Paris, American journalist Julia Jarmond is asked to write an article on this dark episode during World War II and embarks on investigation that leads her to long-hidden family secrets and to the ordeal of Sarah, a young girl caught up in the raid. (Historical)

Ross, Ann – *Miss Julia Throws a Wedding*.

The inimitable Miss Julia pushes an indecisive couple toward matrimony in this Southern comedy-of-manners series' latest installment, which begins with the protagonist frustrated at the inability of her friend, Miss Hazel, to get her beau to propose.

See, Lisa – *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan*.

A story of friendship set in nineteenth-century China follows an elderly woman and her companion as they communicate their hopes, dreams, joys, and tragedies through a unique secret language. (Historical)

Slaughter, Karin – *Fallen*. *

Georgia Bureau of Investigations Detective Faith Mitchell, her partner Will Trent, and trauma doctor Sara Linton join forces to find Faith's mother, missing after a deadly hostage situation that leaves Faith a murder suspect -- and the scapegoat for police corruption, bribery, and murder. (Mystery)

Stedman, M. L. – *The Light Between Oceans*. *

After moving with his wife to an isolated Australian lighthouse where they suffer miscarriages and a stillbirth, Tom allows his wife to claim an infant that has washed up on the shore, a decision with devastating consequences. (Historical)

Tan, Amy – *The Valley of Amazement*. *

The Valley of Amazement is a sweeping, evocative epic of two women's intertwined fates and their search for identity that moves from the lavish parlors of Shanghai courtesans to the fog-shrouded mountains of a remote Chinese village. (Historical)

Tey, Josephine – *The Daughter of Time*.

While recuperating in the hospital, police detective Alan Grant tries to solve the mystery of Richard III and the murder of the princes in the Tower. (Mystery)

Trigiani, Adriana – *The Shoemaker's Wife*. *

Two star-crossed lovers--Enza and Ciro--meet and separate, until, finally, the power of their love changes both of their lives forever. Set during the years preceding and during World War I.

Trussoni, Danielle – *Angelology*. *

Sister Evangeline, a nun, discovers a mysterious collection of letters dating back sixty years that reveal a link between her convent and the Rockefellers, who were interested in a legendary artifact associated with an order of fallen angels; the same relic is sought by the Nephilim, offspring of the union between mortal and angel parents, who will stop at nothing to retrieve it to gain power over humanity. (Author is from La Crosse.)

Twain, Mark – *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

The classic hero, Tom Sawyer, suffers through school, plots mischief with Huckleberry Finn, cons Ben to whitewash a fence, meets Becky Thatcher and hunts for buried treasure among other things.

Watson, Larry – *Montana 1948*.

This is a provocative story of a family's power struggles, small-town politics, ethics, justice and loyalty vs. the law in 1948 Montana.

Watson, S.J. – *Before I Go to Sleep*. *

An accident in her 20s severely damaged her memory, so although Christine Lucas is now 47, she doesn't recall anything that has happened since the accident. Each morning, her husband has to tell her who she is, and who he is. But each morning after he leaves for work, she receives a phone call and is prompted by a doctor to retrieve her secret journal.

Zuckoff, Mitchell – *Lost in Shangri-la*. *

Award-winning former Boston Globe reporter Mitchell Zuckoff unleashes the exhilarating, untold story of an extraordinary World War II rescue mission, where a plane crash in the South Pacific plunged a trio of U.S. military personnel into the jungle-clad land of New Guinea. One of the rescue pilots is from La Crosse. (Nonfiction)

*Added in 2016