

CLIMATE  
CHANGE

ADDICTION

GRIEF

DEATH

LET'S

LOSS

TALK

GRADES K-12

RACISM

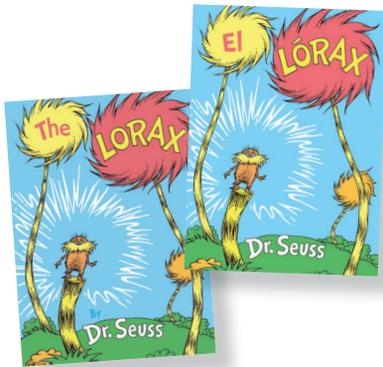
INCARCERATION

MENTAL  
HEALTH

Topics like these can be challenging or even uncomfortable to discuss with readers. Open lines of communication with the help of the fiction and nonfiction books included in this brochure. Some students will identify with the experiences and information contained in these books; others will gain empathy and understanding.



# CLIMATE CHANGE



## **The Lorax** GRADES 1–4

Dr. Seuss's beloved story teaches kids to speak up and stand up for those who can't. *The Lorax* allows young readers to experience the danger of taking our earth for granted in a story that is timely, whimsical, and hopeful. The book's final pages teach us that just one small seed, or one small child, can make a difference.

## **A Place Where Hurricanes Happen** GRADES K–4

Children of New Orleans share their experiences of Hurricane Katrina through poignant and straightforward free verse in this fictional account of the storm. Simple, colloquial text gives teachers a gentle way to introduce children to a very frightening subject. As natural and human-made disasters become increasingly commonplace, we need books like this one to help children contextualize and discuss difficult and often tragic events.

## **When Forests Burn** GRADE 5 & UP

A fascinating look at the most destructive wildfires in American history, the impact of climate change, and what we're doing right and wrong to manage forest fires, from National Book Award finalist Albert Marrin. Pictures help bring this important nonfiction to life.

## **Hoot** GRADE 5 & UP

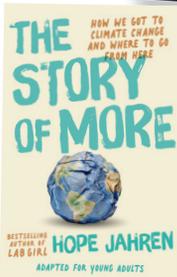
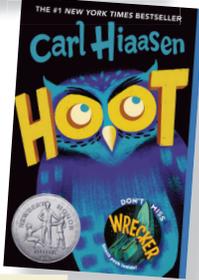
Newbery Honor-winning and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Carl Hiaasen's beloved *Hoot* delivers an adventure full of fun, kids, bullies, alligators, pancakes, and pint-sized owls. Like all of Carl Hiaasen's books, it has a powerful message to care for our environment. The eco-consciousness of the book's character's will encourage kids to take note of the environmental injustices in their communities and inspire them to take bold action.

## **The Story of More** (Adapted for Young Adults) GRADE 7 & UP

This young adult adaptation of acclaimed geochemist and geobiologist Hope Jahren's highly respected nonfiction work is the perfect book for those interested in learning about climate change and how they can contribute to creating a more sustainable future. She assures us that if we act now, we can enjoy a bright future.

## **The Uninhabitable Earth** (Adapted for Young Adults) GRADE 7 & UP

An exploration of the devastating effects of global warming—current and future—adapted for young adults from the #1 *New York Times* bestseller. This is not only an assessment of how the future will look to those living through it but also a dire overview and an impassioned and hopeful call to action to change our trajectory while there is still time.



TALK  
ABOUT

# ADDICTION

## You Are Always Loved

GRADES PREK–3

This book is a child's companion to the authors' memoir, *Under Our Roof*, a story of opioid addiction and recovery. *You Are Always Loved* reinforces the message that circumstances are never a child's fault and they are loved no matter what. For a child experiencing any sort of parental absence, this beautiful picture book will be deeply felt.

## Something Like Home

GRADES 5–9

From the Newbery Honor–winning author of *Iveliz Explains It All* comes a moving novel in verse in which a lost dog helps a lonely girl in foster care. Laura is in foster care while her parents are in rehab. This story normalizes open communication, asking for help, and most of all, being kind.

## Isaiah Dunn Is My Hero

GRADES 3–5

A coming-of-age tale about a boy who proves that with superhero courage—and a few great sidekicks—you can take on even the toughest of circumstances. After his father's death, Isaiah's little sister, Charlie, asks too many questions, and Mama's gone totally silent. On top of that, his mother's struggle with alcoholism leads Isaiah and Charlie to a period of homelessness before Mama gets the help she needs. Kelly J. Baptist's debut novel explores the indomitable spirit of a ten-year-old boy and the superhero strength and self-helpful tools it takes to grow up.

## Lo & Behold

GRADES 5–9

Introducing an unforgettable graphic novel about connection, friendship, and the wonder all around us from *New York Times* bestselling author Wendy Mass and debut illustrator Gabi Mendez. This graphic novel takes on sometimes difficult themes, including opioid addiction and parent separation.

## You'd Be Home Now

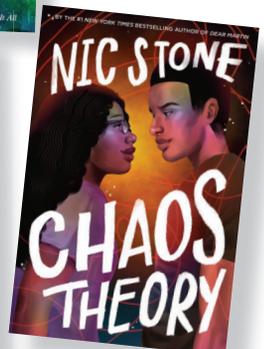
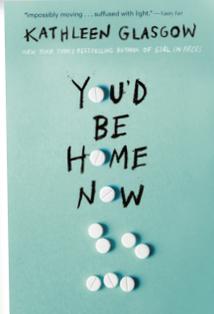
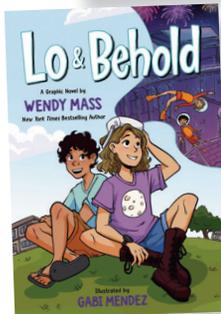
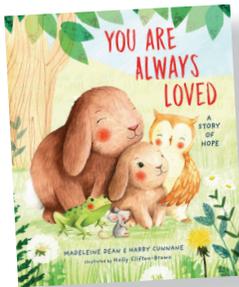
GRADE 9 & UP

Focusing on the journey of one sister, one brother, one family finally recognizing and loving each other for who they are, not who they are supposed to be, *You'd Be Home Now* is Kathleen Glasgow's glorious and heartbreaking story about the opioid crisis, and how it touches all of us. This is a book for students who are personally affected by the opioid crisis or for students learning to understand.

## Chaos Theory

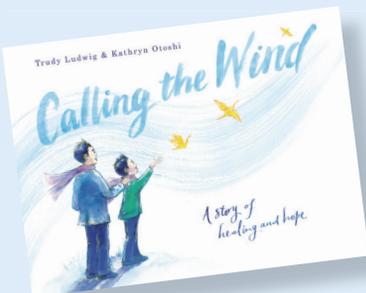
GRADE 9 & UP

A powerful story about two teens: a certified genius living with a diagnosed mental disorder and a politician's son running from his own grief and addiction. This novel from YA powerhouse author Nic Stone features characters prioritizing mental health and learning how to accept the past. With its deep emotional core, it models learning to live and love with mental illness.



## TALK ABOUT

# DEATH, GRIEF, AND LOSS



### Calling the Wind

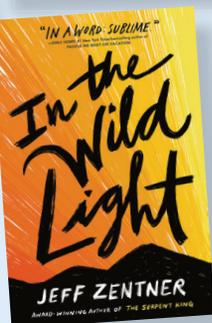
GRADES PREK–3

Inspired by Itaru Sasaki's *Wind Telephone*, which brought healing to the people of Japan in the wake of an earthquake and tsunami, this story explores grief and loss and how we move forward by finding meaningful ways to connect with the family and friends we've lost, as well as those who are still with us.

### Long Ride Home

GRADES PREK–3

Little Koala has a long ride home, and every place her mother passes invokes a memory of her best friend: the ice cream shop where they giggled uncontrollably, the hill in the park where they crashed their bikes (that memory also lives on as a little scar on Koala's knee), the library where they borrowed their favorite book again and again. Koala's friendship blooms beautifully on the page, seamlessly interwoven with the ride home, and soon we learn just why these memories are so important: Koala's friend has moved away. This is a special picture book about the power of memory and loss—a perfect read-aloud for anyone who is missing someone.



### Dear Rosie

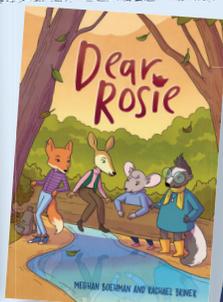
GRADES 3–7

Seventh grader Millie has the best friends in the whole world: Florence, Claire, Gabby, and Rosie. But when Rosie dies in a car accident, everything changes. Rocked by grief, the remaining four girls struggle to move on. Millie barely understands her normal pre-teen feelings, let alone the messy ones left behind by Rosie, so she outruns her emotions by throwing herself into a mystery. This is a heartwarming graphic novel about the journey to heal.

### When You Trap a Tiger

GRADES 3–7

This uplifting story brings Korean folklore to life as a girl goes on a quest to unlock the power of stories and save her dying grandmother. This book speaks to the power of family, tradition, and stories—especially the stories that remain with us even after a loved one dies.



### In the Wild Light

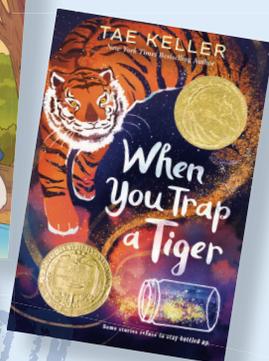
GRADE 9 & UP

Life in a small Appalachian town is not easy. Cash lost his mother to an opioid addiction and his papaw is dying slowly from emphysema. But when an unbelievable opportunity to attend a prestigious boarding school in Connecticut is presented to him, Cash must decide if he can leave behind his family and everything he knows—if he has the courage to change the things he can.

### How to Make Friends with the Dark

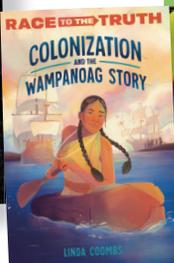
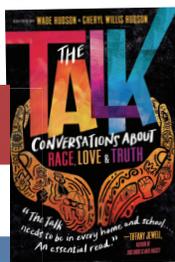
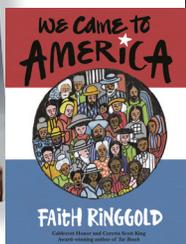
GRADE 9 & UP

Tiger's life changed with a simple phone call: her mother died. Tiger's mother never talked about her father, and with no grandparents or aunts or uncles, her world is packed into a suitcase and moved to a foster home. And another. And another. Until hope surfaces in the shape of . . . a sister? A story about survival and healing, this a powerful tale offers self-helpful tools for anyone who has lost someone.





# RACISM



## Standing in the Need of Prayer

GRADES 1–4

Starting from 1619 and stretching more than four hundred years, this book features such pivotal moments in history as the arrival of enslaved people in Jamestown, Virginia; Nat Turner's rebellion; the integration of the US military; the Selma to Montgomery marches; and peaceful present-day protests. It also celebrates the feats of African American musicians and athletes, such as Duke Ellington and Florence Griffith Joyner. At the end of the book, readers will find descriptions of the people, places, and events that are featured.

This book reckons with a painful history while serving as a testament to the human ability to persevere in even the most hopeless of circumstances. This book invites conversations about racism in its informative reminders of yesterday and today.

## We Came to America

GRADES K–3

Acclaimed artist and Caldecott Medal-winning picture book creator Faith Ringgold shares an inspiring look at America's lineage in this stunning ode to our country—past, present, and future. This picture book celebrates the great diversity of America while honoring those who came to this

country as immigrants, those who were brought to this country as slaves, and those whose land was stolen by colonizers.

## The Talk

GRADE 5 & UP

Thirty diverse, award-winning authors and illustrators share the conversations they have with their children about race in America today. This is a call to action that invites readers, teachers, and gatekeepers to be anti-racist advocates for change. For teachers and librarians hoping to engage young people in frank conversations about race, identity, and self-esteem, this powerful text lays the groundwork for important but sometimes difficult conversations, with its assurance that there can be hope for a better tomorrow.

## Colonization and the Wampanoag Story

GRADE 5 & UP

From its “discovery” by Europeans to the first Thanksgiving, the story of America's earliest days has been carefully misrepresented. Now, a new series is here to tell the truth. Told from the perspective of the New England Indigenous Nations that these outsiders found when they arrived, this is the true story of how America as we know it today began.

## The Sum of Us

(Adapted for Young Readers)

GRADE 5 & UP

Heather C. McGhee examines how damaging racism is, not only to people of color but also to white people. She offers hope and real solutions so we can all prosper. An expert in economic policy, she proves how the stories we tell ourselves about race and belonging influence the policies that determine our shared economic future. *The Sum of Us* provides hope that with understanding and open-mindedness, the world can be more united and equitable than it is today.

## Caste

(Adapted for Young Readers)

GRADE 7 & UP

Readers will be fascinated by this young adult adaptation of the *New York Times* bestselling nonfiction work as they follow masterful narratives about real people that reveal an insidious phenomenon in the United States: a hidden caste system. *Caste* is not only about race or class; it is about power—which groups have it and which do not. Once we learn the reasons behind caste systems and see the often heartbreaking effects, Wilkerson says, we can bridge the divides and make way for an inclusive future where we are all equal.

## TALK ABOUT

# INCARCERATION

## My Brother Is Away

GRADES K–3

In this moving picture book, a young girl reflects on the emotions and challenges of growing up with a brother who is incarcerated. This touching story is filled with vivid illustrations and is based on the author's childhood experiences. It is also available in Spanish.

## Not an Easy Win

GRADE 5 & UP

Like the main character, Chrystal D. Giles grew up with an incarcerated parent. She speaks of that experience through this powerful novel about family, forgiveness, and figuring out who you are when you don't make the rules. This story empowers kids who are feeling misunderstood and will speak to kids growing up with an incarcerated parent—which Chrystal directly addresses in the author's note.

Nothing's gone right for Lawrence since he had to move to live with his granny.

When Lawrence ends up in one too many fights at his new school, he gets expelled. The fight wasn't his fault, but since his pop has been in prison, it feels like no one listens to what Lawrence has to say. Instead of going to school, Lawrence starts spending his days at the rec center, helping out a neighbor who runs a chess program.

## This Is My America

GRADE 7 & UP

Every week, seventeen-year-old Tracy Beaumont writes letters to Innocence X, asking the organization to help her father, an innocent Black man on death row. After seven years, Tracy is running out of time—her dad has only 267 days left. Then the unthinkable happens. The police arrive in the night, and Tracy's older brother, Jamal, goes from being a bright, promising track star to a "thug" on the run accused of killing a white girl. Determined to save her brother, Tracy investigates what really happened between Jamal and Angela. This is an unflinching yet uplifting novel that explores the injustices of the American justice system.



## TALK ABOUT

# CONSENT & HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

## More Than Fluff

GRADES PREK–2

Daisy happens to be fluffy—she's a young chick after all. Her friends can't help but want to pet her, squeeze her, and tell her how cute she is. But Daisy doesn't want to be hugged or kissed. She's not just fluff; Daisy has substance! But how can she tell everyone to give her some space without hurting their feelings?

A timely and funny book that encourages kids to establish and respect boundaries—perfect for reading aloud at storytime!

## Puberty Is Gross but Also Really Awesome

GRADE 5 & UP

Filled with jokes and countless facts to put this stage in perspective—and keep the subject light—this first-of-its-kind inclusive puberty book celebrates the good and completely awful parts of puberty. With straightforward illustrations and an author who doesn't shy away from the tough stuff, this utterly modern take on puberty is the resource this generation (and their teachers) need! Heavily researched backmatter will aid in discussions of puberty

and offer resources for adults and kids to find answers and support, no matter what they're going through.

## Let's Talk About It

GRADE 9 & UP

An inclusive, accessible, and honest graphic novel guide to growing up, from gender and sexuality to consent and safe sex. Perfect for any teen starting to ask: Is what I'm feeling normal? Is what my body is doing normal? Am I normal? How do I know the right choices to make? How do I fix it when I make a mistake?

