

Lincoln City Libraries provides sets of each school year's Nebraska Golden Sower chapter book nominees. Each set contains approximately 15-25 copies of the same title. We make these bags available on a monthly basis to teachers to use in their classrooms from August through July. As with any book, we recommend that teachers read the book before they use it in their classroom to determine if it is appropriate for their needs. All public, private, and home school teachers with a Lincoln City Library card are welcome to use this program. The following guidelines apply to the use of these bags:

- Bags must be picked up and dropped off at Bennett Martin Public Library (136 S. 14th St.) during regular business hours. They can't be left in a book drop.
Hours are: Monday through Thursday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday & Saturday: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday: Noon to 6 p.m.
- Reservations go by calendar month instead of regular due dates. Each teacher can reserve up to two bags for a given calendar month and can reserve each bag for one or two calendar months in a row, as available. To make reservations, contact Bennett Martin Public Library staff in person or email abousquet@lincoln.ne.gov.
- Bags may be picked up on the 1st of the reserved month, and are due back on the 26th of that month, or the next month.
- There are no late fees or fees for a reasonable amount of copies lost in the process of loaning them out to students. Life happens and we want you to feel comfortable using this service.

All 2024-2025 Golden Sower Chapter Book Nominees are available (listed in blue), plus the following nominees from previous years:

Across the Desert, by Dusti Bowling (gr. 3-7). When her hero, a girl known as the Desert Aviator, crashes during her livestream, 12-year-old Jolene, armed with a hand-drawn map and a stolen cell phone, races against time across the treacherous Arizona desert to save her.

Because of the Rabbit, by Cynthia Lord (gr. 3-7). Accompanying her game warden father on a routine call on the last night of summer before she ends homeschooling and starts public school for the first time, young Emma finds herself caring for a baby bunny while navigating a project with an animal-loving boy who does not quite fit in.

Bob, by Wendy Mass & Rebecca Stead (gr. 3-6). When Livy and her family visit Livy's grandmother in Australia again after five years, Livy has the feeling she's forgotten something really important about Gran's house. It turns out she's right—Bob, a short, greenish creature dressed in a chicken suit, didn't forget Livy, or her promise. He's been waiting five years for her to come back and keep her promise to help him find his way back home.

Brave Like That, by Lindsey Stoddard (gr. 4-7). Adopted by a heroic firefighter after being abandoned as a baby, a misfit who is desperate for a break from work, sports and immature peers bonds with an equally lonely stray while finding the courage to realize his own kind of normal.

Bunnacula: The Graphic Novel, by James Howe and Andrew Donkin (gr. 4-6) Harold the dog and Chester the cat must find out the truth about the newest pet in the Monroe household—a suspicious-looking bunny with unusual habits...and fangs! Could this innocent-seeming rabbit actually be a vampire? Experience the chills and thrills of this classic tale in an all-new graphic novel format!

Caterpillar Summer, by Gillian McDunn (gr. 3-6). Since her father's death, Cat has taken care of her brother, Chicken, for their hard working mother but while spending time with grandparents they never knew, Cat has the chance to be a child again.

Clues To The Universe, by Christina Li (gr. 4-7). Though Ro and Benji were only supposed to be science class partners, the pair become unlikely friends: Benji helps Ro finish her rocket, and Ro figures out a way to reunite Benji and his dad. But Benji hesitates, which infuriates Ro. Doesn't he realize how much Ro wishes she could be in his place?

Controlled Burn, by Erin Soderberg Downing. (gr. 3-6). Twelve-year-old Maia's parents say she's lucky she noticed something as early as she did. Lucky to have smelled the smoke, lucky to have pulled her sister, Amelia, out of their burning house. But is it really "lucky" when Amelia's stuck in the hospital, covered in burns? And is it "lucky" when Maia knows it was her candle, left unattended, that started the fire in the first place?...As she begins to figure out how to face her guilt and paralyzing fears, she'll discover there's a fine line between fear and adventure. And when danger strikes again, Maia must summon all her bravery and overcome her self-doubt if she wants to save those she loves most.

Count Me In, by Varsha Bajaj (gr. 4-8). Told from two viewpoints, sixth-graders Karina and Chris use social media to stand up to racism in Houston, Texas, after an attack puts Karina's Indian American grandfather in the hospital.

Cress Watercress, by Gregory Maguire (gr. 3-5). When Papa doesn't return from a nocturnal honey-gathering expedition, Cress holds out hope, but her mother assumes the worst. It's a dangerous world for rabbits, after all. Mama moves what's left of the Watercress family to the basement unit of the Broken Arms, a run-down apartment oak with a suspect owl landlord, a nosy mouse super, a rowdy family of squirrels, and a pair of songbirds who broadcast everyone's business. Can a dead tree full of annoying neighbors, and no Papa, ever be home?

The Doughnut Fix, by Jessie Janowitz (gr. 3-6). When his family moves to tiny Petersville, eleven-year-old Tris stops focusing on his perfect sister, Jeanine, by using his cooking expertise to revive a town tradition of chocolate cream doughnuts.

A Duet for Home, by Karina Yan Glaser (gr 4-6). Two children living in a homeless shelter whose friendship grows over a shared love of classical music, June and Tyree join forces to confront a new housing policy that puts homeless families in danger.

Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library, by Chris Grabenstein (gr. 4-7). Twelve-year-old Kyle gets to stay overnight in the new town library, designed by his hero (the famous gamemaker Luigi Lemoncello), with other students but finds that come morning he must work with friends to solve puzzles in order to escape.

Every Missing Piece, by Melanie Conklin (gr. 5-7). Ever since her father died in a terrible accident, Maddy Gaines has worried a lot. She calls the police so often that she's on a first-name basis with the Sheriff. When a new boy moves to town, Maddy is convinced that he's not who he says he is--he's a boy who went missing six months ago. Maddy, her dog, her best friend, and her stepdad team up to see what he's hiding.

Finally Seen, by Kelly Yang (gr. 4-7). When ten-year-old Lina Gao leaves China to live with her parents and sister, after five years apart, she must reckon with her hurt, anger, and curiosity and find a way to get her bearings in this new country--and the almost-new family that comes along with it.

From the Desk of Zoe Washington, by Janae Marks (gr. 4-7). Avid baker Zoe Washington receives a letter on her twelfth birthday from her biological father, who is in prison for a terrible crime.

Imaginary, by Lee Bacon (gr. 3-7). Eleven-year-old Zach knows he is too old to have an imaginary playmate, but between grieving for the loss of his father and coping with bullying at school the only place he seems to find joy is in his fantasy world with his best friend Shovel.

Invisible, by Christina Diaz Gonzales (gr. 4-7). Can five overlooked kids make one big difference? There's George: the brain, Sara: the loner, Dayara: the tough kid, Nico: the rich kid, and Miguel: the athlete. And they're stuck together when they're forced to complete their school's community service hours. Although they're sure they have nothing in common with one another, some people see them as all the same... just five Spanish-speaking kids. Then they meet someone who truly needs their help, and they must decide whether they are each willing to expose their own secrets to help... or if remaining invisible is the only way to survive middle school

Fuzzy Mud, by Louis Sachar (gr. 3-5). Two middle-grade kids, fifth grader Tamaya Dhilwassi and seventh grader Marshall Walsh, take a shortcut home from school and discover what looks like fuzzy mud but is actually a substance with the potential to wreak havoc on the entire world.

The Incredibly Dead Pets of Rex Dexter, by Aaron Reynolds (gr. 3-6). Receiving a pet chicken instead of the dog he has wished for all his life, Rex is cursed by the Grim Reaper in the wake of his chicken's untimely demise and becomes haunted by a chatty, messy bunch of dead animal ghosts from the local zoo.

Joyful Noise, by Paul Fleischman (gr. 3-5). Written to be read aloud by two voices--sometimes alternating, sometimes simultaneous--here are irresistible poems that celebrate the insect world.

The Lemonade War, by Jacqueline Davies (gr. 3-5). Evan and his younger sister, Jesse, react very differently to the news that they will be in the same class for fourth grade and they battle it out through lemonade stands, each trying to be the first to earn 100 dollars. Includes mathematical calculations and tips for running a successful lemonade stand.

Letters from Cuba, by Ruth Behar (gr. 3-7). In 1938, eleven-year-old Esther joins her father in tropical, multicultural Cuba, where they toil together to rescue the rest of their Jewish family from persecution in Poland. Includes notes about the author's grandmother, on whom the story is based.

The Lion of Mars, by Jennifer L. Holm (gr. 3-6). Bell has spent his whole life - all eleven years of it - on Mars. But he's still just a regular kid - he loves cats, any kind of cake, and is curious about the secrets the adults in the US colony are keeping. Like, why don't we have contact with anyone on the other Mars colonies? Why are they so isolated? When a virus breaks out and the grown-ups all fall ill, Bell and the other children are the only ones who can help. It's up to Bell - a regular kid in a very different world - to uncover the truth and save his family ... and possibly unite an entire planet.

The List of Things That Will Not Change, by Rebecca Stead (gr. 5-8). Despite her parents' divorce, her father's coming out as gay, and his plans to marry his boyfriend, ten-year-old Bea is reassured by her parents' unconditional love, excited about getting a stepsister, and haunted by something she did last summer at her father's lake house.

The Magic Misfits, by Neil Patrick Harris (gr. 4-6). Six young magicians and illusionists team up to save their small town from a crooked carnival owner and his goons.

The Midnight Children, by Dan Gemeinhart (gr. 5-7). In the dead of night, a truck arrives in Slaughterville, a small town curiously named after its windowless slaughterhouse. Seven mysterious kids with suitcases step

out of the vehicle and into an abandoned home on a dead-end street, looking over their shoulders to make sure they aren't noticed. But Ravani Foster covertly witnesses their arrival from his bedroom window. Timid and lonely, Ravani is eager to learn everything he can about his new neighbors: What secrets are they hiding? And most mysterious of all...where are the adults? Yet amid this shadowy group of children, Ravani finds an unexpected friend in the warm and gutsy Virginia. But with this friendship comes secrets revealed--and danger. When Ravani learns of a threat to his new friends, he must fight to keep them safe, or lose the only person who has ever understood him.

The Million Dollar Race, by Matthew Ross Smith (gr. 4-6). This novel follows a speedy kid from an unconventional family who will do whatever it takes to win an international track contest.

Odder, by Katherine Applegate (gr. 3-7). Odder spends her days off the coast of central California, practicing her underwater acrobatics and spinning the quirky stories for which she's known. She's a fearless daredevil, curious to a fault. But when Odder comes face-to-face with a hungry great white shark, her life takes a dramatic turn, one that will challenge everything she believes about herself--and about the humans who hope to save her

One Small Hop, by Madelyn Rosenberg (gr. 4-7). **The Perfect Score**, by Rob Buyeah (gr. 4-6). The whole school is in a frenzy with the statewide assessment tests approaching. When one of the kids has a big idea for acing the tests, they're all in.

A Place to Hang the Moon, by Kate Albus (gr. 4-6). Ahab Goldstein is a seventh-grader living in an United States (specifically Maine) where the environment has turned toxic, and the corrupt Environmental Police Force is in control, limiting access to natural resources like gas and water, issuing fines, and transporting "fragile" species (pretty much all of them) to the Center for Species Rehabilitation in New Arcadia (a dubious refuge at best); so when Ahab and his friends find a real live bullfrog on an island in the toxic harbor, possibly the last one in America, they are faced with a choice--turn it over (NO!), leave it alone, or bike to Canada to find it a mate.

Rez Dogs, by Joseph Bruchac (gr. 3-6). When the COVID-19 pandemic starts, Malian, a young Wabanaki girl, is quarantined with her grandparents on the reservation, where she befriends a local dog and learns about her ancestors and how they always survive together.

Roll With It, by Jamie Sumner (gr. 5-7). Twelve-year-old Ellie, who has cerebral palsy, finds her life transformed when she moves with her mother to small-town Oklahoma to help care for her grandfather, who has Alzheimer's Disease.

A Rover's Story, by Jasmine Warga (gr. 3-5). Built to explore Mars, Resilience begins to develop human-like feelings as he learns from the NASA scientists who assembled him, and as he blasts off and explores Mars, Resilience must overcome different obstacles as he explores the red planet.

Save Me A Seat, by Sara Weeks & Gita Varadarajan (gr. 3-6). Joe has lived in the same town all his life, and was doing just fine until his best friends moved away and left him on his own. Ravi's family just moved to America from India, and he's finding it pretty hard to figure out where he fits in. Joe and Ravi don't think they have anything in common, but soon enough they have a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week.

Saving Winslow, by Sharon Creech (gr. 3-6). When Louie's father brings home a sickly newborn mini donkey, Louie names him Winslow and is determined to save him. Taking care of him helps Louie feel closer to his

brother, Gus, who is far away in the army. As Louie's bond with Winslow grows, surprising and life-altering events prove that this fragile donkey is stronger than anyone could have imagined.

The Seventh Most Important Thing, by Shelley Pearsall (gr. 4-7) Arthur threw a brick at the trash picker and the judge is ready to send Arthur to juvie for the foreseeable future. Amazingly, it's the Junk Man himself who offers an alternative: 120 hours of community service . . . working for him.

The Silver Arrow, by Lev Grossman (gr. 4-7). Kate's humdrum life is transformed when her eccentric Uncle Herbert brings her a colossal locomotive train, the Silver Arrow, as her eleventh birthday gift, leading her and her younger brother on a mysterious quest.

Six Feet Below Zero, by Ena Jones (gr. 4-7). Rosie and Baker need to keep up the illusion that their Great Grammy is alive before the Grim Hesper takes away the only home they have ever known.

Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio, by Peg Kehret (gr. 4-6). The author describes her battle against polio at age thirteen and her efforts to overcome its debilitating effects

Song for a Whale, by Lynne Kelly (gr. 4-6). From fixing the class computer to repairing old radios, twelve-year-old Iris is a tech genius. But she's the only deaf person in her school, so people often treat her like she's not very smart. If you've ever felt like no one was listening to you, then you know how hard that can be. When she learns about Blue 55, a real whale who is unable to speak to other whales, Iris understands how he must feel. Then she has an idea: she should invent a way to "sing" to him! But he's three thousand miles away. How will she play her song for him?

The SOS File, by Betsy Byars (gr. 4-6). The students in Mr. Magro's class submit stories for the SOS file about their biggest emergencies, and then they read them aloud for extra credit.

Spark, by Sarah Beth Durst (gr. 4-7). Naturally quiet since birth, Mina and her stormbeast, Pixit, lead others like themselves in defying authority and attempting to spread the truth that Alorria's idyllic weather comes at a steep cost.

Stella, by McCall Hoyle (gr. 3-7). Stella used to be a bomb-sniffing dog, but after a terrible accident, she goes to live on a small family farm to recover from her fear of loud noises. Stella has every reason to love her new family, especially the young human named Chloe who smells like chocolate chip cookies, newly cut grass, the pages of books, and something else, a strange chemical she can't quite identify. Chloe has epilepsy, and a chemical inside her body surges just before she has a seizure. Stella's nose makes the connection. But how can she warn Esperanza without her thinking it's just Stella's usual anxiety? How can she convince her new family that she can be a new kind of service dog and hopefully save Chloe's life?

Strike Zone, by Mike Lupica (gr. 5-8). Twelve-year-old Nick Garcia dreams of winning MVP of his summer baseball league, of finding a cure for his sister, of meeting his hero, Yankee pitcher Michael Arroyo, and of no longer living in fear of the government and ICE agents.

Time Villains, by Victor Piñeiro (gr. 4-6). When a homework assignment and a magic table summon real and fictional people from history, including the bloodthirsty pirate Blackbeard, sixth-grader Javi, his brawny younger sister Brady, and his brainy best friend Wiki join forces to save the world.

Twins, by Varian Johnson and Shannon Wright (gr. 3-7). Twins Maureen and Francine distinguish themselves for the first time by pursuing separate interests at the beginning of the sixth grade.

The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA., by Brenda Woods (gr. 4-6). When Gabriel accidentally rides his new bike right into the path of a car, a Black man named Meriwether pushes him out of the way just in time and fixes his damaged bike. As a thank you, Gabriel gets him a job at his dad's auto shop. Gabriel's dad hires him with some hesitation, however, anticipating trouble with the other mechanic, who makes no secret of his racist opinions.

The War that Saved My Life, by Kimberly B Bradley (gr. 4-6). A young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside during World War II, where they find life to be much sweeter away from their abusive mother. **What Comes Next**, by Rob Buyea (gr. 3-6). Twelve-year-old Thea, devastated after seeing her best friend die, begins to open to the possibility of new friendships and forgiveness, and comes to believe in what cannot be fully explained. When she bonds with Jack-Jack, a rescue puppy who is no ordinary dog, Thea, who has not spoken since she lost her best friend in a tragic accident, opens up to the possibility of new friends and forgiveness, and comes to believe in what cannot be fully explained.

Wayward Creatures, by Dayna Lorentz (gr. 4-6). Gabe doesn't know where he belongs anymore. His family is caught up in their own lives and his friends barely have time for him ... In a desperate move for attention ... Gabe sets off fireworks in the woods near his house and causes a small forest fire ... In the chaos of the destruction, a coyote named Rill ... finds herself far from home ... Gabe and Rill's paths irrevocably cross when Gabe is tasked with cleaning up the forest ... The damage to the land and both their lives is beyond what the two can imagine. But together, they discover that sometimes it only takes one friend to find the place where you belong.

When Stars Are Scattered, by Victoria Jamieson & Omar Mohamed (gr. 4-8). Omar and his younger brother Hassan live in a refugee camp, and when an opportunity for Omar to get an education comes along, he must decide between going to school every day or caring for his nonverbal brother in this intimate and touching portrayal of family and daily life in a refugee camp.

The Wild Robot, by Peter Brown (gr. 4-6). Roz the robot discovers that she is alone on a remote, wild island with no memory of where she is from or why she is there. Her only hope of survival is to try to learn about her new environment from the island's hostile inhabitants.

Wildfire, by Rodman Philbrick (gr. 3-6). Twelve-year-old Sam Castine is at summer camp while his mother is in rehab, but when the camp is evacuated ahead of a fast moving wildfire, he makes the mistake of going back for his phone, and finds himself left behind, disoriented, and running for his life, together with a girl, Delphy, from a different camp--finding an old jeep keeps them going, but in the wilds of Maine, there are only logging roads and the deadly crown fire is everywhere.

Willodeen, by Katherine Applegate (gr. 3-7). When the annual migration of hummingbirds, a source of local pride and income, dwindles and no one knows why, Willodeen, armed with a magical birthday gift, speaks up for the animals she loves and vows to uncover this mystery.

Wishtree, by Katherine Applegate (gr. 4-8). Red is an oak tree and the neighborhood "wishtree" - people write their wishes on pieces of cloth and tie them to Red's branches. You might say Red has seen it all, until a new family moves in. Not everyone is welcoming, and Red's experiences as a wishtree are more important than ever.

The Witchlings, by Claribel A. Ortega (gr. 4-7). Every year, in the magical town of Ravenskill, Witchlings who participate in the Black Moon Ceremony are placed into covens and come into their powers as full-fledged

witches. And twelve-year-old Seven Salazar can't wait to be placed in the most powerful coven with her best friend! But on the night of the ceremony, in front of the entire town, Seven isn't placed in one of the five covens. She's a Spare! Spare covens have fewer witches, are less powerful, and are looked down on by everyone. Even worse, when Seven and the other two Spares perform the magic circle to seal their coven and cement themselves as sisters, it doesn't work! They're stuck as Witchlings and will lose their magic. Seven invokes her only option: the impossible task. The three Spares will be assigned an impossible task: If they work together and succeed at it, their coven will be sealed and they'll gain their full powers. If they fail... Well, the last coven to make the attempt ended up being turned into toads. Forever. But maybe friendship can be the most powerful magic of all...