



USING LITERATURE CIRCLES TO LOOK AT GENDER EXPECTATIONS

These books could be used in literature circles or book groups to prompt discussion of stereotypes based on gender restrictions because of gender and cultural expectations of girls and boys.

The Breadwinner, Deborah Ellis, Groundwood, 2000.

Parvana and her family live in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Taliban arrests her father for his foreign education. The family is desperate until Parvana thinks of a plan.

The Bridge to Terabithia, Katherine Paterson, HarperCollins, 1987.

Jess and Leslie become fast friends and create an imaginary kingdom in the woods where the two can talk about their schoolmates who tease them. But Leslie dies in a tragic accident, leaving Jess to handle his anger and grief.

Crash, Jerry Spinelli, Laurel Leaf, 2004.

Seventh-grader John "Crash" Coogan has always been comfortable with his tough, aggressive behavior, until his relationship with an unusual Quaker boy and his grandfather's stroke make him consider the meaning of friendship and the importance of family.

Homeless Bird, Gloria Whelan, HarperTrophy, 2001.

Like many girls her age in India, thirteen-year-old Koly is getting married. Full of hope and courage, she leaves home—forever. But in a grim turn of events she finds herself cast out into a current of cruel tradition. Her future seems lost. Yet this young woman, bewildered and brave, sets out to forge her own exceptional future.

Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World, Mildred Pitts Walter, Yearling, 1990.

His grandfather helps ten-year-old Justin realize that cleaning and keeping house are not only women's work.

The Liberation of Gabriel King, K. L. Going, Puffin, 2007.

In Georgia during the summer of 1976, Gabriel, a white boy who is being bullied, and Frita, an African American girl who is facing prejudice, decide to overcome their fears together as they enter fifth grade.

Okay for Now, Gary Schmidt, Clarion Books, 2011.

Doug struggles to be more than the "skinny thug" that some people think him to be. Unusual characters and invaluable lessons about love, creativity, and survival.

Rickshaw Girl, Mitali Perkins, Charlesbridge, 2007.

In her Bangladesh village, ten-year-old Naimi excels at painting designs called alpanas, but to help her impoverished family she thinks she will have to be a boy – or disguise herself as one.

Riding Freedom, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Blue Sky Press, 2002.

A fictionalized account of the true story of Charley (Charlotte) Parkhurst who ran away from an orphanage, posed as a boy, moved to California, and fooled everyone by her appearance.

Ties That Bind, Ties That Break, Lensey Namioka, Laurel Leaf, 2000.

Ailin's life takes a different turn when she defies the traditions of upper class Chinese society by refusing to have her feet bound. With an indomitable spirit, Ailin is determined to forge her own destiny.

Wringer, Jerry Spinelli, HarperCollins, 1997.

As Palmer comes of age, he must either accept the violence of being a "wringer" at his town's annual Pigeon Day or find the courage to oppose it. A good read-aloud to spark discussion concerning the perils of peer pressure.