

“Librarian’s Shelf” by Brad Hruska

Great Books for Him

A few months ago, I featured chapter books that contained subjects that would attract the attention of young female readers. This time, I would like to change gears and highlight those books that encompass themes that appeal to the male palate.

If parents are to be successful in their quest for quality reading materials, they must first know where their children’s interests lie; this is especially crucial when it come to boys. But as most guardians know, adolescent males do not always reveal their interests as easily as their female counterparts. That being said, I have found a few subjects that have assisted me in successfully helping patrons find books for the young men in their lives.

Guys love sports! Everyone has heard this expression a time or two over the years. Whether it is the thrill of being on the field or the excitement gained from watching rival teams battle it out, males typically enjoy the rush that comes from such events. When selecting sport-themed texts, parents should consider those that feature an underdog. This could be a player who is too short, tall, or slow to make a quality play or a team that has difficulty working. Young readers tend to gravitate toward these types of storylines because they can relate to the main characters’ situations and find comfort in knowing that with hard work and dedication victory can be had.

Action adventure is another book topic that adults can refer to if they want to hit homeruns with the young men in their lives. This topic could encompass anything from chasing intergalactic criminals from galaxy to galaxy, squaring off with villains in the old west, or chasing mystical white whales through the oceans of the world. Whatever the adventure, young readers love to lose themselves in a good action-based text. They like the idea of escaping to another world where they are the heroes. Young men can even learn valuable life lessons like what it means to be honorable and why it is important to possess characteristics like loyalty and dedication just by turning the pages of a book.

As with young female readers, males enjoy books about animals; however, their creature of choice is not the trusty steed, but man’s best friend. Most would agree that there is no stronger bond than that found between a boy and his dog. These four-legged companions have earned the trust of boys for generations. Dogs like Lassie, Old Yeller, and Shiloh have taken many male readers on numerous adventures and have served as trusted friends. These furry characters have also provided young male readers with that the unconditional love and acceptance that some strongly desire.

To help parents select books that their boys would be interested in reading, I have chosen a few titles that incorporate the topics previously discussed. These books are sure to appeal any young male reader: “Peter and the Starcastchers” by David Barry, “The Potato Chip Puzzles” by Eric Berlin, “Signal” by Cynthia Defelice, “Dragon Moon” by Carole Wilkinson, “When the Whistle Blows” by Fran Slayton, “The Deep” by Helen Dunmore, “Leven Thumps and the Gateway to Foo” by Obert Skye, “Dogboy” by Christopher Russell, and “We Can’t All Be Rattlesnakes” by Patrick Jennings.

So if you find yourself desperately searching for reading materials for the guys in your home, make a trip to the Columbus Public Library and check out what we have to offer. I guarantee that no matter what your son’s or grandsons’ interests are, we will have book that will entice them. If you have any questions about the texts and topics discussed or would like other reading recommendations, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 ext. 4.