

Top Shelf Fiction

Recommended by readers at Marshall Middle School

Novels:

Estrella's Quinceañera by Malin Alegria.

- Estrella just wants to have a normal Quinceañera, but when her mother brings out the bright orange dress that she has to wear, Estrella knows she's in for trouble. She has to find a way to make her mom happy, her father proud, and her friends included without giving up her special day.

Twilight (Series) by Stephanie Meyer.

- Now a hit movie, *Twilight* tells the dramatic love story between human Bella and Edward, the hunky vampire who has redeemed himself by abstaining from drinking human blood. Packed with all the beautiful, aching, obsessive emotion teenagers know as falling in love.

Kiki Strike (Series) by Kirsten Miller.

- Kiki and Ananka explore NYC through a mysterious series of underground tunnels, finding all sorts of trouble along the way. Lots of action, tips on fashion, and fun teen attitude.

Gym Candy by Carl Deuker.

- Mick, A high school football player has dream of playing for the NFL, and decided he has to take steroids to get there. This book shows the effects steroids can have on your health as well as your family, and in the end, Mick realizes how big of a mistake he has made.

The Lightning Thief (Series) by Rick Riordan.

- Percy Jackson just doesn't fit in, then he discovers why: he is descended directly from the Greek gods, and retains traces of their power. Along with a group of similarly powered friends, Percy takes on monsters, evil deities, and sticky camp counselors.

Peak by Roland Smith.

- Peak is a bad kid, but is up for any adventure, from the opening scene, where Peak gets nabbed by the US Air Force climbing to the top of a NYC skyscraper, the action keeps right on going as Peak and his shady father attempt to climb mount Everest. Great survival tale, but with complex characters and relationships.

Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick.

- For the kid who isn't so into dragons, wizards, or vampire love stories, this story will make 'em cry. Steven is a normal teenager, until his annoying younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia and his family falls apart. A wonderful book that will pierce even the toughest teen 'tude.

Great Series!

These are must have series for any urban library. Relevant settings, characters the kids can identify with, and very accessible reading levels make these books among our most popular.

- **Bluford High** (Various Authors). Titles include ***A Matter of Trust***, ***The Bully***, ***Blood is Thicker***, and ***Brothers in Arms***. Features both male and female high-school characters, mainly African American and Hispanic.
- **Orca Soundings** (Various Authors). Titles include ***Lockdown***, ***Grind***, and ***Juice***. Features both male and female characters of varying ages and ethnicities. Some books in this series may be for more mature readers; please review content for your library.

Graphic Novels:

Kids all ask for them, but many librarians just don't know where to start! These series are appropriate for middle school readers and extremely popular, without being literary "junk food."

- ***Runaways*** from Marvel Comics. Who doesn't love a beautifully drawn story about superhero teens on a mission to take down their evil villain parents?
- ***Usagi Yojimbo*** by Stan Sakai. Affectionately called the Samurai Bunny in our Library, this is a meandering tale about a young warrior in feudal Japan. There may be some violence, as he is, after all, a Samurai.
- ***The Dreaming*** (Series) by Queenie Chan. A mysterious set of twin girls haunt a dark and creaky private school, appearing to the newly arrived students.
- ***Amulet*** by Kazu Kibuishi. Volume one was a huge hit; we're eagerly awaiting the second installment of this beautifully drawn story about two kids who move into an eerie new house and fall into mystery, monsters and dangerous mission.
- ***Bone*** (Series) by Jeff Smith. A goofy set of characters each are on a journey to find Boneville, after being separated in a vast forest. Along the way they meet danger, laughs, and even a little love.