

**Recommended Multicultural Reading List**  
**For Grades 5-12**

**Developed by the Literacy Coalition of the  
Duval County Public Schools and Jacksonville Public Library  
to develop the love of reading**

**Books available from the Jacksonville Public Library Collection**

**2007-2008**

Title	Author	Lexile Level	Synopsis
<p><b>A Picnic in October</b></p> <p>Published date: September 2004</p>	Eve Bunting	310	In their annual visit to Liberty Island, an Italian-American family tells of their immigration to America, their gratitude at arriving to New York City, and their respect for the freedom represented by the Statue of Liberty.
<p><b>The Girl Who Spun Gold</b></p> <p>Published date: August 2000</p>	Virginia Hamilton	360	A West Indian version of "Rumpelstiltskin" told in the rhythmic West Indian dialect and represented by opulent illustrations.
<p><b>Tree of Cranes</b></p> <p>Published date: October 1991</p>	Allen Say	470	A Japanese boy's mother folds delicate silver cranes from origami paper to decorate the his very first Christmas tree.
<p><b>Story of Jumping Mouse</b></p> <p>Published date: May 1989</p>	John Steptoe	500	A compassionate mouse is given the gift of powerful hind legs from a generous frog. The mouse helps many animals and is rewarded for his goodness and kindness in this Native American legend.
<p><b>The Desert is Theirs</b></p> <p>Published date: April 1997</p>	Byrd Baylor	520	Wonderful descriptions of the plants and animals of the desert, the Native Americans who live there and the secrets they know about the desert that no one else knows!
<p><b>Her Seven Brothers</b></p> <p>Published date: September 1993</p>	Paul Goble	520	This story is a Native American legend about the origin of the Big Dipper.
<p><b>Cendrillon</b></p> <p>Published date: January 2002</p>	Robert San Souci	540	A Caribbean version of Cinderella tale, told with the lyrical cadences of French and Creole words.

<b>Borreguita and the Coyote</b>  Published date: January 1998	Verna Aardema	560	The Coyote wants to eat the little lamb in this Mexican folk tale. The story shows how the lamb tricks the big coyote using his intellect.
<b>The Boy of the Three Year Nap</b>  Published date: October 1993	Diane Snyder	610	A Japanese tale of a wise mother determined to change her son's lazy habits as she uses his own trick to avoid work to her own advantage.
<b>Jambo Means Hello</b>  Published date: July 1992	Muriel Feelings	640	This Swahili alphabet book introduces the reader to a different language and culture. Each of the twenty-four letters is represented by a Swahili word. Illustrations are outstanding.
<b>Zlata's Diary</b>  Published date: February 2006	Zlata Filipovic	640	Zlata, who begins her diary at the age of eleven, has been described as the Anne Frank of Sarajevo. This diary, written from 1991 to 1993 tells the story of the Bosnian War in Sarajevo.
<b>The Gold Cadillac</b>  Published date: February 1998	Mildred Taylor	650	Two black girls living in the North take a trip to the South and encounter racial prejudice for the first time.
<b>Grandfather's Journey</b>  Published date: January 2002	Allen Say	650	The author, a Japanese American man, tells of his grandfather's journey to America and the feelings of being torn by a love for two different countries.
<b>Francie</b>  Published date: October 1999	Karen English	660	Growing up in Alabama in the 1940's, Francie Weaver is the 12-year-old heroine. She is a black girl in the South encountering obstacles. She tutors a sixteen-year-old boy accused of murder.
<b>Eagle Song</b>  Published date: March 1999	Joseph Bruchac	680	After moving from a Mohawk reservation to Brooklyn, New York, eight-year-old Danny Bigtree encounters stereotypes about his Native American heritage.

<b>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</b>  Published date: March 1987	John Steptoe	720	A tale from Zimbabwe, which is a variation of Cinderella. Manyara and Nyasha, the sisters, both vie for the royal crown. The kind sister wins.
<b>In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson</b>  Published date: October 1986	Betty Boa Lord	730	A young Chinese girl moves to Brooklyn where she becomes Americanized at school, in her apartment building, and by her love for baseball.
<b>Kira-Kira</b>  Published date: December 2006	Cynthia Kadohata	740	Set in rural Georgia during the late 1950s and early 1960s, this story tells of two Japanese-American sisters growing up in rural Georgia. Despair darkens the close friendship of these two sisters when one sister becomes terminally ill.
<b>Legend of the Bluebonnet</b>  Published date: April 1996	Tomie dePaola	740	This Indian legend tells how a little girl's sacrifice resulted in the wild flowers of Texas. The bluebonnet became the Texas state flower.
<b>Esperanza Rising</b>  Published Date: June 2002	Pam Ryan	750	Esperanza is from a Mexican family of wealth and privilege. Her life changes dramatically as she and her mother go to work in Southern California where they encounter great hardships on the eve of the depression.
<b>Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears</b>  Published date: August 1992	Verna Aardema	770	A West African tale involving a chain of events that upsets all the animals in the jungle. It begins with an outrageous tale and ends with all the animals realizing mosquito is to blame.
<b>Rechenka's Eggs</b>  Published date: March 1996	Patricia Polacco	780	Babushka rescues an injured goose. The goose, Rechenka, breaks painted eggs prepared for a Ukrainian festival. The goose lays eggs to replace the broken ones and they are miraculously colored eggs.

<b>Winter People</b> Published date: October 2004	Joseph Bruchac	800	As the French and Indian War rages in October of 1759, Saxso, a fourteen-year-old Abenaki boy, pursues the English rangers who have attacked his village and taken his mother and sisters hostage.
<b>One Grain of Rice</b> Published date: April 1997	Demi	830	An Indian tale in which a clever girl tricks a wicked raja into sharing the rice he was hoarding.
<b>Becoming Naomi Leon</b> Published date: October 2005	Pam Ryan	830	Naomi and little brother, Owen, live with their Gram. Their mother who abandoned them resurfaces after seven years and wants to take them back. The story of Naomi's efforts to avoid her mother and her journey to Mexico in search of her father is very moving.
<b>Legend of the Indian Paintbrush</b> Published date: April 1996	Tomie dePaola	840	A young Indian boy, Little Gopher, cannot perform like the other boys. He has a vision of becoming an artist and does in fact paint a master work—the sunset.
<b>Dragonwings</b> Published date: August 1975	Laurence Yep	870	The story of a young Chinese boy who joins his father in San Francisco and helps him realize his dream of making a flying machine.
<b>When Clay Sings</b> Published date: April 1987	Byrd Baylor	880	The daily life and customs of prehistoric southwest Indian tribes are retraced from the designs on the remains of their pottery.
<b>The Lotus Seed</b> Published date: February 1997	Sherry Garland	880	A young Vietnamese girl takes a lotus seed from the Imperial Garden. Years later, her grandson plants it in his garden--where it blooms again.
<b>Jesse</b> Published date: October 2006	Gary Soto	900	This young adult novel is about two brothers of Mexican heritage. They hope college will help them get good jobs and escape physical labor.

<b>The Keeping Quilt</b>  Published date: July 1998	Patricia Polacco	920	A quilt was made from items brought from Russia by Patricia Polacco's great grandmother. The quilt was passed down to future generations and used for many different purposes and celebrations, which are documented in the book. The quilt is a symbol of love and tradition in the family.
<b>Harlem Summer</b>  Published date: March 2007	Walter Dean Myers	930	Summer, 1925 and Harlem is hot for sixteen-year-old Mark Purvis. All Mark wants is a chance to wail on his saxophone and impress Fats, Harlem's own piano-playing musical giant. Fats offers Mark another opportunity first, a simple little delivery job for some fast cash. Too bad the cold-blooded gangster Dutch Schultz was in on the deal and wants his money from Mark...or else!
<b>Bud, Not Buddy</b>  Published date: September 2004	Christopher Paul Curtis	950	Bud is a 10-year-old African-American orphan living in Michigan during the Depression-era. He yearns to find the famed jazz musician, Herman E. Calloway, to determine if Calloway is indeed his long lost father. A story of grim and harsh conditions punctuated with an aura of hope and optimism.
<b>Ana's Story: A Journey of Hope</b>  Published date: September 2007	Jenna Bush	970	The story of a seventeen year old young mother who is HIV-positive. Although Ana has lost her mother, father, and youngest sister to AIDS, her life is one of strength and determination as she struggles to make a brighter future for herself and her child. Based on Jenna Bush's UNICEF work in Latin America and the Caribbean.
<b>Gandhi</b>  Published date: September 2001	Demi	980	The story of Gandhi, born in India in 1869, who grew up to become one of the most influential and well-respected political and social leaders of the world.
<b>Saladin: Nobel Prince of Islam</b>  Published date: August 2002	Diane Stanley	990	This book is for young adults. It is the story of a young boy who becomes a brilliant warrior. This hero longed for peace and became a model for his time.
<b>Confucius</b>  Published date: September 2002	Russell Freedman	1080	The story of Confucius who went from poverty to the top of the ruling class is documented. He then quit his post and became a philosopher. It tells of his ideas and influence on the world.

<p><b>Tikki Tikki Tembo</b></p> <p>Published date: March 1968</p>	<p>Arlene Mosel</p>	<p>1090</p>	<p>In this Chinese folktale a boy falls into a well. Getting the child help took a long time because of the fascination with his name.</p>
<p><b>In the Days of the Vaqueros</b></p> <p>Published date: October 2001</p>	<p>Russell Freedman</p>	<p>1180</p>	<p>Mexican vaqueros perfected skills which they taught American cowboys. They rounded up cattle and brought down steers. Cowboys copied their techniques and clothing among other things. Russell Freedman explains their important role.</p>