
GOOD TO KNOW! - Kits check out for a total of 6 weeks.

All kits contain 8 regular print copies and supplement discussion materials. Some kits may also include 1 large print edition and 1 audiobook on CD edition, where available. Please review each kit's inventory tag to make sure all kit materials are included when checking out and returning.

****The Anxious Generation: how the great rewiring of childhood is causing an epidemic of mental illness.*** A Wall Street Journal Top 10 Book of 2024 • A Washington Post Notable Book • A New York Times Notable Book • The Goodreads Choice Award Nonfiction Book of the Year (non-fiction child development) by Jonathan Haidt – Kit includes 10 copies of regular print.

In *The Anxious Generation*, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He then investigates the nature of childhood, including why children need play and independent exploration to mature into competent, thriving adults. Haidt shows how the “play-based childhood” began to decline in the 1980s, and how it was finally wiped out by the arrival of the “phone-based childhood” in the early 2010s. Most importantly, Haidt issues a clear call to action. He diagnoses the “collective action problems” that trap us, and then proposes four simple rules that might set us free. He describes steps that parents, teachers, schools, tech companies, and governments can take to end the epidemic of mental illness and restore a more humane childhood.

Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing and the Future of the Human Race (biography) by Walter Isaacson

When Jennifer Doudna was in sixth grade, she came home one day to find that her dad had left a paperback titled *The Double Helix* on her bed. As she sped through the pages, she became enthralled by the intense drama behind the competition to discover the code of life. Even though her high school counselor told her girls didn't become scientists, she decided she would. Driven by a passion for understanding how nature works and for turning discoveries into inventions, she would help to make what the book's author, James Watson, told her was the most important biological advance since his codiscovery of the structure of DNA. After helping to discover CRISPR, Doudna became a leader in wrestling with these moral issues and, with her collaborator Emmanuelle Charpentier, won the Nobel Prize in 2020. Her story is an “enthraling detective story” (Oprah Daily) that involves the most profound wonders of nature, from the origins of life to the future of our species.

The Dressmakers of Auschwitz: The True Story of the Women Who Sewed to Survive (non-fiction history) by Lucy Adlington

At the height of the Holocaust, twenty-five young inmates of the infamous Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp—mainly Jewish women and girls—were selected to design, cut, and sew beautiful fashions for elite Nazi women in a dedicated salon. It was work that they hoped would spare them from the gas chambers. This fashion workshop—called the Upper Tailoring Studio—was established by Hedwig Höss, the camp commandant's wife, and patronized by the wives of SS guards and officers. Drawing on diverse sources—including interviews with the last surviving seamstress—*The Dressmakers of Auschwitz* follows the fates of these brave women. Their bonds of family and friendship not only helped them endure persecution but also played their part in camp resistance.

****Every Valley: the desperate lives and troubled times that made Handel's Messiah*** (non-fiction history) by Charles King

Every Valley presents a depressive dissenter stirred to action by an ancient prophecy; an actress plagued by an abusive husband and public scorn; an Atlantic sea captain and penniless philanthropist; and an African Muslim man held captive in the American colonies and hatching a dangerous plan for getting back home. At center stage is Handel himself, composer to kings but, at midlife, in ill health and straining to keep an audience's attention. Set amid royal intrigue, theater scandals, and political conspiracy, *Every Valley* is entertaining, inspiring, and unforgettable.

Fly Girls: How five daring women defied all odds and made aviation history (non-fiction history) by Keith O'Brien

A New York Times Bestseller * An Amazon Best Book of the Year * *A New York Times Book Review* Editors' Choice * *A Time* Best Book for Summer

Between the world wars, no sport was more popular or more dangerous than airplane racing. While male pilots were lauded as heroes, the few women who dared to fly were more often ridiculed—until a cadre of women pilots banded together to break through the entrenched prejudice. *Fly Girls* weaves together the stories of five remarkable women: Florence Klingensmith, a high school dropout from Fargo, North Dakota; Ruth Elder, an Alabama divorcee; Amelia Earhart, the most famous but not necessarily the most skilled; Ruth Nichols, who chafed at her blue blood family's expectations; and Louise Thaden, the young mother of two who got her start selling coal in Wichita. Together, they fought for the chance to fly and race airplanes—and in 1936, one of them would triumph, beating the men in the toughest air race of them all.

****The God of the Woods*** (fiction, thriller) by Liz Moore

Early morning, August 1975: a camp counselor discovers an empty bunk. Its occupant, Barbara Van Laar, has gone missing. Barbara isn't just any thirteen-year-old: she's the daughter of the family that owns the summer camp and employs most of the region's residents. And this isn't the first time a Van Laar child has disappeared. Barbara's older brother similarly vanished fourteen years ago, never to be found. As a panicked search begins, a thrilling drama unfolds. Chasing down the layered secrets of the Van Laar family and the blue-collar community working in its shadow, Moore's multi-threaded story invites readers into a rich and gripping dynasty of secrets and second chances.

The Guncle (fiction family life) by Steven Rowley

Bestselling author of *Lily and the Octopus* and *The Editor* brings us this warm and deeply funny novel. Patrick O'Hara has always loved his niece, Maisie, and nephew, Grant — from a safe distance. His Palm Springs home and reclusive lifestyle aren't exactly welcoming to children. But when tragedy strikes, Patrick finds himself suddenly taking on the role of primary guardian. Patrick has no idea what to expect, having spent years barely holding on after the loss of his own great love and managing a stalled career. He regrets his decision to take them in until he starts to recognize that his outsized lifestyle and unusual life wisdom could bring about a season of healing that redefines their understanding of family and finally leads Patrick back to himself.

The Half Moon (fiction, marriage) by Mary Beth Keane

Malcolm Gephardt, a handsome and gregarious longtime bartender at the Half Moon, has always dreamed of owning a bar. When his boss finally retires, Malcolm stretches to buy the place. He sees unquantifiable magic and potential in the Half Moon and hopes to transform it into a bigger success, but struggles to stay afloat. His smart and confident wife, Jess, has devoted herself to her law career. After years of trying for a baby, she is facing the idea that motherhood may not be in the cards for her. Like Malcolm, she feels her youth beginning to slip away and wonders how to reshape her future.

Heaven & Earth Grocery Store (historical fiction/mystery) by James McBride

In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new development, the last thing they expected to find was a skeleton at the bottom of a well. Who the skeleton was and how it got there were two of the long-held secrets kept by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side and shared ambitions and sorrows. In Chicken Hill, Moshe and Chona Ludlow lived when Moshe integrated his theater and where Chona ran the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store. When the state came looking for a deaf boy to institutionalize him, it was Chona and Nate Timblin, the Black janitor at Moshe's theater and the unofficial leader of the Black community on Chicken Hill, who worked together to keep the boy safe.

In the Shadow of the Mountain (biography) by Silvia Vasquez-Lavado

In her page-turning, pulse-raising memoir, Silvia Vasquez-Lavado chronicles her journey to Mount Everest. Deep in the throes of alcoholism, hiding her sexuality from her family, and repressing the abuse she'd suffered as a child, she started climbing. Something about the brute force required for the ascent--the risk and spirit and sheer size of the mountains and death's close proximity--woke her up. She then took her biggest pain as a survivor to the biggest mountain: Everest. She gathered a group of young female survivors and led them to base camp alongside her. It was never easy. Silvia remembers the acute anxiety of leading a group of novice climbers to Everest's base, all the while coping with her own nerves about summiting. But, there were also moments of peace, joy, and healing, with the strength of her fellow survivors and community propelling her forward. In the *Shadow of the Mountain* is a remarkable story of heroism, one which awakens in all of us a lust for adventure, an appetite for risk, and faith in our own resilience.

The Last White Man (fiction) by Mohsin Hamid

One morning, a man wakes up to find himself transformed. Overnight, Anders's skin has turned dark, and the reflection in the mirror seems a stranger to him. At first, he shares his secret only with Oona, an old friend turned new lover. Soon, reports of similar events begin to surface. Across the land, people are awakening in new incarnations, uncertain how their neighbors, friends, and family will greet them. Some see the transformations as the long-dreaded overturning of the established order that must be resisted to a bitter end. In many, like Anders's father and Oona's mother, a sense of profound loss and unease wars with profound love. As the bond between Anders and Oona deepens, change takes on a different shading: a chance at a kind of rebirth--an opportunity to see ourselves, face to face, anew. In Mohsin Hamid's "lyrical and urgent" prose (O Magazine), *The Last White Man* powerfully uplifts our capacity for empathy and the transcendence over bigotry, fear, and anger it can achieve.

Little Fires Everywhere (fiction) by Celeste Ng

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned – from the layout of the winding roads to the colors of the houses to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren – an enigmatic artist and single mother – who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenage daughter Pearl and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community. When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town--and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides. Suspicious of Mia and her motives, Elena is determined to uncover the secrets of Mia's past. But her obsession will come at unexpected and devastating costs. *Little Fires Everywhere* explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, the ferocious pull of motherhood – and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

The Lost Apothecary (fiction) by Sarah Penner

Nella is the proprietor of a secret apothecary shop in London where she has been vending poisons, known only by word-of-mouth by the women of the city. One day, Eliza, a young girl with a curiosity about her trade, enters the store. In the present day, Caroline has just discovered her husband's infidelity and comes upon a clue about the past existence of the apothecary shop while on holiday in London. Soon, she finds herself absorbed in a historical investigation. In this vivid novel, the past and the present collide, resulting in a story about female relationships, full of bitter betrayals and intrigue.

Mad Honey (fiction, family) by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan

Olivia McAfee knows what it feels like to start over. Her picture-perfect life - living in Boston, married to a brilliant cardiothoracic surgeon, and raising their beautiful son, Asher - was upended when her husband revealed a darker side. She never imagined that she would end up back in her sleepy New Hampshire hometown, living in the house she grew up in and taking over her father's beekeeping business. Lily Campanello is familiar with do-overs, too. When she and her mom relocate to Adams, New Hampshire, for her final year of high school, they both hope it will be a fresh start. And for just a short while, these new beginnings are exactly what Olivia and Lily need. Their paths cross when Asher falls for the new girl in school, and Lily can't help but fall for him, too. With Ash, she feels happy for the first time. Yet she wonders if she can trust him completely. Then, one day, Olivia receives a phone call: Lily is dead, and the police are questioning Asher. Olivia is adamant that her son is innocent. But she would be lying if she didn't acknowledge the flashes of his father's temper in Ash, and as the case against him unfolds, she realizes he's hidden more than he's shared with her.

****Martyr!*** (literary fiction) by Kaveh Akbar

Cyrus Shams is a young man grappling with an inheritance of violence and loss: his mother's plane was shot down over the skies of Tehran in a senseless accident, and his father's life in America was circumscribed by his work killing chickens at a factory farm in the Midwest. Cyrus is a drunk, an addict, and a poet, whose obsession with martyrs leads him to examine the mysteries of his past—toward an uncle who rode through Iranian battlefields dressed as the Angel of death to inspire and comfort the dying, and toward his mother, through a painting discovered in a Brooklyn art gallery that suggests she may not have been who or what she seemed. Electrifying, funny, wholly original, and profound, *Martyr!* heralds the arrival of a blazing and essential new voice in contemporary fiction.

****Ministry of Time*** (fiction, time travel) by Kalaine Bradley

A time travel romance, a spy thriller, a workplace comedy, and an ingenious exploration of the nature of power and the potential for love to change it all. The story focuses on a top-secret project where selected figures from the past have been 'rescued' from death in their own periods and transported to the future. In this future, each of the 'expats' from history are assigned a 'bridge', a civil servant to help them acclimatise to their new existence. One of these visitors from the past is Commander Gore, an explorer who, according to historical records, died on a failed Arctic expedition in the Victorian era. He is assigned to a female 'bridge' and so begins the process of learning about the modern age. However, nothing (and especially secret time travel, it seems) is simple, and the project soon proves to be more dangerous than was envisaged for all involved.

Moonlight and the Pearler's Daughter (fiction historical) by Lizzie Pook

Western Australia, 1886. After months at sea, a slow boat makes its passage from London to the shores of Bannin Bay. From the deck, young Eliza Brightwell and her family eye their strange new home. Here is an unforgiving land where fortune sits patiently at the bottom of the ocean. A land where pearl shells bloom to the size of soup plates. Where men are coaxed into unthinkable places and unspeakable acts by the promise of unimaginable riches. Ten years later, the pearl diving boat captained by Eliza's eccentric father returns after months at sea without Eliza's father on it. Whispers from the townsfolk point to mutiny or murder. Headstrong Eliza knows it is up to her to discover who or what is really responsible.

The Paris Daughter (historical fiction) by Kristin Harmel

Paris, 1939: Young mothers Elise and Juliette become fast friends the day they meet in the beautiful Bois de Boulogne. Though there is a shadow of war creeping across Europe, neither woman suspects that their lives are about to irrevocably change. When Elise becomes a target of the German occupation, she entrusts Juliette with the most precious thing in her life—her young daughter, playmate to Juliette’s own little girl. But nowhere is safe in war, not even a quiet little bookshop like Juliette’s Librairie des Rêves, and when a bomb falls on their neighborhood, Juliette’s world is destroyed along with it. More than a year later, with the war finally ending, Elise returns to reunite with her daughter, only to find her friend’s bookstore reduced to rubble—and Juliette nowhere to be found. What happened to her daughter in those last terrible moments? Juliette has seemingly vanished without a trace, taking all the answers with her. Elise’s desperate search leads her to New York—and to Juliette—one final, fateful time.

Saints for All Occasions (historical fiction) by J. Sullivan Courtney

Harper’s Bazaar Best Book of 2017

Nora and Theresa Flynn are twenty-one and seventeen when they leave their small village in Ireland and journey to America. Nora is the responsible sister; she’s shy and serious and engaged to a man she isn’t sure that she loves. Theresa is gregarious; she is thrilled by their new life in Boston and besotted with the fashionable dresses and dance halls on Dudley Street. But when Theresa ends up pregnant, Nora is forced to come up with a plan—a decision with repercussions they are both far too young to understand. Fifty years later, Nora is the matriarch of a big Catholic family with four grown children: John, a successful, if opportunistic, political consultant; Bridget, quietly preparing to have a baby with her girlfriend; Brian, at loose ends after a failed baseball career; and Patrick, Nora’s favorite, the beautiful boy who gives her no end of heartache. Estranged from her sister, Theresa is a cloistered nun living in an abbey in rural Vermont. Until, after decades of silence, a sudden death forces Nora and Theresa to confront the choices they made so long ago. A graceful, supremely moving novel from one of our most beloved writers, *Saints for All Occasions* explores the fascinating, funny, and sometimes achingly sad ways a secret at the heart of one family both breaks them and binds them together.

Sparks Like Stars (fiction) by Nadia Hashimi

Kabul, 1978: The daughter of a prominent family, Sitara Zamani lives a privileged life in Afghanistan’s thriving cosmopolitan capital. The 1970s were a time of remarkable promise under the leadership of people like Sardar Daoud, Afghanistan’s progressive president, and Sitara’s beloved father, his right-hand man. But the ten-year-old Sitara’s world is shattered when communists stage a coup, assassinating the president and Sitara’s entire family. Only she survives. Smuggled out of the palace by a guard named Shair, Sitara finds her way to the home of a female American diplomat, who adopts her and raises her in America.

New York, 2008: Thirty years after that fatal night in Kabul, Aryana’s world is rocked again when an elderly patient appears in her examination room—a man she never expected to see again. It is Shair, the soldier who saved her, yet may have murdered her entire family. Seeing him awakens Aryana’s fury and desire for answers.

Bold, illuminating, heartbreaking, yet hopeful, *Sparks Like Stars* is a story of home—of America and Afghanistan, tragedy and survival, reinvention and remembrance, told in Nadia Hashimi’s singular voice.

This Time Tomorrow (fiction time travel) by Emma Straub

On the eve of her 40th birthday, Alice's life isn't terrible. She likes her job, even if it isn't exactly the one she expected. She's happy with her apartment, her romantic status, her independence, and she adores her lifelong best friend. But something is missing. Her father, the single parent who raised her, is ailing and out of reach. How did they get here so fast? Did she take too much for granted along the way? When Alice wakes up the next morning somehow back in 1996, it isn't her 16-year-old body that is the biggest shock or the possibility of romance with her adolescent crush. It's her dad: the vital, charming, 49-year-old version of her father with whom she is reunited. Now armed with a new perspective on her own life and his, is there anything that she should do differently this time around? What would she change, given a chance?

Trust (historical fiction) by Hernan Diaz

2023 Pulitzer Prize winner for fiction

Even through the roar and effervescence of the 1920s, everyone in New York has heard of Benjamin and Helen Rask. He is a legendary Wall Street tycoon; she is the daughter of eccentric aristocrats. Together, they have risen to the very top of a world of seemingly endless wealth—all as a decade of excess and speculation draws to an end. But at what cost have they acquired their immense fortune? This is the mystery at the center of *Bonds*, a successful 1937 novel that all of New York seems to have read. Yet there are other versions of this tale of privilege and deceit.

The Wager: A tale of shipwreck, mutiny, and murder (non-fiction, survival) by David Grann

On January 28, 1742, a ramshackle vessel of patched-together wood and cloth washed up on the coast of Brazil. Inside were thirty emaciated men, barely alive, and they had an extraordinary tale to tell. They were survivors of His Majesty's Ship the *Wager*, a British vessel that had left England in 1740 on a secret mission during an imperial war with Spain. While the *Wager* had been chasing a Spanish treasure-filled galleon known as "the prize of all the oceans," it had wrecked on a desolate island off the coast of Patagonia. After being marooned for months and facing starvation, the men built the flimsy craft and sailed for more than a hundred days, traversing nearly 3,000 miles of storm-wracked seas. They were greeted as heroes. But then ... six months later, another, even more decrepit craft landed on the coast of Chile. This boat contained just three castaways that told a very different story. The thirty sailors who landed in Brazil were not heroes but mutineers. The first group responded with countercharges of their own of a tyrannical and murderous senior officer and his henchmen. It became clear that the crew had fallen into anarchy while stranded on the island, with warring factions fighting for dominion over the barren wilderness. As accusations of treachery and murder flew, the Admiralty convened a court martial to determine who was telling the truth. The stakes were life and death—for whomever the court found guilty could hang.

We Are the Brennans (fiction family life) by Tracey Lange

Five years after Sunday, Brennan deserted her family without explanation. She is injured in a drunk driving accident. Sunday returns home to meet her resentful brothers and ex-fiancée. When a dangerous man from her past brings her family's pub business to the brink of financial ruin, the only way to protect the Brennans is to upend all their secrets. In the aftermath, the Brennans are forced to confront painful mistakes and find a way forward together.

Where the Deer and the Antelope Play: The pastoral observations of one ignorant American who likes to walk outside (Non-Fiction, memoir) by Nick Offerman

Nick Offerman has always felt a particular affection for the Land of the Free—not just for the people and their purported ideals but to the actual land itself: the bedrock, the topsoil, and everything in between that generates the health of your local watershed. In his new book, Nick takes a humorous, inspiring, and elucidating trip to America’s trails, farms, and frontier to examine the people who inhabit the land, what that has meant to them and us, and to the land itself, both historically and currently. In 2018, Wendell Berry posed a question to Nick, a query that planted the seed of this book, sending Nick on two memorable journeys with pals—a hiking trip to Glacier National Park with his friends Jeff Tweedy and George Saunders, as well as an extended visit to his friend James Rebanks, the author of *The Shepherd’s Life* and *English Pastoral*. He followed that up with an excursion that could only have come about in 2020—Nick and his wife, Megan Mullally, bought an Airstream trailer to drive across (several of) the United States. These three quests inspired some “deep-ish” thinking from Nick, about the history and philosophy of our relationship with nature in our national parks, in our farming, and in our backyards; what we mean when we talk about conservation; and the importance of outdoor recreation, all subjects very close to Nick’s heart. With witty, heartwarming stories and a keen insight into the human problems we all confront, this is both a ramble through and a celebration of the land we all love.

****The Women*** (historical fiction) by Kristin Hannah

Women can be heroes. When twenty-year-old nursing student Frances “Frankie” McGrath hears these words, it is a revelation. Raised in the sun-drenched, idyllic world of Southern California and sheltered by her conservative parents, she has always prided herself on doing the right thing. But in 1965, the world was changing, and she suddenly dared to imagine a different future for herself. When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path. *The Women* is the story of one woman who went to war, but it shines a light on all women who put themselves in harm’s way and whose sacrifice and commitment to their country have too often been forgotten. A novel about deep friendships and bold patriotism, *The Women* is a richly drawn story with a memorable heroine whose idealism and courage under fire will come to define an era.

The Women of the Copper Country (historical fiction) by Mary Doria Russell

In July 1913, twenty-five-year-old Annie Clements has seen enough of the world to know that it’s unfair. She’s spent her whole life in the mining town of Calumet, Michigan, where men risk their lives for meager salaries—and have barely enough to put food on the table for their families. The women labor in the houses of the elite and send their husbands and sons deep underground each day, dreading the fateful call of the company man telling them their loved ones aren’t coming home. So, when Annie decides to stand up for the entire town of Calumet, nearly everyone believes she may have taken on more than she is prepared to handle. Yet, as Annie struggles to improve the future of her town, her husband becomes increasingly frustrated with her growing independence. She faces the threat of prison while also discovering a forbidden love. On her fierce quest for justice, Annie will see just how much she is willing to sacrifice for the families of Calumet.