

Grades K-5 Activism Reading List 2021
Akron-Summit County Public Library

Picture Books:

Clark-Robinson, Monica. **Let the Children March**, 2018. JE

Under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, children and teenagers march against segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963.

Reynolds, Peter. **Say Something!**, 2019. JE

An empowering story about finding your voice, and using it to make the world a better place. The world needs your voice. If you have a brilliant idea... say something! If you see an injustice... say something!

Non-Fiction:

Boyce, Jo Ann Allen. **This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality**, 2019. JNF 379.263 B789t

In 1956, one year before federal troops escorted the Little Rock 9 into Central High School, fourteen-year-old Jo Ann Allen was one of twelve African-American students who broke the color barrier and integrated Clinton High School in Tennessee. At first things went smoothly for the Clinton 12, but then outside agitators interfered, pitting the townspeople against one another. Uneasiness turned into anger, and even the Clinton Twelve themselves wondered if the easier thing to do would be to go back to their old school. Jo Ann--clear-eyed, practical, tolerant, and popular among both black and white students--found herself called on as the spokesperson of the group. But what about just being a regular teen?

Clinton, Chelsea. **Start Now: You Can Make a Difference**, 2018. JNF 361.2 C641s

A book about issues in the world and what kids can do to help solve them.

Dias, Marley. **Marley Dias Gets it Done: And So Can You!**, 2018. JNF 305.2308 D541m

In this accessible "keep-it-real" guide, Marley explores activism, social justice, volunteerism, equity and inclusion, and using social media for good. Drawing from her experience, Marley shows kids how they can galvanize their strengths to make positive changes in their communities, while getting support from parents, teachers, and friends to turn dreams into reality.

Hudson, Wade. **We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices**, 2018. JNF 303.4 W361

What do we tell our children when the world seems bleak, and prejudice and racism run rampant? With 96 lavishly designed pages of original art and prose, fifty diverse creators lend voice to young activists.

Wilson, Janet. **Our Future: How Kids Are Taking Action**, 2019. JNF 361.2 W749o

This book features 10 children who are social, political, and environmental activists from around the world who are making a difference in their communities, and countries.

Biographies:

Camerini, Valentina. **Greta's Story: The Schoolgirl Who Went on Strike to Save the Planet**, 2019. JBIO THUNBER,G C182g

In legislatures all over the world, tens of thousands of serious-looking and stern-sounding politicians sat and discussed an endless range of issues. But they never addressed the problem of the health of the planet. It was time for someone to remind them to step in to protect the environment--and the future of children all over the world. It was an emergency. Everything else could wait. So Greta made a sign, put on her jacket, and went on strike.

Wright, Adrienne. **Hector: A Boy, A Protest, and the Photograph That Changed Apartheid**, 2019. J BIO PIETERS,H W947h

On June 16, 1976, Hector Pieterse, an ordinary boy, lost his life after getting caught up in what was supposed to be a peaceful protest. Black South African students were marching against a new law requiring that they be taught half of their subjects in Afrikaans, the language of the White government. The story's events unfold from the perspectives of Hector, his sister, and the photographer who captured their photo in the chaos.

Fiction:

Firestone, Carrie. **Dress Coded**, 2020. JFIC

Molly Frost is FED UP because Olivia was yelled at for wearing a tank top. Because Liza got dress coded and Molly didn't, even though they were wearing the exact same outfit. Because when Jessica was pulled over by the principal and missed a math quiz, her teacher gave her a F. Because it's impossible to find shorts that are longer than her fingertips. Because girls' bodies are not a distraction. Because middle school is hard enough. And so Molly starts a podcast where girls can tell their stories, and before long, her small rebellion swells into a revolution. Because now the girls are standing up for what's right, and they're not backing down.

Gratz, Alan. **Ban This Book**, 2017. JFIC

A fourth grader fights back when a book is challenged by a parent and taken off the shelves of her school library. Amy Anne is shy and soft-spoken, but don't mess with her when it comes to her favorite book in the whole world. Amy Anne and her lieutenants wage a battle for the books as they start a secret banned books locker library, make up ridiculous reasons to ban every single book in the library to make a point, and take a stand against censorship.

Hiaasen, Carl. **Hoot**, 2002. JFIC

Roy Eberhardt has recently, and unhappily, arrived in Florida. Florida bullies are pretty much like bullies everywhere. But Roy finds himself oddly indebted to the hulking Dana Matherson. If Dana hadn't been sinking his thumbs into Roy's temples and mashing his face against the school-bus window, Roy might never have spotted the running boy. The boy was about Roy's age, but he was running away from the school bus. Sensing a mystery, Roy sets himself on the boy's trail. The chase will introduce him to some other intriguing Floridian creatures: potty-trained alligators, a beleaguered construction foreman, some burrowing owls, a fake-fart champion, a renegade eco-avenger, some slippery fish, a sinister pancake PR man, and several extremely poisonous snakes with unnaturally sparkling tails.

Kendall, Christine. **The True Definition of Neva Beane**, 2020. JFIC

Twelve-year-old Neva and her older brother Clayton have been left with their grandparents for the summer, and she is having a difficult time dealing with change: the changes to her body, changes with

her relationships with her brother who is becoming involved with social activism and their multicultural community (and with Michelle, the sexy girl across the street), and with her best friend, Jamila, whose father is from Ghana--Neva is growing up and she is not sure that the dictionary has the right words to describe everything she is experiencing.

Krishnaswami, Uma. **Book Uncle and Me**, 2016 JFIC

Every day, nine-year-old Yasmin borrows a book from Book Uncle, a retired teacher who has set up a free lending library next to her apartment building. But when the mayor tries to shut down the rickety bookstand, Yasmin has to take her nose out of her book and do something.

Ramée, Lisa Moore. **A Good Kind of Trouble**, 2019. JFIC

After attending a powerful protest, Shayla starts wearing an armband to school to support the Black Lives Matter movement, but when the school gives her an ultimatum, she is forced to choose between her education and her identity.

Ramée, Lisa Moore. **Something to Say**, 2020. JFIC

A friendless girl who has developed a knack for keeping her head down at school resists a red-headed newcomer who wants to make friends, before the two are paired for a class assignment that she hopes will secure her position on the debate team.

Sales, Leila. **The Campaign**, 2020. JFIC

Twelve-year-old Maddie runs her babysitter Janet's campaign to become mayor of their city and protect arts funding.

*Yang, Kelly. **Front Desk**, 2018. JFIC

Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?

*= part of a series.