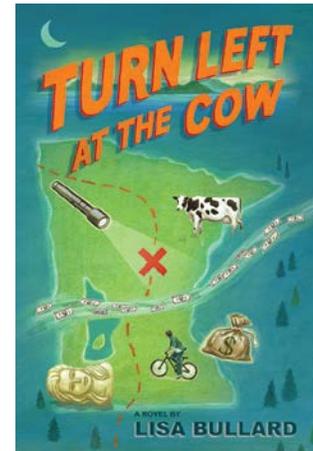


Bookstorm™

Turn Left at the Cow, written by Lisa Bullard, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers, 2013. Available in paperback.

Thirteen-year-old Trav has always wondered about his dead-before-he-was-born dad. But when he heads from California to his grandmother's house in rural Minnesota, hoping to learn about his past, he gets more than he bargained for.

It turns out his dad was involved in a bank robbery right before he mysteriously disappeared, and the loot from the take is still missing. Along with Kenny and Iz, the kids next door, Trav embarks on a search for the cash. But the trio's adventure quickly turns dangerous when it becomes clear that someone else is looking for the money – someone who won't give up without a fight!



COMPLEMENTARY BOOKS

Middle Grade Mysteries

Al Capone Does My Shirts, written by Gennifer Choldenko, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2004.

Moose moves with his family to Alcatraz Island, where his dad is a prison guard. Living on The Rock is challenging but so are making friends and taking care of his older sister, Natalie. Moose keeps getting notes from one of the prisoners ... could it be Al Capone? Newbery Honor book.

Catch You Later, Traitor, written by Avi, Algonquin Young Readers, 2015.

Pete Collison lives in 1951 Brooklyn at the height of The Red Scare. His dad is accused of being a Communist sympathizer and Pete doesn't know what to believe. He sets out to prove his dad's innocence. His classmates and his best friend want nothing to do with him. An FBI agent follows him around. Can Pete find the truth?

Detective's Assistant, written by Kate Hannigan, Little, Brown Books, 2015.

When 11-year-old Nell shows up on her aunt's doorstep, she's worried that she'll be sent to an orphanage. But Nell is smart and resourceful and her aunt is the first female detective to work for the Pinkerton Detective Agency. Nell soon makes herself useful to her aunt and provides readers with a rollicking good story. Set against true American history, this is a superb mystery.

Eddie Red, Undercover: Mystery on Museum Mile, written by Marcia Miles, HMH Books for Young Readers, 2014.

When sixth grader Edmund Xavier Lonnot, who wishes to be known as Eddie Red, collides with a fleeing witness, the NYPD asks him to help solve an art heist. You see, Eddie has a photographic memory and the ability to draw what he's seen. It's an absorbing book with a good payoff and plenty of clues along the way.

Emil and the Detectives, written by Erich Kastner, Jonathan Cape, 1931.

In the introduction to this book, Maurice Sendak writes, "Read it and you will be happy." This book is interesting not only for its story but also because it's widely regarded to be the first book with a juvenile detective. When Emil is sedated with laced chocolate on a train, he is robbed of his grandmother's money. He doesn't want to disappoint his family; he's determined to solve the mystery of the robbery. It's a fast-paced story, with a solid mystery, and highly enjoyable to read.

Greenglass House by Kate Milford, Clarion Books, 2014.

It's wintertime at Greenglass House. The creaky smuggler's inn is always quiet during this season, and twelve-year-old Milo, the innkeepers' adopted son, plans to spend his holidays relaxing. But on the first icy night of vacation, out of nowhere, the guest bell rings. Then rings again. And again. Soon Milo's home is bursting with odd, secretive guests, each one bearing a strange story that is somehow connected to the rambling old house. As objects go missing and tempers flare, Milo and Meddy, the cook's daughter, must decipher clues and untangle the web of deepening mysteries to discover the truth about Greenglass House – and themselves. National Book Award nominee. Edgar Award. Andre Norton Award nominee.

Holes, written by Louis Sachar, Frances Foster Books, 1998.

Stanley Yelnats is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnatses. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys build character by spending all day, every day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes. Why?

House with a Clock in Its Walls, written by John Bellairs, Dial Press, 1973.

Lewis Barnavelt is not brave. Certainly not as brave as his best friend, Rose Rita, but somehow he finds himself exploring his Uncle Jonathan's peculiar house. The previous owner was a wizard, an evil wizard. And somewhere, deep in the house, the doomsday clock is ticking down. Can Lewis stop the countdown?

Kiki Strike: Inside the Shadow City, written by Kirsten Miller, Bloomsbury, 2006.

Who is Kiki Strike? When seventh-grader Ananka Fishbein explores a sinkhole that suddenly appears across from her apartment in New York City, she discovers The Irregulars and their leader, Kiki Strike, who are about to explore The Shadow City in a twisty, turny tale filled with mystery and humor.

London Eye Mystery, written by Siobhan Dowd, Random House, 2006.

Ted and Kat watched their cousin Salim board the London Eye, but after half an hour it landed and everyone trooped off—except Salim. Where could he have gone? How on earth could he have disappeared into thin air? Ted and his older sister, Kat, become sleuthing partners, since the police are having no luck. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. And ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain works in its own very unique way, to find the key to the mystery.

Murder at Midnight, written by Avi, Scholastic Press, 2010.

A plot to overthrow King Claudio is brewing in the Kingdom of Pergamontio. Scholarly Mangus the magician—along with his street-smart and faithful new servant boy, Fabrizio—have been marked as easy scapegoats for the traitor lurking within the king's court. Together, these two unlikely partners must gather clues to solve the mystery and prove their innocence before the stroke of midnight ... or face death!

Red Blazer Girls: the Ring of Rocamadour, written by Michael D. Beil, Knopf, 2009.

Sophie, Margaret, and Rebecca see a ghostly face in the church across from their private school, discovering a woman who badly needs help. The girls set out on a treasure hunt with clues about religion, literature, and math, all twisting and turning to a satisfying conclusion. Edgar Award nominee.

Three Times Lucky, written by Sheila Turnage, Dial Books, 2012.

Loquacious sixth grader Moses LoBeau washed ashore at Tupelo Landing during a hurricane when she was a baby and she's been wondering who her "upstream mother" is ever since. Looked after by the Colonel and Miss Lana and pretty much everyone in town, she's perceptive and kind and funny. When a lawman shows up asking about a murder, Moses and her best friend Dale Earnhardt Johnson III set out to solve the mystery. Newbery Honor.

Under the Egg, Laura Marx Fitzgerald, Dial Books, 2014.

When Theodora Tenpenny spills a bottle of rubbing alcohol on her late grandfather's painting, she discovers what seems to be an old Renaissance masterpiece underneath. That's great news for Theo, who's struggling to hang onto her family's two-hundred-year-old townhouse and support her unstable mother on her grandfather's legacy of \$463. There's just one problem: Theo's grandfather was a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and she worries the painting may be stolen.

Westing Game, written by Ellen Raskin, Dutton Books, 1978.

Perhaps the quintessential mystery for middle graders, this is played out against a cast of characters who all stand to inherit something from the Westing estate. But the deceased Samuel W. Westing wants to play games ... what will our 16 game players do?

Butter Heads and Other Odd State Fair Traditions

This would make a good research-skills project, to find other oddities for which various state fairs are known.

"7 Weird and Wonderful State Fair Traditions," Sarah Purkrabek, *Afar*, June 25, 2015.

<http://www.afar.com/magazine/7-weird-and-wonderful-state-fair-traditions>

Butter Head Sculpture – Minnesota State Fair, Ochen Kaylan, raw footage for film Midwest Brigadoon.

A time-lapse shot of one butter head sculpture at the 2010 Minnesota State Fair. This shot covers nine hours with breaks edited out. The carving is done on a rotating dais, so this could be a bit dizzying!

http://www.mnstatefair.org/entertainment/timelapse/butter_sculpture.html

"Butter Sculpture Gallery," Erin Zimmer, *Serious Eats*, August, 2008.

The Ohio State Fair features butter sculptures, sponsored by the American Dairy Association, and this site features some of the astounding butter art.

<http://www.seriousseats.com/2008/08/butter-sculptures-state-fairs-shawn-johnson-elvis-obama-mccain-jesus-vader.html>

"Ohio State Fair features butter sculpture tribute to Buckeyes," Eric Vander Voort, NCAA.com, Sept 8, 2015.

<http://www.ncaa.com/news/football/article/2015-07-29/ohio-state-fair-features-butter-sculpture-tribute-buckeyes>

Fish Out of Water

100-Year-Old Secret, written by Tracy Barrett, Henry Holt, 2008.

In this first book in the series, Xena and Xander Holmes, sister and brother, great-great-great-grandchildren of Sherlock Holmes, move from America to London so their parents can work there for a summer. They're immediately caught up in a mystery about an expensive painting that disappeared 100 years ago. The siblings are surprised to find that there's a secret society that has been watching them all along.

Secrets of Shakespeare's Grave, written by Deron R. Hicks, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers, 2013.

Although the mystery begins in Georgia, Colophon (look it up, it fits) and her older brother Case are soon hunting through England for their family treasure. A nefarious cousin threatens ownership of the family's 400-year-old publishing company and the two children search through the unfamiliar city for the answers to their mysteries. It's a fast-paced adventure but there's also a good amount of humor. Setting this within the Shakespearean plays is a nice touch.

Missing Parent

Anne of Green Gables, written by L.M. Montgomery, L.C. Page & Co, 1908.

Orphan Anne Shirley is mistakenly sent to Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert, a brother and sister who wanted a boy to help on the farm. Irrepressible, Anne makes an impression on everyone she meets and Matthew and Marilla grow to love her as a member of their family.

Apothecary, written by Maile Meloy, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2011.

When the Scott family moves from America to London in 1952, Janie feels like a fish out of water. School is different, the language is different, her schoolmates aren't friendly. But then there's Benjamin Burrows, the apothecary's son, who wishes to be a spy. When Benjamin's father disappears, leaving his sacred book the *Pharmacopoeia* behind him, the friends decide to find him, thereby embarking on a world-traveling adventure that proves to be dangerous and challenging.

The Case of the Missing Marquess: an Enola Holmes Mystery, written by Nancy Springer, Philomel, 2006.

Enola Holmes' mother disappears on her 14th birthday – and Enola is convinced that she alone can find her, even though she is the (much) younger sister of Sherlock Holmes and Mycroft Holmes. Set in Victorian London, Enola is quick-witted and resourceful and determined, consistently showing what a girl can do in a society that doesn't value girls. The mysteries in this series of books are gripping.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, written by J.K. Rowling, Arthur Levine Books, 1999.

Yes, of course, Lily and James Potter were destroyed by Voldemoort before this series begins. It's why Hagrid delivers baby Harry to the Dursleys, his aunt and uncle. Throughout the books, Harry yearns for his missing parents and they come to help him on occasion. This is certainly a strong contender in the Missing Parents category.

Mysterious Benedict Society, written by Trenton Lee Stewart, Little, Brown, 2007.

"Are you a gifted child looking for special opportunities?" Dozens of children answer this newspaper ad. They're asked to take a series of mysterious, mind-bending tests. Four children are selected to go on a secret mission at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. They must thwart a master criminal whose goal is to take over the world.

Rodzina, written by Karen Cushman, Clarion Books, 2003.

When Rodzina's family dies tragically and her life in Chicago is no longer possible, she gets on the Orphan Train heading west. She is convinced she will be sold into slavery. Her many adventures on the train, working with the children, telling stories, endear this tough and stolid girl to those around her. She is adopted twice but escapes with her life intact. Will she find her forever home?

Worth, written by A. LaFaye, Simon & Schuster, 2004.

When Nathaniel breaks his leg, he can't help on his family's Nebraska farm. His father decides to adopt John Worth from the Orphan Train, to help in Nathaniel's place. Nathaniel is angry because he feels useless. John Worth is angry because he's treated like a servant and he has harrowing nightmares of his family's death in a fire. A range war and a book of Greek mythology bring the boys closer. Scott O'Dell Historical Fiction Award.

Robberies and Heists

Billy the Kid: a Novel, written by Theodore Taylor, Harcourt, 2005.

This is an alternate history, meaning that the author has altered how things really happened. Taylor takes the story of Billy the Kid, who is a teenaged bank robber, and rotates it quite a bit. The resulting yarn is full of horses, guns, betrayal, twists and turns, and love. Billy's cousin Willis Monroe brings him to justice. An author's note relates the true story.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid: Notorious Outlaws of the West, written by Tim Cooke, Gareth Stevens, 2016.

This is a fast-paced and gripping account of Robert Leroy Parkers and Harry Longabaugh, the men who eventually became bank robbers in the West, finally fleeing to South America where their outcome remains a mystery. The movie made about these two in 1969 brought them widespread fame. This book tells their true story.

The Great Train Robbery, Michael Crichton, Jonathan Cape, 1975.

In teeming Victorian London, where lavish wealth and appalling poverty live side by side, Edward Pierce charms the most prominent of the well-to-do as he cunningly orchestrates the crime of the century. Who would suspect that a gentleman of breeding could mastermind the daring theft of a fortune in gold? Who could predict the consequences of making the extraordinary robbery aboard the pride of England's industrial era, the mighty steam locomotive? Based on fact, as lively as legend, and studded with all the suspense and style of a modern fiction master, here is a classic caper novel.

Skyjack: the Hunt for D.B. Cooper, written by Geoffrey Gray, Broadway Books, 2012.

"I have a bomb here and I would like you to sit by me." That was the note handed to a stewardess by a mild-mannered passenger on a Northwest Orient flight in 1971. It was also the start of one of the most astonishing whodunits in the history of American true crime: how one man extorted \$200,000 from an airline, then parachuted into the wilds of the Pacific Northwest, never to be seen again. The case of D.B. Cooper is a modern legend that has obsessed and cursed his pursuers for generations with everything from bankruptcy to suicidal despair.

Small Town Festivals

"10 Wacky Small Town Festivals," Julia Layton & Sarah Winkler, *How Stuff Works*, 6 October 2008. Do check out Frozen Dead Guy Days.

<http://adventure.howstuffworks.com/destinations/parades-festivals/5-weird-festivals.htm>

"America's 15 Best Small Town Festivals," by Annie Bruce, *Fodor's Travel*, April 5, 2016

<http://www.fodors.com/news/photos/americas-15-best-small-town-festivals>

"Bingo! Henny the Hen Just Made Her 'Mark' on No. 16: Game Hinging on Chicken Becomes a Hit at Texas Bar and Elsewhere," Stu Woo, *The Wall Street Journal*, Oct 22, 2012.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10000872396390443749204578048740198716834>

“Great Summer Festivals,” Midwest Weekends, a thorough listing, week by week.

http://midwestweekends.com/plan_a_trip/touring/festivals/midwest_summer_festivals.html

“Slightly Odd Small Town Festivals Worth a Travel Tradition,” *AroundMe.com*. Check out the Cow Chip Throwing Contest in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin.

<http://www.aroundme.com/travel/23497/15-slightly-odd-small-town-festivals-worth-a-travel-tradition>