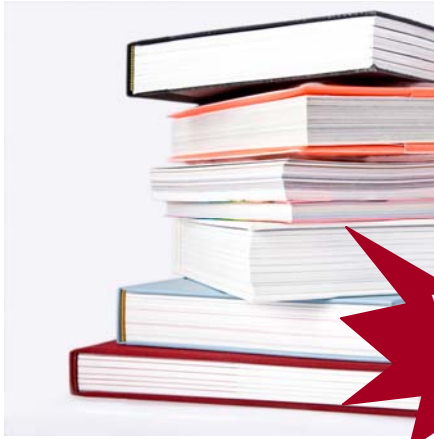


Principal's Picks 2009-2010

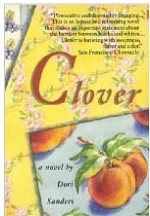
Dr. Lemrow's Recommended Books for Students



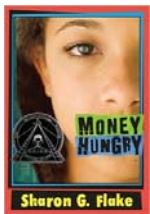
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The Library Card by Jerry Spinelli - This is an unusual little novel. Rather than a novel, it is more like long-short stories tied together with a common thread. That thread is a library card. In three different vignettes, the author, Mr. Spinelli, develops characters and weaves the effect of a library card to their lives. The short character sketches are delightful and heart warming. Some of the stories are funny; some of them tug at your heart strings. I think students will enjoy a variety of characters, the shortness of the stories and the significance of a library card.

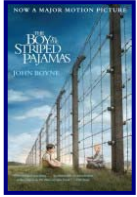


Clover by Dori Sanders - This is an unusual little novel about Clover, a 10-year-old African-American girl from a small town in South Carolina. It chronicles her relationship with her white step-mother following her father's tragic death only hours after the marriage. Clover and her step-mother learn each other. The family scenes are filled with humor and understanding. The family characters are delightful in real-life situations. This is an insightful little book of a 10-year-old coming to grips with the concept of family.



Money Hungry by Sharon G. Flake - Thirteen-year-old Raspberry is obsessed with money. Money keeps her awake at night. What makes money so important to Raspberry is she has experienced living without money. She lived on the streets; she's lived out of a car and now she lives in the Projects. She wants to take herself and her mama out of the projects. Raspberry has learned that only cold, hard cash matters. Beneath all this hardness about money, beats a little girl's heart who loves her mama and cares about people. The story introduces true characters, meaningful situations and challenges. Raspberry must deal with her absent father, pressures of friends, her mother's dating and the ever-present challenge of trying to make ends meet. This is

essentially an "inner-city" book. It talks about the Projects; it talks about a single mama trying to take care of her daughter and, at the same time, trying to better herself, working two jobs and going to school. This is a book more suited for 7th and 8th graders.



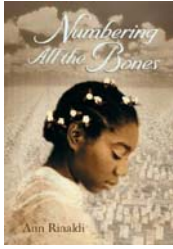
The Boy in the Stripped Pajamas by John Boyne - This is a very unusual book, well written and well conceived. If I say too much about the book, I'll give the story away. The reader will move with a 9-year old boy called Bruno, but the book isn't about 9 year olds. You learn about Bruno's family, his father, the commandant, his sister, "the hopeless case," and his mother. You'll also learn about differences and similarities. At some point in the book, you'll arrive with Bruno at a fence. Fences like this exist all over the world, but I hope you never encounter such a fence. Powerful story.



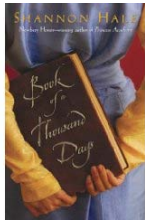
8th Grade Bites by Heather Brewer - This is one of the many popular books today in vampire literature. This is a story about an 8th grade boy whose parents have been mysteriously killed and he's being raised by his parents' good friend. For Vladimir Tod, life is challenging. Middle school is difficult enough. Eighth grade is difficult, but being part human and part vampire is downright hard. This mystery about how Vladimir tries to learn about his parents' death, about who he is and about being a vampire. This is the first book in a ghoulish series for readers. It is filled with dark characters and mystical glyphs, secret identities, hidden agendas, unearthly powers and many teenage situations.



Girl in a Cage by Jane Yolen & Robert J. Harris - This is historical fiction. It is the story of Scotland's struggle for freedom from England. When Robert Bruce becomes King of Scotland, his 11-year-old daughter, Marjorie, becomes a princess! Marjorie grows to understand the true meaning of being a princess and what it really means to lead. Her father's claim to the throne is challenged. Thus, the Bruce family becomes targets of the ruthless Edward Longshanks, King of England. This is the story of Marjorie's capture and imprisonment. Her prison is a wooden cage in the center of a town square where she is displayed like an animal in a zoo. She suffers from the wind, the rain, the townspeople and a battle of wits with Edward Longshanks. This is exciting, interesting, emotional, historical fiction where an 11-year-old girl learns about love, her step mother, her father and, most of all, about herself, what really matters in life, what it means to rule, and the meaning of freedom.



Numbering All the Bones by Ann Rinaldi - The protagonist is 13-year-old, Eulinda. This is a well-written, interesting, emotional story. This is a story of how Eulinda grows to what she should be. The setting is 1864 and the Civil War is moving towards an end. For 13-year-old Eulinda, who lives on a Georgia plantation, it's the most difficult time of her life. She has to deal with her Master, the sale of her younger brother, Zeke and her older brother, Nettie, has run away to join the northern effort. Eulinda is given a chance to move north, but she must make a decision. Nettie might be captive in a nearby prison. This is a story of a young girl, coming to grips with whom she is and what she will be. She expresses it this way "make myself come true." In the course of the novel, the reader learns about Civil War prisons and Southern and Northern sympathizers. The reader meets Clara Barton, the eventual founder of the American Red Cross, and learns of her work with Civil War prisons. Our hero, Eulinda, must dig deep into her heart to unearth the many meanings of freedom.

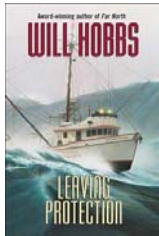


Book of a Thousand Days by Sharon Hale - This is a love story and a story of friendship. This is an intriguing story about Dashti, a maid, and Lady Saren, her mistress. Because Saren refuses to marry a man she despises, she and her maid, Dashti, are imprisoned in a tower for seven years. Food runs low, the days go from boiling hot to freezing cold and Dashti has to try to keep them fed and comfortable. This is an intriguing tale of two lives, double identity, different culture and delightful characters. Dashti must care for her frightened maiden, free a war-torn country, fall in love and come to peace with herself. What she does, how she does it, who she becomes and how she helps herself and her lady are not only exciting character developments, but also, a delightful, fascinating tale of love, conquest and adventure.



Found is Book 1 in a Series called **The Missing** by Margaret Peterson Haddix - This is somewhat of a mystery and an adventure. Thirteen-year-old, Jonah, always knew he was adopted, but he really didn't think it was a big deal. Then a new friend moves to the neighborhood named Chip who finds out that he's also adopted and they both start getting mysterious letters. The two boys with the help of Jonah's sister, Katherine, are plunged into a mystery. This mystery involves the FBI, a smuggling operation, a disappearing and appearing airplane and people who seem to disappear and appear as well. Our main characters are caught in a battle between two opposing forces that want very different things for their lives. The question is do the two boys have a choice in the matter? What about Katherine, the sister? And are both their choices

horrifying? With *Found*, the author, Margaret Peterson Haddix, begins a new series that promises to be every bit suspenseful as her previous writing. I think you will enjoy this book.



Leaving Protection by Will Hobbs - Leaving Protection is a high-seas adventure. The story takes place in Alaska. It is the story of Robbie Daniels who at 16 years old is ready to get a job to help his family and to earn money for school. He signs on to be a deck hand on a salmon troller. The story covers his relationship with the legendary fisherman, Tor Torsen, catching pink salmon from dawn to dusk while he's living his dream and learning about his captain's dark secret. This is the story of how Robbie learns about the sea, about the storms of nature and the storms of people. It is also a suspense story as we learn what the captain is going to do and what happens during a violent storm at sea. This is truly a test of Robbie's courage and wit. This is an entertaining and enjoyable book.



Sand Dollar Summer by Kimberly K. Jones - Twelve-year-old Lise watches her safe world fall apart when her strong, self-reliant mom is injured in a car accident. In order to recuperate, mom takes Lise and her bright little brother to live in a rattle-trap house on the beach in Maine for the summer and so her life changes. Although her mother grew up in Maine, this is Lise's first experience with the ocean; she's frightened of so many things. This book evidences how, in a mere second, one's life can change forever. This is an enjoyable book full of interesting characters and family situations.