Connections Reading List 2019-20

*Connections* is New Hampshire Humanities’ book discussion program for life-long learners. We bring content-rich, beautifully illustrated children’s, YA, and adult literature to adult literacy partners including Adult Basic Education, ESOL and Hi-set classes, Family Connections Center programs within the Department of Corrections and classes for developmentally disabled adults. Students read from one to four books over four meetings. Trained facilitators bring in creative activities and guide students through discussions on humanities themes such as History, Art as Power, The Right to Be, and Our Earth. Students connect to their own stories and ideas, learn from each other, and create a vibrant community of readers.

We organize the books around themes; readers experience deep satisfaction from recognizing patterns of thoughts and ideas in books that at first might seem unrelated. Finding connections among people’s stories, whether it be around ideas of liberty or about what we want to eat, inspires discussion and figuring out who we are as individuals. **You can also mix and match the books to create new themes.** This list is always a work in progress as facilitators and teachers discover & recommend new books.

ESOL Reading levels are noted for the books. The levels include:

- **Literacy** – for students who are learning how to find objects on a page and are beginning to recognize letters and a few words.
- **Beginner** – for students who are building vocabulary, have a solid grasp of phonetics and can discuss the story and relate it to their own lives.
- **Intermediate** – for students who can read a picture book and often middle school level chapter book, understand the meaning of the text as they move forward without needing to identify every word and have discussions about themes and ideas.
- **High School - Advanced** – for students who can read newspapers, young adult-level materials, short chapter books and novels and some adult fiction and nonfiction, who are adept at using dictionaries and digital translators, and have higher level discussions about themes.

Many of the higher-level picture books on the list are made accessible to early readers by virtue of their detailed illustrations. Where the text may be out of reach for some of your students, the illustrations can tell the tale. Likewise, a more advanced class often benefits from reading an illustrated book, as it can enhance their understanding of the plot and theme. If you select a book for your class that is available only in hardback, we ask you to select a maximum of two other books that are available in paperback. **For more information on these titles, please check your public library or go to the publisher’s or bookseller’s website where you can often look inside a book and get a better sense of the appropriateness of the match to your class.**
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1. JOY in family, food, music
   Beautify illustrated books on relevant topics with brief text
   All are Literacy Level +

*Building a House* by Byron Barton
   Literacy – beginner
   Skills of carpenters, painters, bricklayers and more are shown as they build a house in the U.S.

*Hush! A Thai Lullaby* by Minfong Ho, illus. by Holly Meade.
   Literacy – beginner
   Read a Thai lullaby and perhaps share lullabies sung in participants’ families and cultures.

*My People* by Langston Hughes, photos by Charles R. Smith
   Literacy – All people
   Hughes’ poem is accompanied by portraits. The book invites discussion about family, community, culture, love. Single word or phrase on each page.
Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert  
**Literacy - Beginner**  
Ehlert’s bold collages show bulbs, seeds, and seedlings, and a garden’s growth.

Tomorrow’s Alphabet by George Shannon  
**Literacy – All levels**  
A highly creative combination of letters and watercolor paintings that demonstrate where things come from.

Max Found Two Sticks by Brian Pinkney  
**Literacy - beginner**  
The joy of making music

The Relatives Came by Cynthia Rylant  
**Literacy - beginner**  
The joy of company coming

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**2. CULTURES SIDE BY SIDE**

All are Literacy level +

**Bread, Bread, Bread** by Ann Morris, photos by Ken Heyman  
Explores the many traditions of bread around the world.

**Houses and Homes** by Ann Morris, photos by Ken Heyman  
Photos and spare text about houses around the world.

**Mirror** by Jeannie Baker  
Two cultures (Australia and Morocco) and two stories, with threads of the same story.

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**3. DESCRIBING THE WORLD**  
In letters, words, and hand signs

All are Literacy level +

**Alphabet City** by Stephen T. Johnson  
An alphabet book about finding the shape of English letters in the world around us.

**Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions** by Margaret Musgrove, illus. by Leo and Diane Dillon  
An alphabet book of African culture that is also a Caldecott Medal winner for picture book art.

**Calaveras Abecedarios: A Day of the Dead Alphabet Book** by Jeanette Winter  
An alphabet book about the Mexican tradition of the celebration of ancestors.
Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
An alphabet book of the harvest of the garden.

The Handmade Alphabet by Laura Rankin

Jambo Means Hello by Muriel Feelings, illus. by Tom Feelings

4. WORDLESS PICTURE BOOKS
Here are some examples of wordless picture books that might fit the theme you are exploring in your Connections program. They can support adults learning English to practice sequencing ideas, to imagine the story, and to write about what they see in the story. These selected wordless picture books and many others tell universal tales for many levels of readers.

The Lion and the Mouse by Jerry Pinkney
Literacy +
Combines the power of the storytelling with the sheer beauty of the drawings.

Mirror by Jeannie Baker
Literacy +
Two families living their daily lives are portrayed in pages side by side, one family from Morocco, one family from Australia.

The Only Child by Guojing
Intermediate – advanced
This story about growing up an only child in China is gripping and a complete short story in length. “Rare is the book containing great emotional depth that truly resonates across a span of ages: this is one such.” — Kirkus Reviews

The Red Book by Barbara Lehman
Beginner +
“Lehman’s story captures the magical possibility that exists every time readers open a book.” School Library Journal

Sidewalk Flowers By JonArno Lawson, illus. by Sydney Smith
Literacy +
“Bright spots of joy and comfort” in a walk in the city with its flowers.

Wolf in the Snow by Matthew Cordell
Literacy +
A story of kindness overcoming fear, a reversal of the classic Little Red Riding Hood.
5. THE POWER OF WORDS – Nobel Peace Prize Winners in Picture Book Biographies
   All are Beginning - Intermediate

Malala Yousafzai, Warrior with Words by Karen Leggett Abouraya, illus. by L.C. Wheatley
The story of the Pakistani girl's fight for the right of girls to go to school is told in brief scenes and collage art.

Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport, illus. by Bryan Collier
Biography of Martin Luther King illustrated with Collier’s watercolor and collage art.

Nelson Mandela by Kadir Nelson
In spare language and dramatic portraits and landscapes, Kadir Nelson brings South Africa's first black head of state to life.

Wangari’s Trees of Peace by Jeannette Winter*
A story of the Kenyan Nobel-Prize-winning environmental activist in an edition that is short and easy to read.

6. ANIMALS MAKE US HUMAN
   various levels

Big Blue Whale by Nicola Davies. Nonfiction.
   Beginner to Intermediate
   An award-winning nonfiction picture book about the largest known animal.

How to Be a Good Creature: A Memoir in Thirteen Animals by Sy Montgomery, illus. by Rebecca Green.
   Memoir. Advanced
   Short personal essays that can be read in the whole or by singling out individual pieces. “A truly beautiful book about life, family, loss, and love.” Temple Grandin, author of Animals Make Us Human.

Tuesday Tucks Me In: The Loyal Bond Between a Soldier and a Service Dog by Luis Carlos Montalvan.
   Picture book nonfiction - Beginner
   A simply told picture-book version of this story of a military veteran and his service dog.

Red and Lulu by Matt Tavares.
   Picture book – Beginner
   A story of New York City in the holidays and two cardinals who are separated and search for each other. Commended for its visual storytelling.

   Biography. Advanced
   The story of Temple Grandin and her experience of autism.
7. TELLING FAMILY STORIES – Various levels (many bilingual)

This collection offers many different styles and models for readers who want to read with pleasure or to explore ways to tell their own stories. We’ve included stories in which writers write in their mother tongue as well as English.

**Artic Memories** by Normee Ekoomiaka (bilingual Inuit and English)
Picture book – **Beginner – All readers**
The author describes the food, the clothes, the games, the language of his childhood in Alaska.

**Brown Girl Dreaming** by Jacqueline Woodson
Memoir in verse – **Advanced**
Woodson, a former National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature, writes a stunning biography in verse of growing up African American with dreams of being a writer.

**Cool Salsa**, edited by Lori M. Carlson (bilingual English and Spanish)
poetry collection – **Intermediate - advanced**
Bilingual poems on growing up Latino in the United States

**Calling the Doves** by Juan Felipe Herrera  (bilingual English and Spanish)
Picture book memoir – **Beginner – All readers**
Juan Felipe’s fond memories of his mother and father and his life on the road as the child of migrant parents.

**Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings** by Margarita Engle
Memoir in verse, **Advanced**
Margarita Engle tells of growing up as a child in two cultures, Cuba and the U.S., during the Cold War. It begins with "Four Years Before I Existed," which could lead to stories and writing with the prompt, "Imagine the day that your parents met."

**How My Parents Learned to Eat** by Ina Freidman, Illus. by Allen Say
Picture book. **Beginner – intermediate**
In Japan, a Japanese woman and Anglo-American man meet and learn to understand each other, especially through culinary traditions. This is a humorous yet realistic picture of two people from different cultures getting to know each other and falling in love.

**Knots on a Counting Rope**, by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault, illus. by Ted Rand
Picture book. **Intermediate +**
A grandfather empowers his grandson with identity and memories, all in dialogue and pictures. Wonderful to read aloud in two voices.

**The Story of a Pumpkin**, by Hari Tiwari, illus. by Dal Rai  (bilingual Nepali and English)
**Beginner – advanced**
The author remembered this tale told by her father when she was a young child. She told the story in her Ascentria ESOL classroom in Laconia in a New Hampshire Humanities folktale project. A childless couple become the parents of a young pumpkin and all goes well until the pumpkin goes in search of a wife. This folktale from Bhutan.
The Sun and Her Flowers by Rupi Kaur
Poetry collection – Advanced
A young Indian-Canadian woman’s very accessible poems about life, love, and identity.

Wild Berries - Pikaci-Minisa by Juliet Flett (bilingual English and Cree)
Picture book – Literacy – All levels
An elegant dual-language picture book. It features a child, a grandmother, and a memory. On each page one key noun is in both English and Cree. Beautiful use of the sound of English and a heritage language. Teachers' resources are here - https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/book/wild-berries

THEMES ABOUT HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, RIGHTS, CITIZENSHIP

8. OUR EARTH
These books explore passions to understand and protect the earth.

Buried Sunlight by Molly Bang and Penny Chisholm
Nonfiction Picture Book – Intermediate +
Molly Bang, creator of many classic stories, has also created books to illustrate climate change. This book, in Bangs’ Sunlight series, illuminates how fossil fuels have changed the earth.

Flotsam by David Wiesner (wordless) *
Wordless picture book. Literacy +
A boy finds an underwater camera washed up on the beach, develops the film, and discovers worlds beyond worlds.

Miss Rumphius by Barbara Cooney
Beginner - Intermediate
Called by a reviewer, “an oasis of calm and beauty.” Themes include the natural world, wisdom, New England, and restoring our earth. Based on an actual “Lupine Lady” in Maine.

Once There Was a Tree by Natalia Romanova, illus. by Gennady Spirin
Beginner – Intermediate
Celebrates the life of a tree and how it supports animals, insects, and humans.

Picture book – Beginner – Intermediate
A tale of growing ecological awareness and grassroots environment activism led by a group of women.
9. THE RIGHT TO BE

Explores questions of rights: rights to make choices in our lives, rights granted by the United States Constitution, rights society grants or withholds, and ways people have advocated for rights.

*If I Only Had a Horn*, by Roxanne Orgill, illustrated by Leonard Jenkins.
Picture book biography – Beginner+
An illustrated biography of Louis Armstrong when he was a boy and longed to play music.

*Georgia in Hawaii* by Amy Novesky, illustrated by Yuyi Morales,
Picture book biography – Beginner+
An illustrated biography of Georgia O’Keeffe on assignment.

*Brown Girl Dreaming*, by Jacqueline Woodson,
Memoir in verse. Advanced

*Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi,
Advanced
A graphic memoir of growing up in Iran during the revolution.

*Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys
Nonfiction – Advanced
“In 1945, World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom...A tribute to the people of Lithuania, Poland, and East Prussia.” Publisher’s summary

*Teammates* by Peter Golenbock, illus. by Paul Bacon
Picture book biography - Intermediate+
Biography of Jackie Robinson with photos and illustrations.
“Golenbock has taken a single moment of baseball history, set it in its social context, and created a simple and moving tribute to courage and brotherhood.”

10. HOW WOMEN WON THE VOTE

The questions around who has the right to vote are paramount in discussions of civics in the United States. In addition to issues of gerrymandering and voting rights, in 2020 the United States will also recognize the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage.

*Heart on Fire: Susan B. Anthony Votes for President* by Ann Malaspina, illus by Steve James. Picture book biography – Beginner+

*Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote* by Tanya Lee Stone, illus by Rebecca Gibbon.
Picture book biography – Beginner+

*Ida B. Wells: Let the Truth Be Told* by Walter Dean Myers, illus. by Bonnie Christensen.
Picture book biography – Beginner+
Not For Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony, a documentary by Ken Burns

Riding Freedom by Pam Munoz Ryan.
Novel - Advanced

You’ll see many more books about women gaining the right to vote with notations about reading levels here: https://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=11827

11. WHAT DOES DEMOCRACY LOOK LIKE?

Ghandi: a March to the Sea by Alice B. McGinty, illus. by Thomas Gonzalez
Intermediate +
Mohandas Gandhi protests British rule in India in a 1930 act of civil disobedience.

Home to Medicine Mountain by Chiori Santiago, illus. by Judith Lowry
Picture book – Intermediate +
Two young boys are sent to government-run Indian boarding schools. The publisher writes, "This is the story of the boys' journey home one summer and the healing power of their culture."

Baseball Saved Us by Ken Mochizuki, illus. by Dom Lee
Picture book – Advanced beginner - Intermediate +
During World War II, a young Japanese-American boy and his family are sent to an internment camp after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Despondent in their desolate surroundings, father and son pull the camp together to build a baseball diamond and form a league.

Sit – In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down by Andrea Pinkney, illus by Brian Pinkney
Intermediate +
A story of the famous Greensboro, NC sit-in at the Woolworth’s lunch counter that launched thousands of sit-ins across the country to bring about an end to segregation.

Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold
Picture book – Beginner +
Two children’s imaginations re-create their world. “There is an air of triumph in Ms. Ringgold’s vision.”
New York Times

Through My Eyes: The Autobiography of Ruby Bridges by Ruby Bridges
Low Intermediate - intermediate
A memoir from the first African American pupil to attend a formerly segregated school in New Orleans in 1960. Excellent prompt for discussion about civil rights and segregation.
12. COMING TO AMERICA

*Auntie Luce’s Talking Paintings* by Francie Latour, illus. by Ken Daley

*Picture book – Beginner +*

A child visits her auntie in Haiti, the country her family left to come to America. Through the aunts paintings, the child learns who she is and about her home country.

*A Different Pond* by Thi Bui.

*Picture book - Beginner +*

A boy cherishes the ritual of fishing with his father.

*Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales

*Picture book – Literacy +*

A Mexican-American mom and her little boy learn English and a love of books when they are welcomed at the public library.

*I was Dreaming to Come to America: Memories from the Ellis Island Oral History Project* by Veronica Lawlor

*Intermediate*

Short oral histories of immigrants coming to America through Ellis Island as children with watercolors by the author.

*The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Pollacco.

*Picture book – Beginner +*

Polacco’s classic story of Russian immigrants to the U.S.

*Joseph’s Big Ride* by Terry Farish.

*Picture book – Beginner +*

In a South Sudanese-American boy’s quest to ride his neighbor’s bike, he unwittingly makes a friend.

*Me and My Fear* by Francesca Sanna

*Picture book – Beginner +*

Sanna shows in images how a young migrant learns to handle her fear.

*The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi.

*Picture book – Beginner +*

A small girl must decide what name she will use in America.

*Peppe the Lamplighter* by Elisa Bartone, illus. by Ted Lewin

*Beginner - Intermediate*

An immigrant family seeks work and self respect in New York City’s Little Italy.

*When Jessie Came Across the Sea* by Amy Hest, illus. by P.J. Lynch.

*Beginner - advance*

Jessie emigrates from Eastern Europe to New York City in the early 1900s.
13. LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

**Baseball Saved Us** by Ken Mochizuki, illus by Dom Lee

**Intermediate**

During World War II, a young Japanese-American boy and his family are sent to an internment camp after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Despondent in their desolate surroundings, father and son pull the camp together to build a baseball diamond and form a league.

**Her Right Foot** by Dave Eggers, illus. by Shawn Harris

**Picture book - Beginner +**

“She’s in New York./ She’s holding a torch./ And she’s in mid-stride…” Eggers on the building and the meaning of the Statue of Liberty.

**The Wall: Growing up Behind the Iron Curtain** by Peter Sis.

**Graphic memoir - Advanced**

Sis writes history from his own memories of growing up in Czechoslovakia during the Cold War.

**Rosa** by Nikki Giovanni, illus. by Bryan Collier

**Intermediate**

This biography of Rosa Parks tells the story of simple act of courage that launched the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

**Sit – In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down** by Andrea Pinkney, illus by Brian Pinkney

**Intermediate**

A story of the famous Greensboro, NC sit-in at the Woolworth’s lunch counter that launched thousands of sit-ins across the country to bring about an end to segregation.

14. HISTORY OF THE US

The history of America in stories, facts, illustrations, and photographs

**Picture Books**

**Baseball Saved Us** by Ken Mochizuki, illus by Dom Lee

**Intermediate**

During World War II, a young Japanese-American boy and his family are sent to an internment camp after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Despondent in their desolate surroundings, father and son pull the camp together to build a baseball diamond and form a league.


**Advanced beginner – intermediate**

A story of the great student and painter of birds. Nonfiction, biography.
*Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Jeanette Winter

**Literacy – advanced beginner**

An imaginative story of the Underground Railroad.

*Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence* by Russell Freedman

**Advanced**

“Freedman takes a crucial moment in American history and imbues it with living grace and powerful tension.” *Booklist*. Nonfiction.

*Johnny Appleseed* by Reeve Lindbergh

**Literacy – Intermediate**

Here, this classic tale is told in verse, with detailed illustrations.

*Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* by Doreen Rappaport, illus. by Bryan Collier

**Advanced beginner – intermediate**

Biography of Martin Luther King illustrated with Collier’s water color and collage art. Biography.

*Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, illus. by Ted Rand

**Pre-Literacy +**

An illustrated telling of the classic poem.

*Night Boat to Freedom* by Margot Theis Raven

**Advanced beginner – low intermediate**

Award-winning illustrated book based on slave narratives collected by the Federal Writers’ Project.

*Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni, illus. by Bryan Collier

**Intermediate**

Biography of Rosa Parks

*Squanto’s Journey* by Joseph Bruchac, illus. by Greg Shed

**Intermediate**

A story of the first Thanksgiving.

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**Novels**

*Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson

**Intermediate**

Set in 1843, a girl leaves her family’s failing farm in Vermont to work in the textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts. 192 pages.

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**15. WORK**

Here is a selection about many aspects of work: families pulling together in times of crisis, entrepreneurs taking pride in their efforts, young people leaving home to make it on their own and, in “Breaker Boys” and “Kids at Work,” a look at the exploitation of child laborers.
**Picture books**

*Breaker Boys* by Michael Burgan with photographs by Lewis Hine  
**Intermediate**  
This book tells the story of young boys who sorted coal in dusty, loud, and dangerous conditions. Many of these breaker boys worked 10 hours a day, six days a week all for as little as 45 cents a day. Child labor was common in the United States in the 19th century. The photographs of Lewis Hine and others brought the harsh working conditions to light.

*Ox-Cart Man* by Donald Hall, illus. by Barbara Cooney  
**Literacy +**  
Hall’s poem with Cooney’s primitive paintings follow the New England seasons through the life of a mid-19th century farmer.

*Peppe the Lamplighter* by Elisa Bartone, illus. by Ted Lewin  
**Beginner - Intermediate**  
An immigrant family seeks work and self respect in New York City’s Little Italy.

*Potato: A Tale from the Great Depression* by Kate Lied, illus. by Lisa Ernst  
**Beginner – intermediate**  
When Dorothy’s father loses his job and cannot find another the family borrows a car and sets off for Idaho where jobs digging potatoes can be found. The author was eight years old when she wrote this family story told to her by her aunt.

*Uncle Jed’s Barbershop* by Margaree King Mitchell  
**Beginner-Intermediate**  
As the only black barber in a county of sharecroppers during the 1920s, Uncle Jed traveled for miles to tend to his customers and dreamed of someday opening his own shop.

**Chapter books and novels**

*Counting on Grace* by Elizabeth Winthrop  
**Intermediate-Advanced**  
1910: At 12, Grace and her best friend Arthur must leave school and go to work as a “doffers” on their mothers’ looms in the mill. Horrified by the working conditions and the very young children they see, they write a secret letter to the Child Labor Board about underage children working in Pownal, Vermont. What happens next changes her sense of herself, her future, and her family’s future.

*Lyddie* by Katherine Patterson  
**Intermediate- Advanced**  
When Lyddie and her younger brother are hired out as servants to help pay off their family's farm debts, Lyddie is determined to find a way to reunite her family once again. Hearing about all the money a girl can make working at the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts, she made her way there, only to find that her dreams of returning home may never come true.
**The Most Beautiful Place in the World** by Ann Cameron
*Intermediate*
In a small, first chapter book, a Guatemalan grandmother and grandson make the boy’s dream to go to school come true. Cameron is a master of spare, emotionally true stories and presents social issues that lead to rich discussions. Themes include education, poverty and child labor.

**Out Of The Dust** by Karen Hess
*Intermediate-Advanced*
This gripping story, written in sparse first-person, free-verse poems, is the compelling tale of Billie Jo’s struggle to survive during the dust bowl years of the Depression. Newbery Medal

**Seedfolks** by Paul Fleischman, illus. by Judy Pedersen
*Intermediate*
A collection of stories of people from around the world who are now neighbors with a common love – growing things in the ground. “Thirteen voices tell one story of the flowering of a Cleveland vacant lot into a neighborhood garden.” Short novel made up of small stories. 70 pages

## 16. NEW HAMPSHIRE STORIES

### Picture Books

**The Bear That Heard Crying** by Natalie Kinsey – Warnock, illus. by Helen Kinsey
*Advanced beginner – intermediate*
Little Sarah Witcher wanders off into the woods and spends a night curled up with a bear! Based on a true NH tale from Colonial times.

**Birches** by Robert Frost, illus. by Ed Young
*Intermediate*
An illustrated telling of Frost’s classic poem evocative of NH settings.

**Christmas Farm** by Mary Lyn Ray, illus. by Barry Root
*Advanced beginner - intermediate*
NH writer and conservationist, Mary Lyn Ray has written this story about growing Christmas trees and a unique friendship. Themes include New Hampshire, holidays, Christmas in New England, Planting the Earth.

**Ox-Cart Man** by Donald Hall, illus. by Barbara Cooney
*Literacy – low intermediate*
Hall’s poem with Cooney’s primitive paintings follow the New England seasons through the life of a mid-19th century farmer.

**A River Ran Wild** by Lynne Cherry
*Intermediate*
Modern-day descendants of the Nashua Indians and European settlers were able to combat pollution and restore the beauty of the Nashua River in Massachusetts.
17. FAMILIES AROUND THE WORLD
Stories of families from Egypt, Guatemala, the U.S., Australia, and more and what families bring with them on their journey from one country to another.

**Picture Books**

*Boundless Grace* by Mary Hoffman, illus. by Caroline Binch
Pre-literacy – advanced beginner
A girl and her grandmother travel to Africa where the girl’s father now lives with a new wife.

*The Day of Ahmed’s Secret* by Florence Parry Heide, illus. by Ted Lewin
Beginner – intermediate
Set in Cairo, the story and illustrations recreate the sound, scent, and images of the city. “Life goes on in the hectic, noisy cities of the world regardless of a day’s news and yet, the boundless energy and promise of youth reinforce the ideal that anything is possible. Ahmed’s story is a joyful celebration of that spirit.” - *School Library Journal*.

*The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant, illus. by Stephen Gammell
Advanced Beginner
Story of a joyous, summer family party in the American south.

*When I Was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant, illus. by Diane Goode
Pre-literacy – advanced beginner
Memories of growing up in Appalachia. *Caldecott Honor*

**Chapter Books and Novels**

*The Most Beautiful Place in the World* by Ann Cameron.
Intermediate
In a small, first chapter book, a Guatemalan grandmother and grandson make the boy’s dream to go to school come true. Cameron is a master of spare, emotionally true stories and presents social issues that lead to rich discussions. Themes include education, poverty and child labor. 64 pages.

*Habibi* by Naomi Shihab Nye
High intermediate – Advanced
An American girl moves with her family to Palestine and into the Arab heritage of her father’s family in this novel of reaching out across cultures and divides. Themes include cross cultural families and peace-building. 272 pages.

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
Advanced/HiSet
Short adult novel in small chapters. Cisneros writes about growing up in a Latino family. Themes include identity, immigrant neighborhoods, home, living in two cultures, courage. 110 pages.

**18. FOLK TALES**

Folk tales are often short, on universal themes, and can stimulate storytelling and cross-cultural discussion.

**Picture Books**

*How the Stars Fell into the Sky, a Navajo Legend* retold by Jerry Oughton, illus by Lisa Desimini

**Beginner – advanced beginner**

What is the best place to write the laws for all to see? An enchanting tale with stunning illustrations.

*The Story of a Pumpkin*, by Hari Tiwari, illus. by Dal Rai *NH Author and illustrator, published by the New Hampshire Humanities.*

**Advanced beginner – intermediate**

A childless couple become the parents of a young pumpkin and all goes well until the pumpkin goes in search of a wife. A bilingual folktale from Bhutan in English and Nepali.

*Strega Nona*, by Tomie De Paola *Award-winning NH Author/Illustrator and featured speaker at the Connections 2015 family literacy event*

**Advanced beginner**

A "Grandma Witch," a magic pot and a curious, hungry attendant make for disaster! This classic tale has many counterparts from around the world.

*The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks*, by Katherine Paterson, illus. by D. and L. Dillon

**Advanced beginner – intermediate**

A beautiful mandarin duck is captured and caged by a greedy lord who wants to show off the bird's magnificent plumage. When the kitchen maid releases the bird against her lord's command, she and the one-eyed servant, Shozo, are sentenced to death. The grateful bird intends to return their kindness, but can he outsmart the cruel lord?

**Folktale Selections from the International Children’s Digital Library**

*www.childrenslibrary.org*

The International Children’s Digital Library is a free online library for children and other learners around the world. The library is comprised of scanned images of actual books (many are out of print) and the illustrations are stunning. Many of the books have text in multiple languages. A projector and large screen or blank wall will be necessary for viewing. These books cannot be downloaded, but can be viewed as many times as you wish. Students can learn how to access the site and read a book at home with their children in English or their native language. *Connections* facilitators will plan discussion topics, activities and supplementary materials as usual. There can be many advantages to viewing and reading a story together in this way.

**Digital Picture Books from ICDL**
*The Farmer’s Wife*, by Idries Shah, illus. by Rosemary Santiago (ICDL)
**Advanced Beginner**
A farmer’s wife tries to retrieve an apple from a hole in the ground. Read to learn how she solves her problem.

*The Hunterman and the Crocodile* by Baba Wague Diakite (ICDL)
**Advanced Beginner – Intermediate**
A hunter and a crocodile take turns being captive and captor in a humorous folktale that teaches the importance of living in harmony with nature and is illustrated with ceramic-tile paintings.

*A Man Called Raven* by Richard Van Camp (ICDL)
**Low Intermediate**
A mysterious man tells two Indian brothers why they must not hurt the ravens that pester them.

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19. **JOURNEYS**
Imagine the many kinds of journeys. How can journeys change the course of a life?

*Picture Books*

*Grandfather’s Journey* by Allen Say
**Advanced beginner – low intermediate**
A man lives in two cultures, and when he is in one, he yearns for the other.

*Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen, illus. by John Schoenherr
**Literacy – low intermediate**
A father and his little girl follow the call of the owl through the woods on a winter night. Poem.

*What You Know First* by Patricia MacLachlan, illus. by Barry Moser.
**Intermediate +**
Set in the U.S. during the Depression, the story captures the universal emotions of leaving a place one loves.

*Chapter Books and Novels*

*Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
**Intermediate**
A courageous girl must move from Mexico to work among the farm laborers in California during the Great Depression. 262 pages.

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20. **ART AS POWER**
The transformative power of art, music and imagination
Picture Books

*Celia Cruz* by Veronica Chambers, illus. by Julie Maren
*Advanced beginner – intermediate*
The story of the famous Cuban singer and how she becomes the “Queen of Salsa.”

*Frederick* by Leo Lionni
*Literacy – beginner*
Frederick the mouse reveals the power of poems.

*The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco
*Beginner - intermediate*
From a basket of old clothes, an immigrant mother from Russia makes a quilt and connects her family to home.

*Harold and the Purple Crayon* by Crockett Johnson
*Literacy +*
Follow Harold’s imagination as he draws his world and walks into it.

*Max Found Two Sticks* by Brian Pinkney
*Literacy – beginner*
A boy finds two sticks and day dreams himself into a world of percussion.

*Silent Music: a Story of Bagdad* by James Rumford*
*Intermediate*
A boy uses skill at calligraphy to express himself as his country is enveloped in war. Beautiful illustrations.

*Symphony of Whales* by Steve Schuch, illus. by Peter Sylvada
*Intermediate +*
Whales stranded near the Bering Strait respond to the sounds of classical music and follow the music to the open sea.

*Wabi Sabi* by Mark Reibstein, illus. by Ed Young.
*Advanced beginner – intermediate*
This picture book explores the Japanese idea of wabi sabi - beauty in that which is simple, natural, and imperfect - and haikus, the 17-syllable poem.

Chapter book

*The Hundred Dresses* by Eleanor Estes
*Chapter book Intermediate +*
A timeless story for all ages about prejudice, personal choice, art, and defining one's own identity.
96 pages