

Dear Educators,

We are delighted to share with you our [2021 Neev Book Award Shortlist!](#)

The Neev Book Award recognises outstanding writing that leads to a fuller understanding of Indian lives and stories. The award aims to raise awareness nationally and globally about original, distinguished children's literature from India and the diaspora. The award is also a platform to discover stories and voices with fresh and different perspectives. It promotes children's books with Indian characters and settings so that children can see aspects of themselves and their world reflected in the literature they read.

We encourage you to explore all books on this rich and varied list and suggest the following ways to engage your students:

- **Battle of the Books Club:** Encourage your avid readers to form a special reading club where they read all the books in their age appropriate category. They then judge the books and pick their own winner. During club meetings, encourage students in either small groups or whole groups to hold spirited discussions about which book they think deserves the award.
- **Reading Challenges:** Challenge students to read as many books as possible in their age based category. Or, mix it up! Encourage older children to read titles in the younger age categories - they might be surprised at how much they enjoy these books! Offer special recognition to students who read a complete category.
- **Literature Circles or Student Book Clubs:** Get students to form small reading groups (4 -5 students per group). Each circle chooses one book to read and discuss, while enjoying the chance to take a deep dive into one book.
- **Literary Café:** Encourage students to select one book from the shortlist to read. Each student can then share their thoughts and a particularly powerful passage from the book with the class. Bring food related to the book's theme to make it a special celebratory occasion.
- **Read-Alouds (for the Early Years category):** Engage your school's younger students in read-alouds of our wonderful Early Years selection. Students will love listening to these stories. Books often have suggestions for educators or you can



plan activities around each book; for example, students can draw their own illustrations, or come up with a different ending.

If you would like to purchase the shortlist for your school library or classrooms, please click [this Amazon link](#).

Author Kate DiCamillo reminds us: “Reading should not be presented to children as a chore, a duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift.” It is our hope that our Neev Book Award shortlist is such a gift, bringing the joy of reading to children everywhere.

Warm regards,

Rasil Ahuja & Dhooleka Raj
Jury Co-Chairs,
On Behalf of The Neev Book Award Jury 2021

