

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.

Alexander, Robert – *The Romanov Bride*.

Pavel, a vengeance-seeking villager, joins an underground group that assassinates the grand duke of Russia, irrevocably affecting the life purpose of his widow, Elisavyeta. (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)

Barry, Brunonia – *The Lace Reader*.

Having left her hometown of Salem, Massachusetts, fifteen years ago under troubling circumstances, Towner Whitney reluctantly returns after her eighty-five-year old great-aunt Eva suddenly disappears. The ending will really surprise you.

Berry, Steve – *The Romanov Prophecy*.

After the Russian people vote to bring back the Tsar, to be chosen from the distant relatives of Nicholas II, attorney Miles Lord heads for Moscow to perform a background check on one of the candidates, but his assignment turns unexpectedly dangerous.

Binchy, Maeve - *Copper Beech*.

The copper beech tree in the quaint town of Shancarrig holds the secrets of the town.

Bradford, Barbara Taylor – *A Sudden Change of Heart*.

Steeped in the exciting world of art and interior design, Bradford's tale includes art collecting, repatriation of art stolen by the Nazi's, romance and sorrow.

Brennert, Alan – *Honolulu*.

Journeying to 1914 Hawaii as a mail-order bride, Korean-born Jin finds her hopes devastated by the realities of a rushed marriage to a bitter laborer; a situation throughout which she works to overcome limited opportunities. (Historical)

Brooks, Geraldine – *Year of Wonders*.

Young Anna Frith, a vicar's maid, is faced with the loss of her family, the disintegration of her local community, and a passionate, illicit love as she and her village confront the horrors of the plague, in a historical novel based on real-life events in seventeenth-century England. (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)

Chevalier, Tracy – *The Girl With a Pearl Earring*.

Sixteen-year-old Griet becomes a servant in the household of the 17th century Dutch painter Vermeer after an accident blinds her father and he can no longer make a living. (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)

Delinsky, Barbara – *Lake News*.

Lily Blake returns to her home town of Lake Henry, New Hampshire after a fabricated story about a love affair between she and a famous cardinal.

Diamant, Anita – *The Red Tent*.

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

Doctorow, E.L. – *World's Fair*.

This story, told by the young son of a poor Bronx family in the 1930s culminates in a visit to the New York World's Fair in 1939. (Historical)

Dunant, Sarah – *The Birth of Venus*.

The history of Renaissance Florence is brought to life through the voice of Alessandra in this absorbing story of love, art, religion and power. (Historical)

Dunn, Jane – *Elizabeth and Mary*

A dual portrait of England's Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots documents their complex relationship, different characteristics, and ideals, and discusses their reigns, power struggle, and influence on British history. (Nonfiction)

Edgerton, Clyde – *Where Trouble Sleeps.*

Evil comes to Listre, North Carolina in the 1950s in the form of a stranger with a pencil thin mustache and trunk full of dirty movies.

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.

Essex, Karen – *Leonardo's Swans*

Essex offers another meticulously researched fictional biography, this time moving to war-torn 15th-century Italy to document the lives of the noble d'Este sisters, who make politically advantageous marriages. (Historical)

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)

Finney, Jack – *Time and Again.*

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

Gerritsen, Tess – *The Mephisto Club.*

Boston Medical Examiner Maura Isles is summoned to the scene of a brutal killing and teams up with Detective Jane Rizzoli to investigate the victim's ties to Joyce O'Donnell, a cantankerous psychologist, and to a sinister cabal called the Mephisto Club. (Mystery)

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, Phillipa – *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)

Harris, Robert – *Pompeii.*

With detailed examination of time, place, and circumstance, Harris brings to life first-century Pompeii and its surroundings. A straight-arrow Imperial Roman hydraulic engineer on assignment in Naples plumbs into the corruption of the waterworks as Vesuvius begins to rumble. (Historical)

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)

Holman, Sheri – *The Dress Lodger*.

In this novel set in London during the Industrial Revolution, a young prostitute borrows a blue dress to attract a higher class of client and is shadowed by an evil old woman hired by the dress' owner to keep an eye on her. (Historical)

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)

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.

Jakes, John – *Savannah*.

As Sherman's army marches from Atlanta to the sea in 1864, the city of Savannah lies directly in its path, threatening the livelihood of Widow Sara Lester and her twelve-year-old daughter Hattie, who struggle to save the family plantation. (Historical)

James, P. D. – *The Murder Room*.

Commander Adam Dalgliesh and his team investigate the murder of a trustee of the Dupayne, a small private London museum locked in a battle over its future, and find their probe complicated by a second corpse. (Mystery)

Junger, Sebastian. *Perfect Storm*.

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

Kent, Kathleen – *Heretic's Daughter*.

A family's conflict becomes a battle for life and death in this gripping and original first novel based on family history from a descendant of a condemned Salem witch. (Historical)

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.

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)

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)

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.

Lescroart, John – *Suspect*.

When Dr. Caryn Dryden is found floating dead in her hot tub, her husband becomes the prime suspect. Gina Roake takes the case and feels her client's innocence will be easy to prove since he was at his cabin on Echo Lake that weekend. She was wrong. (Mystery)

Lippman, Laura – *What the Dead Know*.

Interviewing a distressed and disoriented woman who has fled the scene of an accident, Baltimore County police department detective Kevin Infante is amazed when she claims to be the younger of a pair of sisters who were abducted thirty years earlier. (Mystery)

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 chosen 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)

Martini, Steve. *The Arraignment.*
Defense attorney Paul Madriani investigates the murder of a friend Nick Rush, while helping his friend's widow collect an insurance policy made out to Nick's ex-wife.

Mosse, Kate – *Sepulchre.*
The stories of two women separated by more than a century are brought together by a series of visions that are related to the tarot and a small church, known as a Sepulchre in the grounds of the Domaine de la Cade.

Oufkir, Malika – *Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail.*
The daughter of a former aide to the king of Morocco, who was executed after a failed assassination attempt on the ruler, describes how she, her five siblings, and her mother were imprisoned in a desert penal colony for twenty years. (Nonfiction)

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.

Patterson, James – *Honeymoon.*
When a young investment banker dies under suspicious circumstances, FBI agent John O'Hara pursues a suspicion that the victim's beautiful bride is responsible. (Mystery)

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)

Pickard, Nancy – *The Virgin of Small Plains.*
Seventeen years after the discovery of a female murder victim near Small Plains, Kansas, the girl's grave has become the source of strange miracles and legends, until the return of prodigal son Mitch Newquist threatens to bring old secrets to light.

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.

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.

Rubinfeld, Jeb – *Interpretation of Murder*.

In 1909, as a sadistic killer stalks Manhattan's wealthiest heiresses, Sigmund Freud is called in by American analyst Dr. Stratham Younger to assist him in interviewing Nora Acton, a hysterical survivor of the killer who can recall nothing about the attack. (Mystery)

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)

Steinbeck, John – *The Red Pony*.

The Red Pony tells the story of a young boy raising a sorrel colt on his father's California ranch. (copies only)

Swanson, James – *Manhunt: The Twelve-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer*.

A fascinating and vivid account of the escape of John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln's assassin, takes readers along on the intensive search from the streets of Washington, D.C., through the swamps of Maryland, into the forests of Virginia, and into the lives of the men who pursued him. (Nonfiction)

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)

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.

Vreeland, Susan – *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*.

A series of stories depicts the life and times of “Girl in Hyacinth Blue,” a painting by Vermeer that surfaces after being hidden for fifty years.

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.