

Unit of Inquiry Recommended Reading List

Sharing the Planet

Below you will find a list of books related to the Unit of Inquiry, “Sharing the Planet”. Each book is related to the Central Idea. Included with each book title is a short summary. All titles are carried at the BCA2 Library unless otherwise indicated. This list is not exhaustive, but suggestions based on reviews and the librarian’s knowledge of children’s literature.

Pre-K

- Kenah, Katharine. *Nature’s Amazing Partners*. Columbus, OH: School Specialty Publishers, 2005.
 - Simple text and very colorful photographs present several pairs of living things that work together to survive. It includes animals and plants.
- Bodach, Vijaya Khisty. *Leaves*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2007.
 - This book focuses in on the importance of leaves. While describing the different types of leaves, the book also describes the uses of leaves. A maple tree is highlighted.
- Cherry, Lynne. *The Great Kapok Tree*. San Diego: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, 1990.
 - A classic picture book about a hunter who takes a nap with his axe beneath the tree he plans on cutting down. As he dreams the animals of the forest come to him to beg him to leave the tree alone.
- Bergen, Lara. *Diego’s Springtime Fiesta*. New York: Simon Spotlight/Nick Jr., 2008.
 - During the Animal Rescue Center’s Springtime Fiesta, Diego finds a mother rabbit whose babies are missing. He sets out to find them for her.
- Schaefer, Lola M. *Because of an Acorn*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2016.
 - Emphasizing how much of nature is connected this book has beautiful illustrations and text.

Kindergarten

- Bancroft, Henrietta and Richard G. VanGelder. *Animals in Winter*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.
 - This easy-to-read book describes the many different ways animals cope with winter. It includes migration, hibernation and food storage.
- Whipple, Laura. *Eric Carle’s Animals, Animals*. New York: Philomel Books, 1989.
 - A classic picture book filled with poems by a variety of authors and illustrated by Eric Carle. Students will love the pictures and poems that describe the uniqueness of animals.
- Kirk, Daniel. *A Prayer for the Animals*. New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2018.
 - A beautifully illustrated picture book with a simple, but profound message. We need to be conscious of our responsibility to take care of the animals of our planet.
- Marino, Gianna. *Night Animals*. New York: Penguin Group, 2015.
 - A humorous look at the different species of nocturnal animals.

- Beck, W.H. *Glow: Animals With Their Own Night-Lights*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.
 - This introduction to bioluminescence for young readers takes a highly visual look at this scientific phenomenon and its uses. The book shares engaging facts and vibrant images.

1st Grade

- Hopkins, Joseph H. *The Tree Lady: The True Story of How One Tree-Loving Woman Changed a City Forever*. New York: Beach Lane Books, 2013.
 - A nonfiction book about how a woman transformed the San Diego area by creating a park.
- Aloian, Molly. *Plants Are Alive!* New York: Crabtree, 2012.
 - An easy-to-understand discussion of the life cycle and parts of a plant. Includes activities/experiments students can do at home.
- Levine, Sara. *Flower Talk: How Plants Use Color to Communicate*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press, 2019.
 - This is a fun non-fiction science book that uses a cactus as a narrator. Colorful illustrations add to the richness of the information in this great picture book.
- Bodach, Vijaya Khisty. *How Does It Grow?* Logan, IA: Perfection Learning, 2011.
 - This thin book is packed with photographs and simple text to teach children how plants grow.
- Paul, Baptiste and Miranda. *I Am Farmer: Growing an Environmental Movement in Cameroon*. Minneapolis, MN: Millbrook Press, 2019.
 - A biography of Tantoh Nforba and how as a child he was interested in gardening. As an adult, he is bringing clean water and bountiful gardens to Cameroon. He is an environmental hero.

2nd Grade

- Jenkins, Steve. *Creature Features*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.
 - Steve Jenkins and Robin Page have published a lot of books together about animals. All of them are excellent as Page's illustrations are clear and concise while Steve Jenkins' words are straightforward, and sometimes funny. This title is the one that is closest to the central idea, but all are worth a read.
- Townsend, John. *Would You Survive?* Chicago: Raintree, 2006.
 - An examination of how certain habitats and climates affect animals. How do they survive extreme climates that are found in deserts and the arctic?
- Fletcher, Patricia. *Why are Ostriches so Big? and Other Curious Bird Adaptations*. New York: Gareth Stevens Publishers, 2018
 - A book about bird adaptations that will amaze readers. It also includes animal body systems, life cycle, and more.
- George, Jean Craighead. *Galapagos George*. New York: HarperCollins Publishing, 2014.
 - A moving tale about the last Galapagos Tortoise who died in 2012. This book is written by a well-known author and includes a look at evolution through one animal. Includes a glossary in back.

- Schnazer, Rosalyn. *What Darwin Saw*. Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2009.
 - This is a good book for a second grader looking for a challenge. It chronicles Charles Darwin's work on the theory of evolution. The picture book has large text and engaging illustrations to still make it accessible.

3rd Grade

- Yamada, Kobi. *What Do You Do With a Problem?* Seattle: Compendium, 2016.
 - This is one book within a series of 3 that this author has written. All follow the same format of asking what do you do with this? A great book to use as a springboard to discuss how we react to challenges.
- Winter, Ali and Michael El Fathi. *Peace and Me*. London: Lantana Publishers, 2018.
 - This book not only profiles the lives of some of the recipients of the prize, but it also gives students a short biography of Alfred Nobel. Some of those included are: Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, and Malala Yousafzai.
- Johnson, Jen Cullerton. *Seeds of Change: Planting a Path to Peace*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2010.
 - This biography of Kenyan, Wangari Maathai, gives students the opportunity to look more in-depth at a Nobel Peace Prize Winner. She stood in the face of opposition and began an effort to restore Kenya's ecosystem.
- Frier, Raphaelae. *Malala: Activist For Girls' Education*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2017.
 - A shorter illustrated biography of Malala Yousafzai.
- Anders, Hanson. *Keeping the Peace: The Kids' Book of Peacemaking*.
 - This easy-to-read book explains conflict resolution. The author touches on understanding what people want to expressing feelings. A basic book with a good message.

4th Grade

- Murphy, Jim. *Breakthrough! How Three People Saved "Blue Babies" and Changed Medicine Forever*. Boston: Clarion Books, 2015.
 - An excellent biography on how three different doctors experimented and worked to save babies who were born with a dangerous heart defect. At the same time, it explores why one of those doctors' contributions was completely ignored.
- Freedman, Russell. *The Wright Brothers*. New York: Holiday House, 1991.
 - Newbery winner Freedman is a pro at biographies. His clear text focuses on aviation history while still making the Wright Brothers more human.
- Oachs, Emily Rose. *The 12 Most Influential Inventions of All Time*. Mankato, MN: 12 Story Library, 2018.
 - The author has selected 12 inventions to highlight in this book as some of the most very important in history. Using historic photos and engaging sidebars, students are presented information on inventions such as the printing press and the internet.

- Asst. Authors. *How the _____ Changed History*. Minneapolis, MN: Abdo Publishing, 2016.
 - A series of books by Abdo publishing that focus on inventions that have changed how we live. There are titles on automobiles, the light bulb, even on safe food and sanitation. They have a lot of information and are a great read for 4th graders who are looking for a challenge.
- Thimmesh, Catherine. *Girls Think of Everything*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.
 - A colorful collection of biographies of women who have invented items like disposable diapers, space helmets, and correction fluid.

5th Grade

- Brown, Don. *The Great American Dust Bowl*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013.
 - This graphic non-fiction book is a great way to engage students in the causes and results of the Dust Bowl.
- Lanston-George, Rebecca. *A Primary Source History of The Dust Bowl*. North Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2015.
 - When learning about the impact of humans on the environment, it is important to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources. This book uses actual photos and writings of the time to portray life through the eyes of the people who lived it.
- Smith-Llera, Danielle. *You Are Eating Plastic Every Day: What's in Our Food?* North Mankato, MN: Compass Point Books, 2020.
 - A recent book that looks at a crucially important topic. . . what is the impact of the amount of plastics we use in the world?
- Goldstein, Margaret J. *Garbage in Space: A Space Discovery Guide*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2017.
 - Just as we cannot see the amount of garbage in the ocean, there is a lot of floating garbage in space. This book explores the problem of space junk and details some of the ideas that are coming forth to solve this problem.
- McCarthy, Meghan. *All That Trash: The Story of the 1987 Garbage Barge and Our Problem With Stuff*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2018.
 - A true story that follows the challenges of what seemed like a good idea. However, it ended up being a failure in accomplishing the task of removing excess garbage from an almost-full landfill. Environmentalists used the plight of the barge to bring the need for recycling to the attention of the world.