



News of the World

By [Paulette Jiles](#)

It is 1870 and Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd spends his days giving live readings to paying audiences hungry for news of the world. In Wichita Falls, he is offered a \$50 gold piece to deliver a young orphan to her relatives. Upon arrival in San Antonio, the captain must hand Johanna over to an aunt and uncle she doesn't remember—strangers who regard her as an unwanted burden. Faced with a terrible choice, Captain Kidd must decide to abandon the girl to her fate or become—in the eyes of the law—a kidnapper himself. **February 2017 WITCC Lifelong Learning Book Club Read**

Read-alikes compiled by Sioux City Public Library Staff

Compelling historical fiction:

[*The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead](#)

(New Fic Whi) The story of Cora, a young third-generation slave on a Georgia cotton plantation who flees north after being brutally attacked. Cora faces unthinkable horrors on her incredible journey while being relentlessly followed by a notorious slave catcher.

[*Frog Music* by Emma Donoghue](#) (Fic Don) During the scorching summer of 1876, Jenny Bonnet, an enigmatic pants-wearing bicyclist who traps frogs for San Francisco's restaurants, is murdered in a railroad saloon while her friend, Blanche—a San Francisco prostitute, bends over to tie her shoe. Blanche pursues justice for Jenny while desperately searching for her missing son, in a story that brings to life the brothels, gaming halls, and smallpox-infested boardinghouses of the era.

[*The Good Lord Bird* by James McBride](#) (Fic McB) A novel disguised as the memoir of a 10-year-old slave boy in Kansas who is mistaken for a girl and plays along in order to escape to safety with abolitionist John Brown's renegade band of freedom warriors. Henry, or "Little Onion" as he is called by Brown, finds himself encamped with the group as they travel the country raising arms and ammunition in their battle against slavery.

[*The Magician's Lie* by Greer Macallister](#) (Fic Mac) Ada Bates, known as "The Amazing Arden", invents the controversial stage act known as The Halved Man and becomes the most famous female illusionist in turn-of-the-20th-century America. When Arden's husband is found murdered following her performance in Waterloo, Iowa, she falls under suspicion and goes on the run. When the police nab Arden, she tells her version of what happened—a story far more spectacular than her stage act.

Complex adult-child relationships:

[*Petropolis* by Anya Ulinich](#) (Fic Uli) Sasha, a biracial Jewish girl growing up in a Siberian mining town, struggles through her adolescence with her strongwilled, single mother. After having a child with a homeless art school dropout, Sasha decides to become a mail-order bride in order to search across America for the father who abandoned her.

[*We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo](#) (Fic Bul) After her home and stability are destroyed by the paramilitary, 10-year-old Darling and her group of friends spend their days on the streets of a Zimbabwean shantytown called "Paradise", raiding the rich homes of suburban neighborhoods to survive. Later, Darling moves to the United States to live with her aunt and struggles with her identity after being separated from her homeland, culture, and loved ones.

[*Lucky Us* by Amy Bloom](#) (Fic Blo) After being abandoned by her mother, Eva meets her older half-sister, Iris, whom she never knew existed. Eva and Iris begin an adventure in pursuit of Iris' dream to become an actress in 1940s Hollywood. After a series of misadventures, they reunite with their father and journey once again across the country. Eva finally finds family in the ragtag group of outcasts they befriend along the way.

[*A Long Way Home* by Saroo Brierley](#) (Nonfiction 920.0092) At the age of five, Saroo was separated from his brother at a train station in India. After spending weeks on the streets, he was declared a lost child and placed for adoption. Twenty-five years later, Saroo located his hometown on Google Earth and traveled from Australia back to his hometown in India to finally discover his family's fate.

More great read-alike suggestions on the back



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Read-alikes compiled by Sioux City Public Library Staff Continued

Tales of orphan voyages:

[*Coal River* by Ellen Marie Wiseman](#) (New Fic Wis) In 1912, 19-year-old Emma Malloy is left penniless after the death of her parents and is forced to return to her hometown, the mining town of Coal River, Pennsylvania. She quickly realizes that young “breaker boys” are illegally working in the mines, suffering injuries and death while the mine owner rakes in the profit. Unwilling to stand idly by, Emma secretly joins forces with a young miner who hopes to instigate a strike.

[*The Tilted World* by Tom Franklin and Beth Ann Fennelly](#) (Fic Fra) Sent to the Mississippi Delta to solve the disappearance of two fellow Prohibition agents, Ted Ingersoll and his partner come upon a botched robbery that leaves a baby boy the only survivor. What follows is a suspenseful, emotionally moving novel complete with bootlegging, a disintegrating marriage, and dangerous secrets set against the backdrop of the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927, one of the worst natural disasters in the history of the United States.

[*Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline](#) (Fic Kli) Close to aging out of the foster care system, Molly Ayer takes a position helping an elderly woman named Vivian and discovers that they are more alike than different as she helps Vivian solve a mystery from her past.

[*Songs of Willow Frost* by Jamie Ford](#) (Fic For) Set in 1920s Seattle, this is the moving story of William Eng, a 12-year-old resident of the Sacred Heart Orphanage who on a rare school trip, believes that he recognizes his mother in a film advertisement as glamorous actress Willow Frost, and vows to find her in order to make sense of his abandonment.

manner of criminals. But his quest for justice and liberal use of the gallows earn him just as many friends as enemies and take a toll on every aspect of his life.

[*Blood Meridian: Or the Evening Redness in the West* by Cormac McCarthy](#) (Fic McC) Based on historical events that took place on the Texas-Mexico border in the 1850s, this epic novel traces the fortunes of the Kid, a 14-year-old Tennessean who stumbles into the nightmarish world where Indians are being murdered and the market for their scalps is thriving.

Character-driven westerns:

[*Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry](#) (Fic McM) A group of former Texas Rangers embarks upon an epic journey to drive a band of cattle 3,000 miles northward into unsettled Montana, hoping to turn around their cattle business in the newly opened territory.

[*Doc* by Mary Doria Russell](#) (Western Rus) After the burned body of a mixed-blood boy, Johnnie Sanders, is discovered in 1878 Dodge City, Kansas, part-time policeman Wyatt Earp enlists the help of his professional-gambler friend Doc Holliday. Fact and mythmaking converge in this story as Russell creates a Western filled with nuggets of surprising history and larger-than-life heroic figures.

[*The Branch and the Scaffold* by Loren D. Estleman](#) (Western Est) Brutally efficient judge Isaac C. Parker is determined to rid Arkansas and the Indian Territory of all