

Host a Virtual Book Club

Book clubs give students opportunities to:

- Discover which genres most appeal to them
- Engage in independent discussion
- Read books that aren't in the curriculum (aka for fun)
- Identify as readers

In the age of social distancing, book clubs can be a lifeline for some students. Virtual clubs can also provide a way for students to:

- Connect with others
- Safely pass the time
- Reduce stress
- Escape into a book
- Learn from the struggles of characters

Visit [RHTeachersLibrarians.com](https://www.rhcb.com) for book and discussion ideas.

Encourage your students to stay connected and to keep reading. Help them start a middle school virtual book club that runs all summer!

1. GET COZY

Clubs should ideally have no more than sixteen members. If more than sixteen students are interested in joining, consider breaking up into smaller groups. Nominate discussion leaders or encourage students to take turns leading discussion.

2. GIVE OPTIONS

Create a list of books that match the group's overall interests and reading preferences. Then send students a survey with books for them to vote on. If you have several smaller groups in your club, let each group pick its own books.

3. "MEET UP"

Book clubs are as much an opportunity to socialize as they are to read. Research online to find a secure platform to host group video chats.

4. GIVE VOICE

This is an opportunity for student leaders! Leaders start the conversation and refocus the discussion if it gets too off topic. Student leaders can use RHCB discussion guides for inspiration, and they can always offer these BIG conversation starters:

- a. Did you like this book? Why or why not?
- b. Which characters are most likable? Which are most unlikable? Why?
- c. What lessons did you learn, and how do they relate to your life?

Visit [RHTeachersLibrarians.com](https://www.rhcb.com) for more discussion questions.

5. MIX CONTEMPORARY STORIES WITH CLASSICS

Reading different kinds of books is important for acclimating to different styles of writing, encountering new vocabulary, broadening worldview, and developing a reading identity. Try to expand your book club's reading list by suggesting books that match thematic interests but include varied vocabulary or style. One way to do this is to pair contemporary fiction with comforting classics. See below for some example pairings.

6. BUILD COMMUNITY

Suggest students organize virtual viewings of movie versions of the books they are reading. They can even have a post-movie discussion: Which version, book or movie, did they like better, and why?

7. STAY CONNECTED

In the absence of social events and camp time, it is more important than ever for students to stay connected and to keep reading! Encourage students to continue the book club throughout the summer by providing a menu of titles and title pairings they can choose from. See the next page for examples!

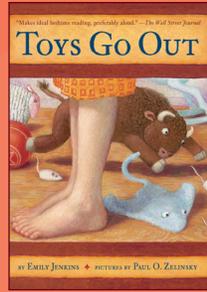
Expand Horizons: Pair Comforting Classics with Contemporary Stories



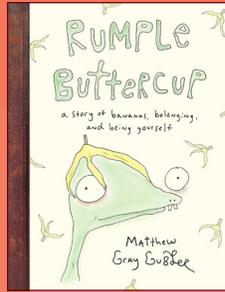
Where the Red Fern Grows
Wilson Rawls



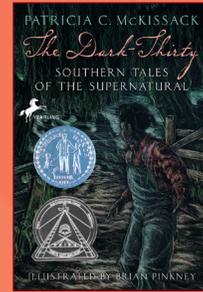
Banjo
Graham Salisbury



Toys Go Out
Emily Jenkins; Illustrated by Paul O. Zelensky



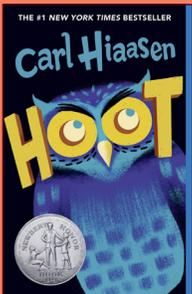
Rumple Buttercup
Matthew Gray Gubler



The Dark-Thirty
Patricia C. McKissack; Illustrated by Brian Pinkney



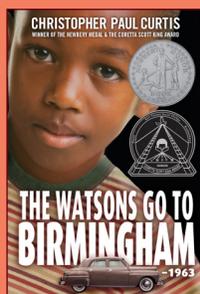
Flying Lessons & Other Stories
Ellen Oh



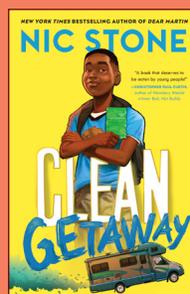
Hoot
Carl Hiaasen



Hello from Renn Lake
Michele Weber Hurwitz



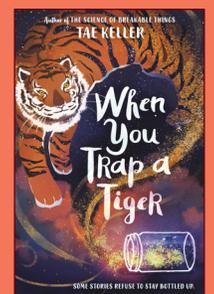
The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963
Christopher Paul Curtis



Clean Getaway
Nic Stone



My Father's Dragon
Ruth Stiles Gannett



When You Trap a Tiger
Tae Keller

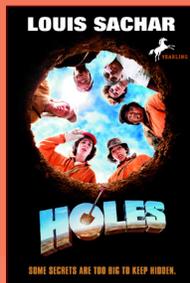
Build Community: Read Before You Watch



Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library
Chris Grabenstein



The Golden Compass
Philip Pullman

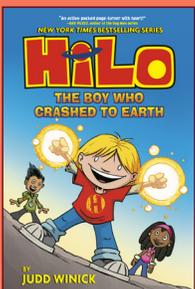


Holes
Louis Sachar



Wonder
R. J. Palacio

For Readers Who Love Series



Hilo Series
Judd Winick



Samantha Spinner Series
Russell Ginns



Talespinners Series
Scott Reintgen



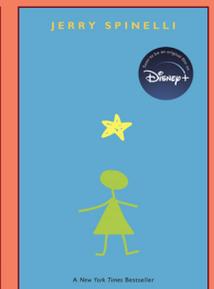
5 Worlds Series
Mark Siegel and Alexis Siegel; Illustrated by Xanthe Bouma, Matt Rockefeller, and Boya Sun



Reckoners Series
Brandon Sanderson



The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel Series
Michael Scott



Stargirl Series
Jerry Spinelli