



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTRODUCING CUSTOM BOOK LISTS FOR KIDS, A NEW ONLINE BOOK RECOMMENDATION SERVICE FOR CHILDREN FROM HENRICO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Just in time for winter break, HCPL is offering convenient online book recommendations for children in grade 6 and below, with an emphasis on engaging reluctant readers.

Henrico County Public Library (HCPL) is pleased to announce Custom Book Lists for Kids, an online book recommendation service for children and their parents. The service allows parents and caregivers to fill out an online form to receive personalized book recommendations from HCPL librarians within one week. The Custom Book Lists curated by our librarians will contain links to the library's catalog where users can place items on hold, meaning patrons will not need to make a trip to the library until their book is available. E-book and E-audiobook users can get expert recommendations and start reading anywhere they have an internet connection. While HCPL anticipates getting requests mainly from parents and caregivers who are looking for a little help finding that perfect book for their child, the library also welcomes kid-initiated requests. Librarians are launching this service in anticipation of the holidays, when busy families may need to stock up on reading materials for trips and entertainment on winter break days.

HCPL debuted online book recommendations two years ago with the Teen 3 Books 4 Me service, and began offering Custom Book Lists for Adults last spring. Custom Book Lists for Kids builds off the successes of those services, while incorporating new features designed to best serve children and their caregivers. For example, Custom Book Lists for Kids focuses on making recommendations based on developmentally appropriate practices. The online form asks questions about the particular child's age, grade, and interest in order to identify books that will be appropriate for their reading level. Librarians understand and are trained to work with the great variety in reading ability among children, and HCPL staff will use their expertise in combination with information collected through the online form to match each child with books they can successfully enjoy.

Another important feature of Custom Book Lists for Kids is that it serves not only avid readers, but aims to find materials suitable for reluctant readers as well. The online form for Custom Book Lists for Kids includes a section where parents whose children do not like to read, or do not read often, can list their child's favorite TV shows, movies, hobbies, and interests so that librarians can make suggestions for engaging reading materials. Parents and caregivers can use this service to get book ideas to share with their child, without traveling to the library and being put on the spot in front of a librarian. A major goal of this program is to help young reluctant readers get interested in reading, and offering access to librarians' expertise, without the need to visit the library, can help children and their parents do that.

Custom Book Lists for Kids is intended to help children from birth to grade 5 grow their love of books and reading with fun recommendations, matching the individual child with a personalized list of books. If a child needs help finding books for a homework assignment or if a teacher needs help finding books for their class, a phone call or visit to the library is more appropriate.

You can find Custom Book Lists for Kids at henricolibrary.org/recommendations.

For more information on this topic, contact Patty Conway: pconway@henricolibrary.org / 804.501.1906

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