

# July 2021 Podcast

**Brittany 00:18**

Hello, welcome to the Clinton-Macomb Public Library podcast. My name is Brittany and I'm the Outreach Manager for youth and teen services. And I am joined today by Jessie, our children's librarian.

**Jessie 00:28**

Hello,

**Brittany 00:29**

and Mei-Ling, our school outreach librarian.

**Mei-Ling 00:31**

Hello.

**Brittany 00:32**

Today we are going to talk about our favorite classics, what they're about why we love them. And then we are going to offer you some modern readalikes that you can check out for your kids or for yourself. So, without further ado, let's jump into our first book. And I think the first pick is mine. So, my favorite classic is Bridge to Terabithia. And this is about two children. One's named Leslie and one's named Jesse who create magical forest Kingdom in their imaginations. So this novel tells the story of Jesse Aaron's he's in fifth grade, and he becomes friend with his new neighbor, Leslie Berg. He loses a foot race to her school. And Leslie is from a wealthy family. She's kind of a tomboy and Jesse thinks really highly of her. Jesse's from a poor family. He's very artistic. And in the beginning, he kinda is fearful and he kind of have like an angry streak about him. But after the two children meet, they create this magical Kingdom named Terabithia. And it goes on from there. It's kind of a shorter book. If you haven't read it, it is not to give anything away, but you will sob for days at the end. And it's...it's honestly just an excellent book. And I really, really loved it. It really stuck with me for when I read it in my own childhood. So what...what kind of readalikes do we like for this?

**Mei-Ling 02:06**

What's yours?

**Brittany 02:07**

Okay, so my mine is a book called Wish Tree. It's by the author Katherine Applegate, who writes a couple Newbery books. This is about a tree name Red. He is a wish tree. That's what his neighborhood calls him. And when you go up to Red you, you make a wish. So, you tie a ribbon around Red and you, you tell him what your wishes and he, he, he doesn't grant the wish. It's actually written from the tree's perspective. But then one day, a very special wish comes to Red and it's, it's a wish from a girl who wishes that she had a friend. And so Red decides that he is going to for the very first time try to actually grant a wish for someone and it's just a really

beautiful book. I read it in one sitting in an afternoon and again, I just sobbed afterwards. So I don't know maybe I just like sad books, but it was just a wonderful book and if you have read anything by Katherine Applegate, she's an excellent author. So that's my readalike for that have...have either of you read Wish Tree before? That's great so that's a book for you guys to read.

**Mei-Ling** 03:13

I have not read Wish Tree.

**Jessie** 03:17

I know. There's so many books and not enough time. Mei-Ling, why don't you? So, it's your readalike for that?

**Mei-Ling** 03:24

My readalike to Bridge to Terabithia is a book called Nightmares. And it is written as co-written by Kristin Miller and Jason Segal. And if that name sounds familiar to you, it's because he was did star on the show How I Met Your Mother. And he also was in that Muppets movie.

**Jessie** 03:46

Yes, he was.

**Brittany** 03:47

Yeah, sure. In Saving Sarah Marshall...

**Mei-Ling** 03:49

Yeah, yes. Very funny. So, he wrote this book called Nightmares and then there are two sequels. So, it is actually a trilogy, but it's about a boy named Charlie Laird. And he has several problems. Number one, his dad married a woman, he is sure moonlights as a witch. And two, he had to move into her weird purple mansion, which is a creepiest place in Cypress Creek where he lives. And three he can't remember the last time sleeping wasn't a nightmarish prospect, like even a nap. So, he, his mom is dead in the book. So, it tells you right away that his mother's died and his dad is remarried this lady, she's really weird. And so, he does dream about his mom a little bit. So, there's like a bittersweet you know, aspect to that but then like there's just these straight up very strange, kind of scary nightmares. He has to figure out why he's having these nightmares. But it manages to like meld like creepiness and humor all into one and I read all three books and they are they're really good.

**Brittany** 05:04

I feel like we went a very different way.

**Jessie** 05:06

Yeah. I was just thinking that because mine...

**Mei-Ling** 05:10

Yes, cuz mine took a troubled young boy and totally went sideways right, but I just thought it would be fun to....

**Brittany 05:18**

Well, it's fun that we've all pulled different aspects. Yeah, this book that we love, right. A totally different side of things.

**Jessie 05:24**

Okay, I think that's going to be the theme through the whole podcast.

**Mei-Ling 05:27**

So what is your readalike Jessie?

**Jessie 05:29**

So, I have not read Bridge to Terabithia. And I think I shocked everybody. in the children's department.

**Brittany 05:36**

She's going to and we have not ruined it for her.

**Jessie 05:39**

And we'll see if I cry. It takes a lot. But I'm too many books. Not enough time really. But um, so I Brittany helped me actually because she has read the book and she found a book that I have read and they...they in based on the description of Bridge to Terabithia it. Um, I can see pulling elements of that into the story. So, my pick is This Was Our Pact by Ryan Andrews. And it is a graphic novel that came out I think two years ago. Yeah, it was a big I read it. My...my oldest daughter read it and we both really enjoyed the book. The description is it's the night of the annual Autumn Equinox festival when the town gathers to float paper lanterns down the river. Legend has it that after drifting out of a sight they soar off to the Milky Way and turn into brilliant stars. But could that actually be true? This year, Ben and his classmates are determined to find out where those lanterns really go into ensure success in their mission. They've made a pact with two simple rules. No one turns for home and no one looks back. The plan is to follow the river on their bikes for as long as it takes them to find the truth. So, what reminded me of just what Brittany was telling me about Bridge to Terabithia, is it sort of like an unlikely friendship. More comes out of there's a lot of fantasy and magic happening there kind of in the stories. I mean, it's sort of like a, I think all three of them are a little bit more like modern day contemporary with a fantasy twist. And so together, Nathaniel and Ben will travel farther than anyone has ever gone Down a winding road full of magic, wonder and unexpected friendship.

**Brittany 07:23**

And I will say this, I remember at the very beginning of that book, half of the kids all about one kid turn all that two kids rather turn around and go home.

**Jessie 07:35**

Yeah.

**Brittany 07:35**

And you have you have the main character whose name I can't think of right now. And he he's with his. Yeah, he's with this kid who doesn't really like all that. Yeah.

**Jessie 07:48**

They're not. They weren't friends to start, but...

**Brittany 07:50**

yeah, he overheard them talking about it. And so, I think just like Bridge to Terabithia, you have this this unlikely friendship that really blossoms into like a really strong friendship. And I think through what they do in this book, it really brings them together.

**Jessie 08:05**

Yeah,

**Brittany 08:06**

it doesn't have the sad name that

**Jessie 08:08**

No, it doesn't.

**Brittany 08:11**

Alright, who wants to talk about their mom or their classic? Excuse me?

**Jessie 08:15**

I can go alright. My classic is Matilda. I, Matilda by Roald Dahl, is, um, I think a lot of people have read it. It is a book about a young girl who loves to read and she's just absorbs everything she can put her hands and she basically lives in a library. And the librarian is her best friend. And she just keeps bringing her books that she brings home. But her parents are very unsupportive, and are very mean to her and send her to this awful school where Mrs. Trunchbull the headmistress kind of throws children when they're, they she thinks that they're being bad. But what comes out of it is a wonderful friendship between Matilda and her teacher because her teacher recognizes how intelligent and smart she is and recognizes also that our home life isn't so great. And I won't ruin the end of the story. But um, it there's no tears. But it is just a great story about, you know, a young girl who I think what I took away from this book more than anything, and I think this is why it's carried along with me as it came out when I was very, very young. I don't even know how I was born yet I don't know the publication date, but I loved to read as a kid and I'm a librarian and I've kind of carried that sentiment with me this book along with me. And so when I read other books that has to do with characters that really enjoy reading, that's where my readalike comes into play. So, my readalike is called Pages in Co and it's about an 11-year-old girl named Tilly Pages who has found comfort in the stories of app pages and co it's her grandparents bookshop, but her favorite characters and of Green Gables, which is another one of my favorites. Alice in Wonderland starts showing up at the shop. Tilly's adventures become very real. Not only can she follow Anne and Alice into their books, she discovers she can book wander into any story she chooses. Tilly's new ability leads her to a fun and exciting adventure. But danger may be lurking on the very next page. So, the other part is, is that Tilly is also an

orphan. Well, I don't I believe she's an orphan her...her mother passed away, but she's living with her grandparents. And her mother starts showing up in these books too. So, there's like a very interesting twist with that. But I kind of took a lot you know, you say, I don't know, it's interesting. I'm interested to see what components you take from Matilda, as your readalike, Brittany.

**Brittany** 11:00

So I feel like we picked books that we haven't read from each other before, so I haven't read Matilda before, but from your description, which was very well done, I chose the book that I am obsessed with and everyone knows I'm obsessed with it. I talk about it a lot. I chose the book Nevermore. This is by Jessica Townsend and it's about a girl, Morigan Crowe who has the worst luck ever. She was born on a curse day. And because of that everything that goes wrong in the world is Morigan's fault. So, a tree has a house. It's Morigan's fault. There's a hurricane, it's Morigan's fault. Or even if someone just gets a bad grade, and Morigan looked at them, it is her fault. So, she's in a pretty terrible life and her...her dad has her mom passed away her dad has treated her really, really horribly because she is fated to die on her 11th birthday. But instead of that happening, a guy named Jupiter sweeps in and he offers her a spot at a very prestigious school in Nevermore as long as she can pass some trials. And if she's able to do that, she will escape her fate of death and become something truly special in the world. But there are four trials she has to get through first, and they're really, really hard. And there's no guarantee that she'll get through them. And if she loses it loses these trials, she's going to die. So, kind of bleak, but it is a series which hopefully won't give away the end of that first book for you. But right now, there's three in the series and I just read the third one finally, a couple of weeks ago and I'm obsessed with it. It was as good as the first two which sometimes series kind of Peter off as you go on, but I am just so excited to see what comes out of the next few books in the series. So, it's very exciting to me, I just kind of felt like the Matilda vibe

**Jessie** 13:02

It does well when you brought it up. I immediately thought because I have I've read the first Nevermore I have not read the other two, but her parents definitely have the same vibe. Well, it's her dad and her stepmother, right?

**Brittany** 13:14

Yes.

**Jessie** 13:14

Have the same vibe as Matilda's parents. They're just like, they also they're just unsupportive. They just think that their child is the worst. And then the child goes on to become amazing.

**Brittany** 13:28

And there's magic.

**Jessie** 13:29

Yeah, tons of magic. Oh, yeah, I forgot to mention that. There's a lot of magic in Matilda, though, so

**Brittany** 13:35

I think I've seen Matilda.

**Jessie 13:36**

Well, oh, yeah, definitely. I feel like there's more magic in the book, though than in obviously. It's the book. What is your pick, Mei-Ling?

**Mei-Ling 13:49**

I don't remember so much magic in Matilda.

**Jessie 13:51**

Maybe there wasn't as much magic in the book as there was in the movie. No, there was magic. Remember, she could move things with her eye?

**Mei-Ling 13:59**

Yes.

**Jessie 14:00**

And like those lizards in the water?

**Mei-Ling 14:02**

Yes. Yes. Okay. So, my reader like is it's actually a series but the Wayside School series by Louis Sachar. There's magic in there, too. So, it's a four book series. In the very first book, this teacher turns the students that she thinks are naughty in the apples. But then the tables turn and she gets turned into an apple.

**Jessie 14:28**

I love the Wayside School.

**Brittany 14:32**

I don't remember that.

**Jessie 14:33**

We're reading them now. Me and my middle my middle child. They are so funny.

**Mei-Ling 14:39**

I just read all four books with my family. We were like reading it at night. So in the first book, you discover that wayside school was supposed to be one story or one floor and what is it 40-30 classrooms but instead it they built the classrooms on top of each other, which is of course it's preposterous, but, you know, it definitely adds to the humor. And then just that, like every chapter is about, well, it kind of features a different student, but you know, the classmates are in there, as well. So, there's like a little bit of magic in there.

**Brittany 14:55**

30

**Jessie 15:19**

The author is in there, too.

**Mei-Ling 15:21**

Yeah. Another

**Jessie 15:22**

Yes, gym teacher, he's as a gym teacher or whatever.

**Mei-Ling 15:25**

Yep. And also, there's an element of like, the kids are sort of like they're not outright neglected, but like some of the things that happen. Like, I as a parent, I think, like, you know, where were the parents? Why does nobody realize this is going on? Like, how could this kid get stuck in the classroom for like, 35 years?

**Jessie 15:46**

Or the one girl whose face changes? Yeah, she always makes been nasty, nasty fishes. And then the cloud of doom calm.

**Mei-Ling 15:54**

Exactly. So, the first three books were written quite some time ago. And then the fourth book, it came out in March 2020. It's called Wayside School Beneath the Cloud of Doom. And so that one was written 40 years after the first three. Yeah, he read. If you read the preface, he says, it's been 40 years since I read it.

**Brittany 16:16**

He needs to start writing books.

**Jessie 16:17**

I didn't realize he was that old.

**Brittany 16:21**

He writes like Holes and Fuzzy Mutt and yeah, he's got a ton of great books. Wow, 40 years.

**Jessie 16:25**

Either that or he was like really young when he wrote Wayside School. I didn't even I don't even remember that as a kid. I read it as an adult.

**Mei-Ling 16:37**

So like, Matilda, there's...there's magic. There's some magical realism in this school. Teachers there. Yeah, yeah. So, I think if you like that, you know, you really

**Jessie 16:50**

I feel like I could go on and on about that series.

**Mei-Ling** 16:53

Yeah.

**Jessie** 16:53

So, like the one with a paperclip when she the box when they go inside? Yeah, just to get like the magic box. And it's a paper. Yes. So funny.

**Brittany** 17:02

Yeah.

**Jessie** 17:03

What is your classi... classic?

**Mei-Ling** 17:06

Alright, my classic is I chose to go broad with this one is Grimm's Fairy Tales, which everyone's read at least one of them or a version of one of them. And like the spin offs and twisted fairy tales are of course endless, you know. I also like to listen to podcasts about Grimm's Fairy Tales. And to hear them performed is really cool as well.

**Brittany** 17:34

What is your readalike?

**Mei-Ling** 17:35

My readalike is A Tale Dark and Grim by Adam Gidwitz. And there's a companion through a glass grimly. I think there's one more I cannot name but the first book starts out with Hansel and Gretel as the main characters and they move through the book, and each chapter, they kind of get into a different fairy tale and add their own little twist. So it's almost like they're leaping through each chapter that's like also a story. A story you might or might not know. Like, you might know Blue Beard, but then you might not know about Clever Hans, like that's not as popular of a folklore fairy tale. And then the same thing happens in Through a Glass Grimly, wow, see that first five times. The main characters are different, but the boy, his parents are divorced and the companion novel, and it doesn't, you know, this parents don't get back together and that I don't think I'm spoiling anything, but he also moves through these fairy tales. So, like that one is more about modern spin. But the Tale Dark and Grim is really clever. Like I started reading it, and I thought, oh, you know, how is this gonna be unique, but it was really cool how...Adam and Eve...Hansel and Gretel sort of evolved their way through the book. And through each tale Oh, my word. Good. Go on. What is your spin off? Okay, Jesse.

**Jessie** 19:12

All right. So, I was I had a different book. And then I right before we did this podcast, I remembered the series that I read the first and I have not read the rest of them, but I'm really excited about but it's Disney Chills, by

Vera Strange. And the sort of the top little sentence on the book says the dreams that you fear will come true. So, this is definitely a scary take, I guess. Are all of our picks kind of scary?

**Brittany 19:43**

My next one's really funny.

**Jessie 19:46**

Okay. All right. I was just thinking did I take the dark route. But basically what the story is, is it's sort of like a modern storyline with the each story is different. Each one is different. So, you don't have to read them in order because every story is different. But then they start bringing in villains from Have you read any of the Disney chills? No, they start bringing in villains from like the Disney, which also there are some, you know some of the Disney fairy tales are obviously reformatted into Disney the Grim fairy tales that have been made for children. Because some of the Grim fairy tales can be a little dark. Well, this is not as dark necessarily as Grim fairy tales, but it is more of like, like goose bumps or, you know, a scarier type version of it in their bringing the villains in. Yeah, they're really they're really good. And I think there's three out and the fourth ones coming out this year around Halloween. So yeah, they're pretty cool.

**Mei-Ling 20:55**

I've seen the cover but I haven't read them

**Jessie 20:57**

The covers are awesome, because it's like, each one has a kid and then like a scary villain on the back in the background. And I know the first three has Ursula, Shadow Man who I think is one of the scariest characters in Disney movies, and Cruella.

**Brittany 21:12**

So yeah, that sounds really good.

**Jessie 21:15**

Yeah.

**Brittany 21:16**

All right. So, my read a like to this is a book called Granted, I went with the happy with an actual fairy.

**Jessie 21:25**

It sounds about right.

**Brittany 21:26**

Yeah. This is a this is about a girl. Well, another girl of fairy named Ophelia Fidgets. And she lives in the magical land of haven. She has a very special job called a grantor and it is her job to venture out. And she gets to grant wishes for humans, which is a very important job. Only she has not ever gotten her first assignment. So, she's never actually granted a wish before. The reason being is that there is a very low supply of magic for the fairies

to grant wishes in the world right now. And so today is a special day though, because Ophelia is going to get her very first wish granting assignment. And she's about to discover that figuring out how to truly give someone what they want takes much more than a handful of fairy dust. So, first thing I'll say is this is an excellent family read. If you want to check this book out. It's by John David Anderson, who does some amazing books. But this one in particular is very family oriented. So, you could read this chapter by chapter each night on, and then it's kind of, there's a lot of adventure. And it really does put you at the edge of your seat without kind of crossing the line over into being like, too heavy of a material for maybe a kid who gets scared easily. So, I think this is just a really fun pick. And there's a part where Ophelia is on the back of a dog. And he's helping her grant this wish and is just super cute. And honestly, I love anything that John David Anderson touches. So, he's a great author. He's got he's got some depressing books, too. So be careful, depending on what...what you're reading, if you don't like sad books, don't read those books. But yes, this is my pick for...for that reader like and it's just really, really good.

**Jessie 23:21**

It's interesting how each of us have like, again, gone in a different direction

**Brittany 23:25**

For each...each book to, I think that's a very cool and just how we that's just goes to show to you that if you're talking to a librarian and at the library, and the next day, you see a different one, you could have 20 different picks from

**Jessie 23:39**

Totally, 100%

**Mei-Ling 23:40**

Or you could have the same like the each...each one of us, I think could talk about the same story and take something right describe it different.

**Jessie 23:48**

Right, right.

**Mei-Ling 23:49**

Something from a differently.

**Jessie 23:50**

Exactly.

**Brittany 23:51**

And even as you were describing your readalikes I was thinking of readalikes to read.

**Jessie 23:57**

Yeah.

**Brittany** 23:58

Oh, that reminds me. So, it's kind of

**Mei-Ling** 24:04

like, you know, you're talking about yours. I've thought about Descendants. Yeah, yeah. Because it's all the villains.

**Jessie** 24:10

Yeah, Yes, for sure. For sure. Yeah, I do. Like the new sort of. It's interesting where Grimm Fairy Tales has gone. Yeah, you know, how it started and how it's evolved into, you know, kind of a Disney version of a lot of fairy tales. But then I also think that it's going backward a little bit, you know, inserting to bring some of the true story of grain back into definitely, Yes, for sure.

**Brittany** 24:38

All right. Well, thank you for joining us today. We hope you enjoyed this podcast and I hope you'll join us next month. Have a great day.