

# IS THIS BALANCE?

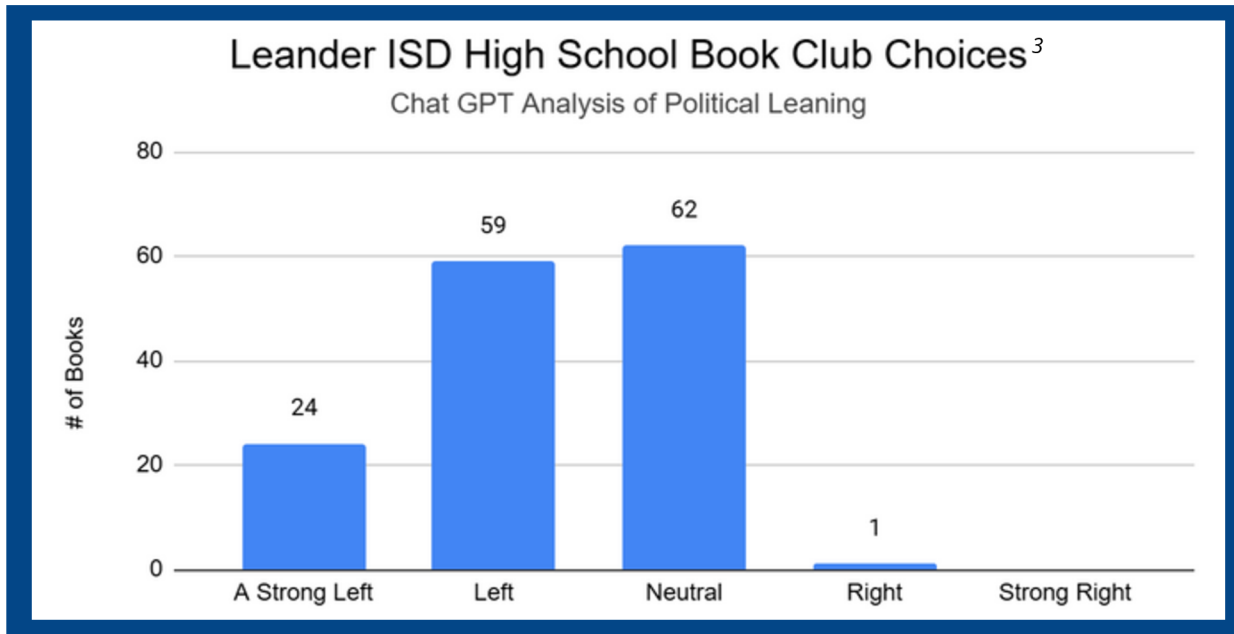
DID

YOU

KNOW?

## Leander ISD Book Club Choices

Inspired by a study<sup>1</sup> at Stanford University, Texas Parents United asked Chat GPT to analyze the political leanings of the book club offerings for high school students in Leander ISD<sup>2</sup>



**When Book Clubs were introduced to the Leander ISD English curriculum in 2020, it was said the intent was to increase diversity and ensure that every student could see themselves in the offerings. You be the judge.**

1. *Stanford Study* - <https://stanfordreview.org/ai-finds-widespread-radical-left-bias-in-pwr-classes-2/> - Study performed using AI
2. The exact question posed to Chat GPT, "I want to know which books from a list are politically left leaning, right leaning and neutral and how extreme they are in their leanings."
3. Based on the complete list of high school book club books on the Leander ISD English Language Arts webpage as of March 5, 2025
4. Note: books were counted for each separate unit in which they were offered. A few books were offered in multiple units.

**TEXAS PARENTS UNITED** - *Your Voice in Education*



# HOW WERE THESE BOOKS SELECTED?

- In the spring of 2020 “Leander ISD ... created two book club reading opportunities for each high school ELA course, and 15 titles for each book club unit were selected and vetted by the Curriculum Design Team: a group of curriculum specialists, general education teachers, special education teachers, ESL teachers, instructional coaches, and librarians. The 15 titles include a wide range of reading levels and topics.”\*
- In the Fall of 2020, Leander ISD acknowledged, “some books containing passages that raised concerns from students, teachers, parents, and community members made it through this flawed vetting process and for this we apologize to our students, families and community for this breakdown in trust and the process.”\*
- In 2020 and 2021, administration “asked the Community Curriculum Advisory Committee (CCAC) to vet all high school English Language Arts student choice book club selections.”\*
- The CCAC used the following criteria to evaluate each book individually but, despite repeated requests from CCAC participants and parents, never once considered the list of books as a whole.
  - Diversity: Exposes students to new ideas, perspectives, and experiences; students see themselves in the books
  - Student Appeal: Variety of reading levels and topics
  - Literary Merit: Awards, positive professional reviews, compelling characters, exemplary author’s craft, and storytelling
  - Alignment to Curricular Goals: The text matches the unit focus and can be used to teach the English Language Arts skills specific to the unit of study
  - Student Navigation of Text, Topics, and Themes: Is the content sensitive? Is the content age-appropriate? Can the book stand on its own without needing a lot of supplemental adult support? Will students understand what is going on?
- While the CCAC process led to the removal of a handful of books from the list of 120 due to extreme graphic sexual content, the lists students choose from today are largely unchanged and remain overwhelmingly weighted toward politically left ideology. Further, while the district provides an option to suggest a title to add, to date not one suggested book has been added.

\*Leander ISD ELA webpage



## STRONG LEFT

1. All American Boys by Jason Reynolds
2. Dear Martin by Nic Stone
3. The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas
4. Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds
5. Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America by Barbara Ehrenreich
6. Just Mercy (Adapted for Young Adults): A True Story of the Fight for Justice by Bryan Stevenson
7. The Power by Naomi Alderman
8. There are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in The Other America by Alex Kotlowitz
9. Speak: The Graphic Novel by Laurie Halse Anderson
10. The Outside Circle by Patti LaBoucane-Benson
11. The Unwanted: Stories of Syrian Refugees by Don Brown
12. They Called Us Enemy by George Takei, Justin Eisinger, and Steven Scott
13. From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun by Jacqueline Woodson
14. Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson
15. Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood by Marjane Satrapi
16. The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline
17. Know My Name: A Memoir by Chanel Miller
18. Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen by Jose Antonio Vargas
19. How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child by Sandra Uwiringiyimana
20. Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson
21. The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin
22. Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds
23. The Round House by Louise Erdrich
24. Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

# Leander ISD

## BOOK CLUB CHOICES - Chat GPT Rating

### LEFT

1. I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika Sanchez
2. Black and White by Paul Volpini
3. Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell
4. Piecing Me Together by Renee Watson
5. The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie
6. American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang
7. Love, Hate, & Other Filters by Samira Ahmed
8. The Benefits of Being an Octopus by Ann Braden
9. The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo
10. Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America by Beth Macy
11. How I Resist: Activism and Hope for a New Generation edited by Maureen Johnson
12. I am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World by Malala Yousafzai
13. Internment by Samira Ahmed
14. March: Book Three by John Lewis
15. The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives by Dashka Slater
16. An American Sunrise: Poems by Joy Harjo
17. Discovering Wes Moore by Wes Moore
18. League of Denial: The NFL, Concussions, and the Battle for Truth by Mark Fainaru-Wada and Steve Fainaru
19. March: Book One by John Lewis
20. March: Book Two by John Lewis
21. The Pregnancy Project: A Memoir by Gaby Rodriguez and Jenna Glatzer
22. The Rose that Grew from Concrete by Tupac Shakur
23. A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansbury
24. American Street by Ibi Zoboi
25. The Book of Unknown Americans by Cristina Henríquez
26. Americanized: Rebel without a Green Card by Sara Saedi
27. Mad, Bad & Dangerous to Know by Samira Ahmed
28. New Boy: William Shakespeare's Othello Retold: A Novel by Tracy Chevalier
29. Ask Me No Questions by Marina Budhos
30. Patron Saints of Nothing by Randy Ribay
31. Swing by Kwame Alexander
32. Kiss Number 8 by Colleen AF Venable and Ellen T. Crenshaw
33. Laura Dean Keeps Breaking Up With Me by Mariko Tamaki
34. Honor Girl by Maggie Thrash
35. Almost American Girl: An Illustrated Memoir by Robin Ha
36. Hey, Kiddo by Jarrett J. Krosoczka
37. I Was Their American Dream: A Graphic Memoir by Malaka Gharib
38. Wonder Woman Tempest Tossed by Laurie Halse Anderson
39. If You Come Softly by Jacqueline Woodson
40. Miracle's Boys by Jacqueline Woodson
41. We Were Here by Matt de la Pena
42. After Tupac and D Foster by Jacqueline Woodson
43. Hush by Jacqueline Woodson
44. Mexican White Boy by Matt de la Pena
45. Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese's by Tiffany Midge
46. Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi
47. Darius the Great Is Not Okay by Adib Khorram
48. Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood by Trevor Noah
49. Crazy Brave: A Memoir by Joy Harjo
50. Black Boy by Richard Wright
51. I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai
52. Reading Lolita in Tehran by Azar Nafis
53. The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride
54. Dear Justyce by Nic Stone
55. Dry by Neal Shusterman
56. Gabi, A Girl in Pieces by Isabel Quintero
57. I'll Give You the Sun by Jandy Nelson
58. Refugee by Alan Gratz
59. This is Where it Ends by Marieke Nijkamp

# Leander ISD

## BOOK CLUB CHOICES - Chat GPT Rating

### NEUTRAL

1. Challenger Deep by Neal Shusterman
2. Ugliest by Scott Westerfield
3. A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
4. A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith
5. Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
6. Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
7. The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas
8. The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime by Mark Haddon
9. The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson
10. The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer
11. What We Saw by Aaron Hartzler
12. Dear Evan Hansen: The Novel by Val Emmerich et al
13. Lord of the Flies by William Golding
14. Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
15. The Help by Kathryn Stockett
16. We'll Fly Away by Bryan Bliss
17. All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque
18. Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario
19. Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds
20. Othello by William Shakespeare
21. The Serpent King by Jeff Zentner
22. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
23. Turtles All the Way Down by John Greene
24. Dragon Hoops by Gene Luen Yang
25. The Crossover: The Graphic Novel by Kwame Alexander
26. Through the Woods by Emily Carroll
27. Ball Don't Lie by Matt de la Pena
28. Beneath a Meth Moon: An Elegy by Jacqueline Woodson
29. Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson
30. The Living by Matt de la Pena
31. Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451: The Authorized Adaptation by Tim Hamilton
32. Bad Boy: A Memoir by Walter Dean Myers
33. Damsel: A Novel by Chandra Prasad
34. Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris
35. Paper Girls, volume 1 by Brian K. Vaughan
36. Scythe by Neal Schusterman
37. The Memory Police by Yoko Ogawa
38. Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
39. I, Robot by Isaac Asimov
40. Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
41. Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel
42. The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
43. The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
44. Ordinary Hazards: A Memoir by Nikki Grimes
45. Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover
46. Girl on Film: A Graphic Novel Memoir by Cecil Castellucci
47. Let Love Have the Last Word: A Memoir by Common
48. The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism by Naoki Higashida
49. The Way I Heard It by Mike Rowe
50. We Should Hang Out Sometime: Embarrassingly, a True Story by Josh Sundquist
51. All Creatures Great and Small by James Herriot
52. Barrio Boy by Ernesto Galarza
53. Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl
54. The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls
55. Highly Illogical Behavior by John Corey Whaley
56. My Friend Dahmer by John "Derf" Backderf
57. Boot Camp by Todd Strasser
58. Borderline by Allan Stratton
59. Ready Player One by Ernest Cline
60. The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B by Teresa Toten
61. 1984 by George Orwell
62. Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

# Leander ISD BOOK CLUB CHOICES - Chat GPT Rating

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## RIGHT

- The Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkien

## STRONG RIGHT

