

Librarians Telling Tales Podcast Transcript- Episode 2

Quick Look Booklist:

- **Independent Readers/ Independent Reads**
 - *Little Critter* -series by Mercer Mayer
 - *Little House on the Prairie* -series by Laura Ingalls Wilder
 - *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel
 - *Berenstain Bears* -series by Stan & Jan Berenstain
 - *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl
 - *The Twits* by Roald Dahl
 - *The BFG* by Roald Dahl
 - *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl
 - *The Witches* by Roald Dahl
 - *The Babysitters' Club* -series by Ann M. Martin
 - *The Boxcar Children* -series by Gertrude Chandler Warner
 - *Ramona Quimby* -series by Beverly Cleary
 - *Ramona the Brave* by Beverly Cleary
 - *Beezus and Ramona* by Beverly Cleary
 - *Henry Huggins* by Beverly Cleary
 - *Ralph S. Mouse* by Beverly Cleary
 - *Sweet Valley High* by Francine Pascal, Jamie Suzanne, Kate Williams
 - *Sweet Valley Twins* by Francine Pascal, Jamie Suzanne, Kate Williams
 - *Baby Island* by Carol Ryrie Brink
 - *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
- **Section 2- How to Support and Encourage Independent Readers**
 - *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J.K. Rowling
- **Section 3- Popular Books for Independent Reading**
 - *Wings of Fire* -Books & Graphic Novel Series by Tui Sutherland
 - *Keepers of the Lost Cities* -series by Shannon Messenger
 - *Dog Man* -series by Dav Pilkey
 - *Bad Guys* -series by Aaron Blabey
 - *Sophie Mouse* -series by Poppy Green
 - *Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid: Rowley Jefferson's Journal* -series by Jeff Kinney
 - *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* -series by Jeff Kinney
 - *Big Nate* -series by Lincoln Peirce
 - Graphic novels of Raina Telgemeier: *Smile, Guts, Drama, Ghosts* etc.
 - Star Wars- including LEGO Star Wars, novelizations, and more (Various)
 - *Percy Jackson & the Olympians* - series by Rick Riordan
 - Rick Riordan Presents titles
 - *Fabelhaven* -series by Brandon Mull
 - *Beyonders* -series by Brandon Mull
 - *The Dragon Master* -series by Tracy West

- *The Last Firehawk* -series by Katrina Charman
- *Chicken Squad* -series by Doreen Cronin
- *Kung Pow Chicken* -series by Cyndi Marko
- *Elephant & Piggie* -series by Mo Willems
- *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* -series by Mo Willems
- *Hunger Games* -series by Suzanne Collins
- *Maze Runner* -series by James Dashner
- *Heartstopper* -series by Alice Oseman
- *Legend* -series by Marie Lu
- *I Am Number Four* -series by Pittacus Lore
- *The Inheritance Games* -series by Jennifer Lynn Barnes
- *The Alchemyst* -series by Michael Scott
- *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen
- *I Survived* -series by Lauren Tarshis
- *Choose Your Own Adventure* -series by various authors
- **Readers Rave**
 - *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith
 - *Dry* by Neal and Jarrod Shusterman
 - *The Thirteen Hours of Halloween* by Dian Regan

Transcript:

Musical Intro: “Uplifting 2463” by Twisterium from pixabay.com
(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades and plays under.

Amy:

Hey bookworms! Welcome to Librarians Telling Tales where we introduce you to all the things we love about libraries: books, people, and making connections. I’m Amy!

Blair:

I’m Blair!

Jennifer:

I’m Jennifer!

(0:24) Music fades out

Blair:

In today’s episode we’ll chat about the first books that rocked our worlds—our favorite independent reads—and the books that we see flying off our shelves and helping readers in our community discover the joy of reading!

Musical Transition: “Ascending-marimba-notification” by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com
(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(0:39) Section 1- Independent Readers, and Our Favorite Independent Reads

Jennifer:

Before we start sharing OUR favorite independent reads, you know- those books that launched us as readers- we want to talk some basics, and answer that question: What are independent readers? Simply, independent readers are kids who read on their own; those are voracious readers who really need very little help from adults.

Amy:

Mhm, absolutely. And it's not really focused on age or skill-level, but it's really those kids that have discovered the joy and the pleasure of reading. It's that magical moment when kids realize that not only CAN they read on their own, but that they actually ENJOY reading on their own.

Blair:

Absolutely. You know, it's just so fun when kids really start to develop their own taste in books, and they find those books and series that they engage with; the things that speak to them, and then draw them into reading. It just encourages their overall independence.

Jennifer:

Blair, you are right!

Blair:

I'm always right, that is what I tell my mother.

(Everyone laughs)

Blair: Even when I'm wrong I'm right.

(Everyone laughs)

Jennifer:

You are right, and when they start to read, when those kids start to choose their own books--they tend to turn into lifelong readers. So, I'm going to let you all into a little secret about the joy of reading for me: My mom really stressed with reading with me, I did not get it right away, and she turned it over to my dad. And my dad sat with me, and I remember, it was those...what we call Basal readers, very basic. I think there was Sam and Ann and Miss Pat, and Tab, but once the light went off, I was reading like gangbusters. I just took off and started reading. So my first independent reads were the *Little Critters* series (Mercer Mayer), and those are still checking out on our shelves. And...I collect those and my mom would give me one each year, a brand new one, so I have a collection. And as I got older I would take those *Little Critter* books to babysitting jobs and the kids had so much fun looking for the little grasshopper, the spider, or the mouse. And I devoured those, and those were the ones that kicked off my independent reads. And then for Christmas I got *The Little House on the Prairie* books (Laura Ingalls Wilder) and that was it—I was off and running...

Amy:

Ready, set, go!

Jennifer:

Ready, set, go! I don't remember the books; like we have a section in our library, the Beginning Readers. I don't remember that existing, or being a section that I would go to in the library, it was just something I did at school. But we've come a long way, I think, since that time. So, what are some of your books you remember as independent readers?

Amy:

Well, first I want to say, that when you read the *Little Critter* book during the virtual story times that we did, you mentioned sharing those with the kids that you babysat, and having- encouraging the kiddos that were watching you in that presentation, encouraging them to watch for those characters as well...what a sweet connection! So, anyway.

Jennifer:

They work! Those books work.

Amy:

Mhm. And I think it is interesting that you mention *Little Critter* and Mercer Mayer because when I was thinking about this, some of the books I loved reading growing up, that I first started reading when I was young were *Frog and Toad* (Arnold Lobel) and the *Berenstain Bears* (Stan & Jan Berenstain) and those too are still circulating, they're still on our shelves! And I'm 41, almost 42, and so... I read them when I was a small child, and now they are still out there and kids are reading them today. So it's pretty cool to see that sort of continuity, which is almost surprising that that still exist, I think!

Blair:

Oh, I read the *Berenstien Bears* too! Berenstain?...I never knew how to pronounce it properly...

Amy:

Me neither! (giggles)

Blair:

...so it is, it is the Bear Book with the Bs. (Amy laughs) Um, I actually, was trying to figure out exactly which ones that we had... But I was pretty sure we had one that was like flaps where you were treasure hunting in the house and looking for stuff to go on a picnic, but I couldn't find references to this actually being a book, so maybe I was just making it up in my head... But those popups books were my absolute favorite. I loved the popup books! And I actually remember, tying back to last time we were talking about bedtimes and reading stories together, I remember a point at which my mom was like, "You know how to read, why don't *you* read the stories tonight?" And so that kind of became the takeover that I started reading us stories at bedtime.

Amy:

Mhm.

Blair:

Then with independent reads, I think, for me, the magic year really was 2nd grade. Like, honestly, I think it was Roald Dahl; it was *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, but then it was every single thing on my 2nd grade teacher's shelf that was Roald Dahl, I devoured. I devoured them all. My real love of reading started from that. *The Twits*, *BFG*, *James and the Giant Peach*...oh, I loved them all!

Amy:

The Witches (Roald Dahl)...

Blair:

The Witches!!! The Witches is still the best, *The Witches* is still like...

Amy:

So creepy!

Blair:

I feel like my aesthetic in life is defined by Roald Dahl's *The Witches* and then the movie with Angelica Houston, because, ah, she is wonderful! She is just so awesome! Yeah, that definitely defined my beginning reading.

Amy:

2nd grade was also a big year for me with reading, but it was tied to the launch, well at least at my school, of Pizza Hut's Book It program, or Bookin it? And I was like...gasp..."I can have a free pizza?!?" I mean, that was seriously motivating, hugely motivating for why I wanted to read so many books on my own to get those little stamps so my mom would sign the sheet, or whatever it was. The first book I remember reading on my own in 2nd grade was sort of an embarrassing one...(laughs)...but it was a book that I wrote myself, that I made up, called "Pie Friends." I added "Pie Friends" to my list even though it wasn't a published book, and my mom signed off on it.

Jennifer:

Do you still have it?

Amy:

I don't. But she trusted that I had read a book. But I, in fact, had created a book. (Laughter) But then from there for me it was the *Babysitters' Club* (Ann M. Martin), the *Boxcar Kids* (*The Boxcar Children* by Gertrude Chandler Warner), both of which that we still have in the library.

Jennifer:

Mhm. And let's not forget *Ramona Quimby* (Beverly Cleary).

Amy:

Oh yes!

Jennifer

My first Ramona book was *Ramona the Brave* and I loved Ramona! I laughed out loud and read every book that Beverly Cleary had published.

Amy:

Mhm

Jennifer:

Which went to *Beezus and Ramona*, and *Henry Huggins*, *Ralph the Mouse*

Amy:

Mhm

Jennifer:

Everything! I just couldn't get enough of Beverly Cleary and we still have those books too.

Amy:

Oh yes, on the shelves here, absolutely.

Blair:

What we don't have on our shelves is *Sweet Valley*, (Jennifer and Amy gasps)... *Sweet Valley Twins* and *Sweet Valley High*! I was all about *Sweet Valley* (both series by Francine Pascal, Jamie Suzanne, and Kate William collectively). I had a twin obsession. I was sure that I was, somehow, a twin. (Amy laughs) And my imaginary friends, I had two of them because they were twins. And so *Sweet Valley* hit me in just the right places. And for the longest time I was like, yes, I'm going to have twins because I'm just that obsessed with twins...TWINS!!!...I was a strange child.

Jennifer:

We should have an episode of all the books that are about twins, because there are a lot!

Amy:

There are quite a few actually.

Jennifer:

Lots of series, actually, about twins. So I don't think that you are too afield about with your feelings about twins.

Blair:

Probably not, but I felt very odd actually that my imaginary friends were twins. And my mother remembers their names, I can't actually remember their names, it was something weird like "Oopsy and Boopsy" or something...silly. (Everyone laughs) That's not right, but that's close.

Amy:

But your fascination with twins, I had something similar fascination with the *Boxcar Kids* and wanting to solve mysteries and be on my own and live in a boxcar. And I think you did too, Miss Jennifer.

Jennifer:

Oh yeah, I love survival books—*Baby Island*, which is a classic, I think Carol Ryrie Brink... I just love any book- even now- books where kids are on their own and surviving. And I think a lot of our teen readers love those dystopian books because the kids are surviving, you know, saving the world.

Blair:

Oh yeah, dystopia is 100% my genre. I love dystopia and science fiction and when they blend it makes me really happy. But the other really weird thing that I read independently, super early—I know for a

fact I picked it up 2nd grade, sometime... I was out of books to read at the house, and I looked at my mom's bookshelf, and it had a copy of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith and oh my gosh, I started reading that book, and I know there is no way I actually understood that book, but...man, did I love it! And I have reread that book so many times, totally understand it now.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from OrangeFreesounds.com
(Description) *Bright marimba scale.*

(8:07) Section 2- How to Support and Encourage Independent Readers

Amy:

So much of what our job is, is keeping up with book trends, and making sure we have those books that the kids in our community just really, really, REALLY want to read.

Jennifer:

And having a variety of books on our shelves is so important. We have fantasy, adventure, graphic novels...all those different types of books that give our independent readers a lot of choice.

Blair: And choice is so important for independent readers. I mean—one of my things is going into like tips and tricks. When kids start to express their own interest in reading, sometimes they want to read some things that are above their ability level. They wanna read *Harry Potter*, but they can't get through *Harry Potter* yet. Well, the best way to keep them independent and let them have that experience as well, is to give them an audiobook and a physical book at the same time. They can listen to the narrator, they can follow along with the text. It encourages their understanding of vocabulary, it can increase their overall fluency, and it's just a really great way to let them experience books that otherwise might have to wait to read.

Jennifer:

And in addition to that, Blair, I would just say that creating a reading culture at home is so important. We did that when my kids were little, we had books everywhere—books were sitting on the couch, on the table, on the floor in the bedroom, or in a basket that would go back to the library. And having books everywhere made it very clear that books were important. And I thought that encouraged my kids to read. And then, of course, getting a library card!

Amy:

Wohoo!

Jennifer:

Yes! Getting that library card and at our library, kids can be as young as zero and get their library card. So, that really encourages a reading culture and really supports those kids who have a love of reading.

Amy:

And in addition to all of that, which is awesome advice, especially getting your own library card for your child—please, please, please do that! I would suggest that you do give them choice, but that you guide that a bit when you do come to the library, or you go shopping at the bookstore, or the Little Free Library in your neighborhood—allowing them to make a choice for themselves. Maybe guide that choice, you know like, 3-5 books today, not 16 or 50. Because yes, you can check out 50 books with your library card, but really setting a little bit of a perimeter, but giving them a lot of choice in sort of guide them and steer their interest really just limit that number of choices: Don't bring home too many things.

Blair:

Setting reasonable rates of what you can accomplish...

Amy:

Yes.

Blair:

You know, don't over-do, because if you over-do, then you may not get to read them all, and then, and you may not get to keep them all or read them all next time. So yeah, you are totally right.

Jennifer:

Great tips.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com
(Description) Bright marimba scale.

(10:33) Section 3- Popular Books for Independent Reading

Jennifer:

Let's talk about books that are flying off the shelves, that the kids are just clamoring for, and asking us for, and keeping us on our toes with the newest book that's come out in the series.

Amy:

Wings of Fire.

Jennifer:

Oh yes.

Amy:

Wings of Fire!

Blair:

Oh and in graphic and in original print. It is just so hot.

Jennifer:

And I saw that you just put number five, graphic novel in the book-cart, so we can order it. So everybody who's listening: We're on it!

Amy:

Upon patron request!

Blair:

Well, what I also found funny is that I was just going through the new shelves, and on the new shelves we had one from **January** that has been checked out so much it was still marked as new. Which is shocking, because we don't normally let that happen.

Amy:

Right, right.

Blair:

But, January!

Amy:

It is probably its first return to the library, it's like: "I'm home!" and we're like: "Wait, you are old!"
(Laughs)

Blair:

Oh it was even better: I changed its home location and it immediately went out on hold.

Amy:

That's awesome!

Jennifer:

So...let's do a speed round!

Amy:

Alright! Let's do it!

Jennifer:

Keepers of the Lost Cities (Shannon Messenger).

Blair:

Dog Man (Dav Pilkey).

Amy:

Bad Guys (Aaron Blabey).

Jennifer:

Sophie Mouse (Poppy Green).

Amy:

That's a great series! That also came to us on patron request. They picked up a Scholastic one from a book fair and now we have all 17 or 18 in the series, we have a huge number of those books. They are awesome!

Blair:

And they go like crazy!

Amy:

They do.

Blair:

Um, *Rowley Jefferson* (Jeff Kinney), that whole spin-off series. I feel like there are just not enough in the whole system, everybody wants them.

Amy:

And *Wimpy Kid* too (Jeff Kinney)!

Blair:

Still!

Amy:

I mean, those books are still circulating like hotcakes. Yep.

Jennifer:

Big Nate (Lincoln Peirce).

Amy:

Mhm

Jennifer:

And all those read-alikes for *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. There's, oh Raina Telgemeier...

Amy:

Yes!

Jennifer:

Let's not forget her.

Amy:

No, nope, can't forget her.

Blair:

I think it is interesting that literally anything that has Star Wars on it—any single thing that has Star Wars, anywhere in the whole collection, it is bananas!

Amy:

Mhm

Jennifer:

Legos too.

Amy:

Oh yes, Legos too.

Jennifer:

Legos Star Wars, that's why I was thinking about it. Oh my goodness.

Amy:

But even the Rick Riordan stuff, the *Percy Jackson* series...his spin-offs...all those are very popular still. That first five books in that original series are rarely all on the shelf or even at all on the shelf.

Jennifer:

Which reminds me of Brandon Mull and *Fabelhaven* and *Beyonders*, those books, the first book is never on the shelf, so it is really hard to tell kids about it when you know that number 1 may not be there.

Amy:

And for those kids that are in the 2nd, 3rd grade, just getting started with reading: *The Dragon Master* series by Tracy West—super popular, hard book to find on the shelf at any given time. And also...oh gosh, what is that one called? *The Last Firehawk*?

Jennifer:

The Last Firehawk.

Amy:

The Last Firehawk by...Something Charman (Katrina Charman).

Jennifer:

Yes

Amy:

It's in the Cs, guys. It's in the Cs if you're looking for it!

Jennifer:

Something about chickens? *The Chicken Squad* (Doreen Cronin)! *Kung Pow Chicken* (Cyndi Marko). Those are big series too that kids are asking about.

Amy:

And that are funny! So funny.

Jennifer:

Yeah, funny, yep. Yeah, funny is the buzz word.

Blair:

Well, and of course, it's always Mo Willems. So, *Elephant & Piggie*, all day long. Which is surprising because *Elephant & Piggie* are all in the reading level section versus all of the *Pigeon* books, which are in the picture book section, and so it is kind of that fun break when they want both. They have to go to both areas to find it.

Jennifer:

And for teens, I think it is still the classic books, like *Hunger Games* (Suzanne Collins), *Maze Runner* (James Dashner)... Can you think of any other ones that come to mind for the teens that they are asking for?

Blair:

Well, the *Heartstopper* series we haven't been able to keep on the shelf (Alice Oseman). Which is a graphic novel, and of course the graphic novels are just always flying, but I have noticed that the *Heartstopper* series is always out.

Jennifer:

Marie Lu's *Legend* series is always going out and kids love Marie Lu, she is a great teen author for science fiction and dystopian novels. I am Number 1 by Pittacus Lore (*I am Number 4*), that series has had a resurgence. Oh, *The Hawthorn Legacy*! Or, actually, it is called the *Inheritance Games*, *The Hawthorn Legacy* is the 2nd book, but that book is really on fire now too for teens (Jennifer Lynn Barnes). It is a mystery series.

Blair:

And *The Alchemyst*, the Nicholas Flamel series (Michael Scott)—those books we couldn't keep on the shelf. I kept having people wanting to have new titles, new titles! And I was like "Oh this is kind of a fun one!" and every time I tried to recommend it they were already gone. They were already checked out. (Amy laughs.) There was no...

Jennifer:

That is something that is always that, that stumps me as a librarian; do I recommend this book? I have learned to go to the shelf first.

Amy:

Yes!

Jennifer:

...to make sure the book is there before I get the kids all super excited about it, and then "Oops, sorry, it is not here!"

Amy:

...book 1 is not on the shelf...

Jennifer:

"Sorry guys, can we put that on hold for you?" Great... (Laughter)

Blair:

It's true, yeah, it is really tricky.

Amy:

I think harkening back too to our talk about favorites for ourselves and survival stories: One of the books that I find is easy to recommend is *Hatchet*, Gary Paulson, that is that book that is just the right length; really short, exciting chapters; survival; alone on an island...that even the more reluctant readers that are like, "I don't want to read a book!" they say, "Okay" and that starts something.

Jennifer:

That leads us to the series we have totally forgotten, that's the *I Survived* series (Lauren Tarshis).

Amy:

(Overlapping) Oh my gosh, yes! Lauren Tarshis!

Blair:

(Overlapping) I was going to bring that up too! The *I Survived* series is so popular.

Amy:

Wait! *Choose Your Own Adventure* (Various Authors)! I just forgot, I mean, I just remembered! (laughs) Those were for me big, and then I see that they have made a whole new series and sets of those and even the super hero ones.

Blair:

I thought for sure, how many people in one week, earlier in the summer, were asking for *Choose Your Own Adventure*? I thought surely there must have been a piece on it or something?! I was like: "What made you think of it?" "Nothing, I just, I want to read a *Choose Your Own*." And I mean, we went through so many of those! It was a little surprising that there hadn't been some impetus, some reason for it.

Amy:

A new Netflix show our something. (Laughs)

Blair:

(Laughing) Exactly!

Jennifer:

So hopefully our listeners, just from our discussion today, if they haven't heard of some of these series', well, see, there are so many wonderful independent reads and series that they can come to the library and check out for their kids. Or to know what's new and current and flying off the shelves.

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from [Orangefreesounds.com](https://www.orangefreesounds.com)
(description) Bright marimba scale.

(16:21) Readers Rave

Amy:

Now we're going to hear from you, our readers and listeners. This is a fun segment where you tell us some of your favorite books- this is Readers Rave.

#1- Hannah:

Hi! I'm Hannah, I'm 22, and one book that will always stay with me is *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Betty Smith. It was the first book where I got to know a character from the time they were a child, all the way into their adulthood. And it felt so intimate to be able to see this character evolve, and also see a lot of parts of myself in this character as she grew too. It was beautifully written, and I would recommend it to anybody.

#2 Sophia:

My name is Sophia, and I'm 14 years old. I book that I love is *Dry* by Neal and Jarrod Shusterman. I really enjoyed *Dry* because it was a very interesting kind of sci-fi dystopian novel that had many thoughts on what our world's future would look like if climate change keeps on affecting us.

#3- Melanie:

Hi, my name is Melanie, and one of my favorite books for the season is called *The Thirteen Hours of Halloween* by Dian Regan. It is a fantastically fun book! It is an adaptation of The Twelve Days of Christmas. The little girl's best friend actually gets her things, like flying broomsticks, rapping mummies, zombies on skateboards, and fat bats, just to name a few. It is so much fun, my granddaughter and I love to sing it together. It's just a great way to spend the holiday, and a fantastic little book—you should definitely check it out!

Music Transition: "Ascending-marimba-notification" by Alexander from Orangefreesounds.com (description) Bright marimba scale.

Blair:

Do you want to be part of Reader's Rave? Call us at **928-777-1490** and leave a message with your first name, your age, a book you love, and what you love about it.

Jennifer:

Thank you for joining us today on Librarians Telling Tales. Don't forget to subscribe to catch our next episode in mid November where we will be talking about books that celebrate family and food. Want the list of books shared in this episode? You'll find them on our webpage at prescottlibrary.info/youth-services-podcast in the Episode 2 transcript.

(18:40) Musical Outro: "Uplifting 2463" by Twisterium from pixabay.com
(Description) Upbeat, piano and percussion. Music fades in and plays under.

Amy:

This Podcast is supported by the Arizona State Library, Archives & Public Records, a division of the Secretary of State, with federal funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. We would also like to thank the City of Prescott, Friends of the Prescott Public Library, and all our fabulous coworkers at Prescott Public Library.

Blair:

Be sure to like and subscribe to Librarians Telling Tales- and until next time, we'll see you in the library.

Total Run Time (19:11)