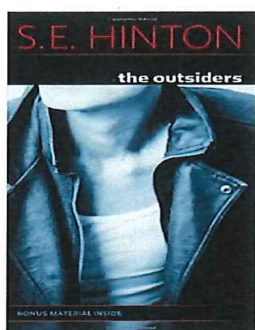


IDENTITY

LITERATURE CIRCLE NOVELS

Below is a list of young adult novels dealing with concept of "Identity". These novels can be used in any Identity themed Literature Circle unit. It is strongly suggested that you read each of the books you plan to use for your Literature Circles before you begin the assignment with you class; this will help you choose books with content appropriate for the grades you teach, help you assess reading levels, and enable you to fully participate in group discussions. Some of the books have content that is quite realistic and heavy - you will want to preview each book before hand to make sure it is suitable for the grade you teach. The descriptions below can help you describe the books to your students during book talks.

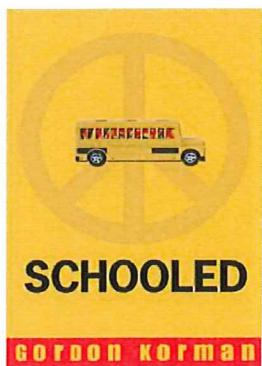
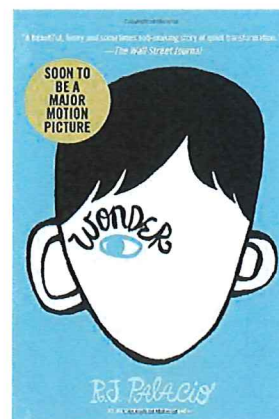


The Outsiders - S.E. Hinton

No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he's got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends-true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on "greasers" like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect-until the night someone takes things too far.

Wonder - R.J. Palacio

August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid-but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. Wonder begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance.



Schooled - Gordon Korman

Since he was little, Capricorn Anderson's only experience has been living on a farm commune and being home-schooled by his hippie grandmother. But, when she falls out of a tree, Cap is forced to move in with a guidance counselor and her cranky teen daughter and attend the local middle school. While Cap knows a lot about tie-dying and Zen Buddhism, no education could prepare him for the politics of public school. Once Zack Powers, big man on campus, spots Cap, he can't wait to introduce him to the age-old tradition at C-Average: the biggest nerd is nominated for class president-and wins.

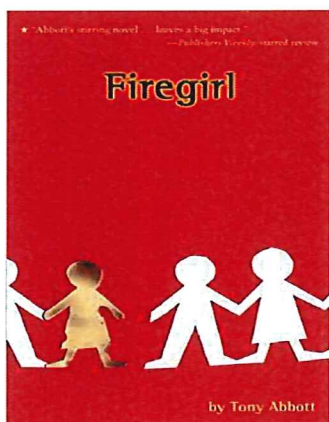
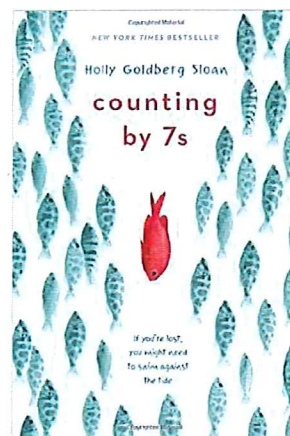


Ungifted - Gordon Korman

Donovan is definitely skilled . . . at getting into trouble. And when one of his thoughtless pranks accidentally destroys the school gym during the Big Game, with the superintendent watching, he knows he's in for it. Suspension at best, maybe expulsion. Either way, a lawsuit and paying for damages. But through a strange chain of events, his name gets put on the list for the local school for gifted students: the Academy for Scholastic Distinction. Donovan knows he's not a genius, but he can't miss this chance to escape. Now, he has to figure out a way to stay at ASD - and fit in with the kids there. And who knows, maybe his real gift will come to light...

Counting by 7s - Holly Goldberg Sloan

Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read.

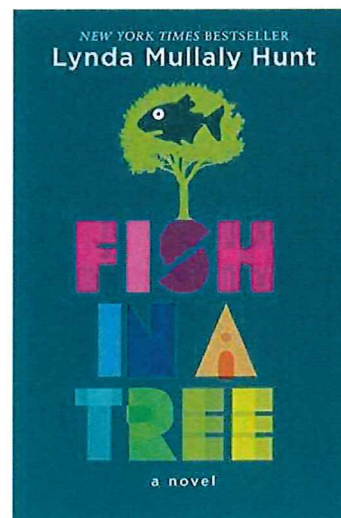


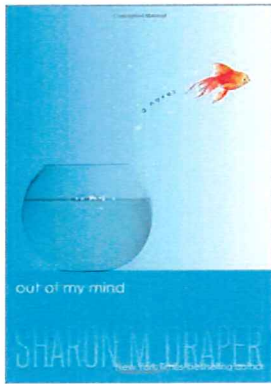
Firegirl - Tony Abbott

Tom's a normal seventh-grader, negotiating a slightly prickly stage in his long friendship with Jeff. The arrival of new girl Jessica Feeney, however, changes everything; Jessica, who is attending a local hospital for treatment, has been badly burned by a fire, and her terrible disfigurement shocks the class into confusion. This isn't the usual book about adjustment to difference; instead, Abbott brilliantly explores the kids' struggle to manage the intrusion of abnormality in their lives...this is a thoughtful exploration of a brief interlude's lasting impact.

Fish in a Tree - Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike.



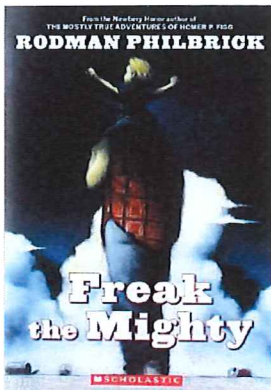
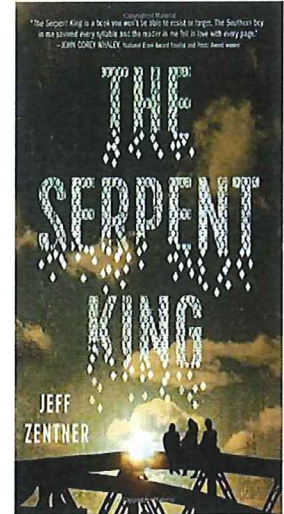


Out of My Mind - Sharon M. Draper

Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her and smarter than her classmates in her integrated classroom—the very same classmates who dismiss her as mentally challenged, because she cannot tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy. And she's determined to let everyone know it...somehow.

The Serpent King - Jeff Zentner

Dillard Early, Jr., Travis Bohannon and Lydia Blankenship are three friends from different walks of life who have one thing in common: none of them seem to fit the mold in rural Tennessee's Forrestville High. Dill has always been branded as an outsider due to his family heritage as snake handlers and poison drinkers, an essential part of their Pentecostal faith. But after his father is sent to prison for sexual abuse of a young parishioner, Dill and his mother become real pariahs. As the three friends begin their senior year, it becomes clear that they won't all be getting to start a promising new life after graduation. How they deal with their diverging paths could cause the end of their friendship. A shattering act of random violence forces Dill to wrestle with his dark legacy and find a way into the light of a future worth living.

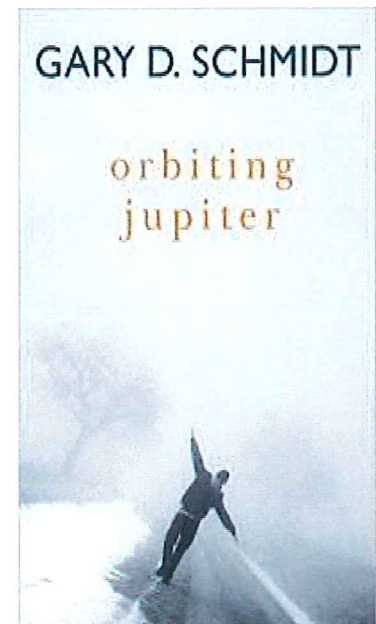


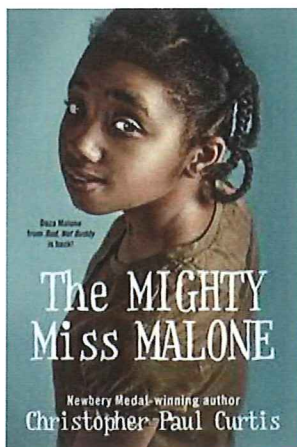
Freak the Mighty - Rodman Philbrick

The heartwrenching story of two "special ed" boys who pair up to form a unique and empowering friendship. Two boys, a slow learner stuck in the body of a teenage giant and a tiny Einstein in leg braces, forge a unique friendship when they pair up to create one formidable human force.

Orbiting Jupiter - Gary D. Schmidt

Everyone at Jack's school thinks his new foster brother, Joseph, is trouble. They say he got kicked out of his last school for beating up a teacher. They also say he is angry, mean and prone to violence, but Jack sees him differently. At Jack's family farm Joseph has to help with all the chores since he is a new member of the household. Joseph doesn't know much, but he seems to be trying and he never gives up or complains. Jack is patient with Joseph and eventually Joseph opens up and shares his secret; he is a father, and all he can think about is getting back to see his baby, Jupiter.





The Mighty Miss Malone - Christopher Paul Curtis

Deza lives with her parents and her older brother, Jimmie, in Gary, Indiana. It is 1936, and even though her parents are both hardworking people, the Depression has taken its toll on their family. Her father lost his job a while back and even though he is always looking for work there is just nothing to be found. Deza makes her family proud because she is the gets the highest marks in her class and does her best to keep her brother in line as well. It is a good thing she is mighty, because their family is put through the wringer; it seems like whatever can go wrong does go wrong, and the question is: is Deza tough enough to help her family make through the terrible trials of the Depression?

Pax - Sara Pennypacker

Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a kit. But one day, the unimaginable happens: Peter's dad enlists in the military and makes him return the fox to the wild. At his grandfather's house, three hundred miles away from home, Peter knows he isn't where he should be—with Pax. He strikes out on his own despite the encroaching war, spurred by love, loyalty, and grief, to be reunited with his fox. Meanwhile Pax, steadfastly waiting for his boy, embarks on adventures and discoveries of his own. . . .

