SUPPLEMENTAL READING LIST

The following titles were selected by Allyson Dowds, Youth Technology Librarian for Teen Central at the Boston Public Library, to offer additional support for the “Empathy: The Cost of Switching Sides” series. Great Stories Club program hosts are encouraged to recommend these titles for additional thematic exploration, plan supplemental programs using the list, or seek local funding to expand the series to include discussion of one or more additional titles.

Titles marked with an asterisk (*) are recommended especially for younger and/or reluctant readers.

American Street by Ibi Zoboi
American Street is an evocative and powerful coming-of-age story perfect for fans of Everything, Everything; Bone Gap; and All American Boys. In this stunning debut novel, Pushcart-nominated author Ibi Zoboi draws on her own experience as a young Haitian immigrant, infusing this lyrical exploration of America with magical realism and voudou culture.

   On the corner of American Street and Joy Road, Fabiola Toussaint thought she would finally find une belle vie—a good life. But after they leave Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola’s mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud American cousins, Chantal, Donna and Princess; the grittiness of Detroit’s west side; a new school; and a surprising romance, all on her own.

   Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola soon realizes that freedom comes at a cost. Trapped at the crossroads of an impossible choice, will she pay the price for the American dream?

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Sáenz
Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship — the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.

Changers Book One: Drew by T. Cooper, Allison Glock-Cooper
Ethan is a Changer, a little-known, ancient race of humans who live out each of their four years of high school as a different person. After graduation, Changers choose which version of themselves they will be forever — and no, they cannot go back to who they were before the changes began.

   Fans of the books of John Green, the Joss Whedonverse — and empathy between humans — will find much to love in this first of a four-part series that tracks the journey of an average
suburban boy who becomes an incredible young woman ... who becomes a reluctant hero ... who becomes the person she was meant to be.

Because, while changing the world can kinda suck, it sure beats never knowing who you really are.

*Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank*
Discovered in the attic in which she spent the last years of her life, Anne Frank’s remarkable diary has since become a world classic — a powerful reminder of the horrors of war and an eloquent testament to the human spirit. In 1942, with Nazis occupying Holland, a thirteen-year-old Jewish girl and her family fled their home in Amsterdam and went into hiding. For the next two years, until their whereabouts were betrayed to the Gestapo, they and another family lived cloistered in the “Secret Annex” of an old office building. Cut off from the outside world, they faced hunger, boredom, the constant cruelties of living in confined quarters, and the ever-present threat of discovery and death. In her diary, Anne Frank recorded vivid impressions of her experiences during this period. By turns thoughtful, moving and amusing, her account offers a fascinating commentary on human courage and frailty and a compelling self-portrait of a sensitive and spirited young woman whose promise was tragically cut short.

*Every Day by David Levithan*
Every day a different body. Every day a different life. Every day in love with the same girl.

There’s never any warning about where it will be or who it will be. “A” has made peace with that, even established guidelines by which to live: Never get too attached. Avoid being noticed. Do not interfere.

It’s all fine until the morning that A wakes up in the body of Justin and meets Justin’s girlfriend, Rhiannon. From that moment, the rules by which A has been living no longer apply. Because finally A has found someone he wants to be with — day in, day out, day after day.

*The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas*
Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed.

Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil’s name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what really went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr.

But what Starr does — or does not — say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.
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Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

A man I helped to settle here taught me a saying from Africa. I’ll bet you would like it: A cow is God with a wet nose.

Kek comes from Africa, where he lived with his mother, father and brother. But only he and his mother have survived. Now she’s missing, and Kek has been sent to a new home. In America, he sees snow for the first time and feels its sting. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter — cold and unkind. But slowly he makes friends: a girl in foster care, an old woman with a rundown farm, and a sweet, sad cow that reminds Kek of home. As he waits for word of his mother’s fate, Kek weathers the tough Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories and belief in his new country.

Lies We Tell Ourselves by Robin Talley

Sarah Dunbar is one of the first black students to attend the previously all-white Jefferson High School. An honors student at her old school, she is put into remedial classes, spit on and tormented daily.

Linda Hairston is the daughter of one of the town’s most vocal opponents of school integration. She has been taught all her life that the races should be kept “separate but equal.”

When they are assigned to work together on a school project, Sarah and Linda must examine how they really feel about the complicated issues of race, and about one another.

Boldly realistic and emotionally compelling, Lies We Tell Ourselves is a novel about finding truth amid the lies and finding one’s own voice even when others are determined to silence it.

*Listen, Slowly by Thanhha Lai

A California girl born and raised, Mai can’t wait to spend her vacation at the beach. Instead, she has to travel to Vietnam with her grandmother, who is going back to find out what really happened to her husband during the Vietnam War. Mai’s parents think this trip will be a great opportunity for their out-of-touch daughter to learn more about her culture. But to Mai, those are their roots, not her own. Vietnam is hot, smelly, and the last place she wants to be. Besides barely speaking the language, she doesn’t know the geography, the local customs, or even her distant relatives. To survive her trip, Mai must find a balance between her two completely different worlds.

Perfect for fans of Rita Williams-Garcia and Linda Sue Park, Listen, Slowly is an irresistibly charming and emotionally poignant tale about a girl who discovers that home and culture, family and friends, can all mean different things.
SUPPLEMENTAL READING LIST

*A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park*

The *New York Times* bestseller *A Long Walk to Water* begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about two eleven-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours’ walk from her home; she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the “lost boys” of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya’s in an astonishing and moving way.

**Mexican WhiteBoy by Matt de la Peña**

Danny’s tall and skinny. Even though he’s not built, his arms are long enough to give his pitch a power so fierce any college scout would sign him on the spot. He throws a ninety-five mile an hour fastball, but the boy’s not even on a team. Every time he gets up on the mound he loses it.

But at his private school, they don’t expect much else from him. Danny’s brown. Half-Mexican brown. And growing up in San Diego that close to the border means everyone else knows exactly who he is before he even opens his mouth. Before they find out he can’t speak Spanish, and before they realize his mom has blond hair and blue eyes, they’ve got him pegged. But it works the other way too. And Danny’s convinced it’s his whiteness that sent his father back to Mexico.

That’s why he’s spending the summer with his dad’s family. Only, to find himself, he may just have to face the demons he refuses to see — the demons that are right in front of his face. And open up to a friendship he never saw coming.

**The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate**

This unforgettable novel from renowned author Katherine Applegate celebrates the transformative power of unexpected friendship. Inspired by the true story of a captive gorilla known as Ivan, this illustrated book is told from the point of view of Ivan himself. This paperback edition includes an author’s note highlighting the differences between the fictional story and true events, a version of the author’s Newbery Medal acceptance speech, Ivan’s “signature,” discussion questions and more.

Having spent twenty-seven years behind the glass walls of his enclosure in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. Instead, Ivan occupies himself with television, his friends Stella and Bob, and painting. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he is forced to see their home, and his art, through new eyes.

In the tradition of timeless stories like Charlotte’s Web and *Stuart Little*, Katherine Applegate blends humor and poignancy to create an unforgettable story of friendship, art, and hope.
The One and Only Ivan features first-person narrative; author’s use of literary devices (personification, imagery); and story elements (plot, character development, perspective).

The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore
The Other Wes Moore is a thought-provoking and personal narrative about two men with the same name. Moore begins with his own story, which starts in Baltimore and moves to the crack-infested Bronx, military school, Johns Hopkins and a Rhodes Scholarship. The second part of the book tells the other Wes Moore’s journey, which also begins in Baltimore but leads to drug dealing, brushes with the police and a life sentence for murder. Anecdotes from Moore’s early years convey his struggle to form an identity within his violent and impoverished surroundings; his love for his family and his core optimism shine through even the darkest moments he recounts. The story concludes with Moore’s questions and ruminations about how, regardless of limitations and societal expectations, the decisions that an individual makes determine who he or she will become. Moore wisely opens the door for teens to contemplate their own answers and beliefs while laying out his own experiences honestly and openly.

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper
Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory; she can remember every detail of everything she has ever experienced. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her and smarter than her classmates in her integrated classroom — the very same classmates who dismiss her as mentally challenged because she cannot tell them otherwise. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy. And she’s determined to let everyone know it — somehow.

In this breakthrough story, reminiscent of The Diving Bell and the Butterfly, from multiple Coretta Scott King Award-winner Sharon Draper, readers will come to know a brilliant mind and a brave spirit who will change forever how they look at anyone with a disability.

*The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
No one ever said life was easy. But Ponyboy is pretty sure that he’s got things figured out. He knows that he can count on his brothers, Darry and Sodapop. And he knows that he can count on his friends — true friends who would do anything for him, like Johnny and Two-Bit. But not on much else besides trouble with the Socs, a vicious gang of rich kids whose idea of a good time is beating up on “greasers” like Ponyboy. At least he knows what to expect — until the night someone takes things too far.

The Outsiders is a dramatic and enduring work of fiction that laid the groundwork for the YA genre. S. E. Hinton’s classic story of a boy who finds himself on the outskirts of regular society remains as powerful today as it was the day it was first published.
Pedro & Me: Friendship, Loss, and What I Learned by Judd Winick (Graphic Novel)
Pedro is a young Cuban émigré, living in America. Attractive, gay and seeking excitement, he becomes sexually active at a young age and contracts HIV. Devastated, he decides to spread the word to other vulnerable young people by public speaking. He tours the States, educating others about safe sex and how to avoid AIDS.

Judd Winick is a cartoonist. After graduating from art college he found that his anticipated career had not taken off quite as he hoped. He auditioned for, and was accepted onto MTV’s reality program “The Real World.” He considers himself a liberal, but the news that he will share a house with (in fact, a bedroom with) a man with AIDS forces him to confront his own attitudes and overcome his own anxieties. In the house, he not only meets the man who will change his life, Pedro, but also his future wife, Pam.

Pedro’s declining health brings together those around him and his attitude and selflessness touches everyone. Even Bill Clinton (featured in the story) was moved to help his plight.

Same Sun Here by Silas House, Neela Vaswani and Hilary Schenker
In this extraordinary novel in letters, an Indian immigrant girl in New York City and a Kentucky coal miner’s son find strength and perspective by sharing their true selves across the miles.

Meena and River have a lot in common: fathers forced to work away from home to make ends meet, grandmothers who mean the world to them, and faithful dogs. But Meena is an Indian immigrant girl living in New York City’s Chinatown, while River is a Kentucky coal miner’s son. As Meena’s family studies for citizenship exams and River’s town faces devastating mountaintop removal, this unlikely pair become pen pals, sharing thoughts and, as their camaraderie deepens, discovering common ground in their disparate experiences. With honesty and humor, Meena and River bridge the miles between them, creating a friendship that inspires bravery and defeats cultural misconceptions. Narrated in two voices, each voice distinctly articulated by a separate gifted author, this chronicle of two lives powerfully conveys the great value of being and having a friend and the joys of opening our lives to others who live beneath the same sun.

Something In Between by Melissa de la Cruz
It feels like there’s no ground beneath me, like everything I’ve ever done has been a lie. Like I’m breaking apart, shattering. Who am I? Where do I belong?

Jasmine de los Santos has always done what’s expected of her. Pretty and popular, she’s studied hard, made her Filipino immigrant parents proud and is ready to reap the rewards in the form of a full college scholarship.

And then everything shatters. A national scholar award invitation compels her parents to reveal the truth: their visas
expired years ago. Her entire family is illegal. That means no scholarships, maybe no college at all and the very real threat of deportation.

For the first time, Jasmine rebels, trying all those teen things she never had time for in the past. Even as she's trying to make sense of her new world, it's turned upside down by Royce Blakely, the charming son of a high-ranking congressman. Jasmine no longer has any idea where — or if — she fits into the American Dream. All she knows is that she's not giving up. Because when the rules you lived by no longer apply, the only thing to do is make up your own.

**A Step Toward Falling** by Cammie McGovern
Emily has always been the kind of girl who tries to do the right thing — until one night when she does the worst thing possible. She sees Belinda, a classmate with developmental disabilities, being attacked. Inexplicably, she does nothing at all.

Belinda, however, manages to save herself. When their high school finds out what happened, Emily and Lucas, a football player who was also there that night, are required to perform community service at a center for disabled people. Soon, Lucas and Emily begin to feel like maybe they're starting to make a real difference. Like they would be able to do the right thing, if they could do that night all over again. But can they do anything that will actually help the one person they hurt the most?

Told in alternating points of view, *A Step Toward Falling* is a poignant, hopeful and altogether stunning work that will appeal to fans of books by Jennifer Niven, Robyn Schneider and Jandy Nelson.

*Wonder* by R.J. Palacio
August (Auggie) Pullman was born with a facial deformity that prevented him from going to a mainstream school — until now. He's about to start fifth grade at Beecher Prep, and if you've ever been the new kid then you know how hard that can be. The thing is Auggie's just an ordinary kid, with an extraordinary face. But can he convince his new classmates that he's just like them, despite appearances?

R. J. Palacio has written a spare, warm, uplifting story that will have readers laughing one minute and wiping away tears the next. With wonderfully realistic family interactions (flawed, but loving), lively school scenes and short chapters, *Wonder* is accessible to readers of all levels.