



Reading Suggestions for ELA Genre – Mystery

List compiled from various sources including the public libraries of New York, Princeton, Palo Alto, Los Angeles, Wooster, and various independent schools.

This list is not exhaustive and students may bring in other mystery books for our approval.

Abbott, Tony. *The Postcard*.

While in St. Petersburg, Florida, to help clean out his recently-deceased grandmother's house, thirteen-year-old Jason finds an old postcard which leads him on an adventure that blends figures from an old, unfinished detective story with his family's past.

Abrahams, Peter. *Down the Rabbit Hole : an Echo Falls Mystery*

Like her idol Sherlock Holmes, eighth grader Ingrid Levin-Hill uses her intellect to solve a murder case in her home town of Echo Falls. Is there a connection between the murder and the local theater group Ingrid belongs to? *Also: **Behind the Curtain** and **Into the Dark***

Anderson, Janet. *The Last Treasure*

Thirteen-year-old Ellsworth leaves his father to visit the relatives he has never met and eventually joins forces with Jess, his distant cousin, to uncover family secrets and search for their ancestor's hidden treasure.

Avi. *Something Upstairs*

When he moves from Los Angeles to Providence, Rhode Island, Kenny discovers that his new house is haunted by the spirit of a black slave boy who asks Kenny to return with him to the early nineteenth century and prevent his murder by slave traders. *District reading list*

The Man Who Was Poe

In Providence, R.I., in 1848, Edgar Allan Poe reluctantly investigates the problems of eleven-year-old Edmund, whose family has mysteriously disappeared and whose story suggests a new Poe tale with a ghastly final twist.

Windcatcher

While visiting the Connecticut shore, Tony hears rumors of sunken treasure and follows a mysterious couple who seem to be searching for something.

Wolf Rider: A Tale of Terror

After receiving an apparent crank call from a man claiming to have committed murder, fifteen-year-old Andy finds his close relationship with his father crumbling as he struggles to make everyone believe him.

The Seer of Shadows

This intriguing historical ghost story is set in New York City in 1872. Horace Carpetine becomes an apprentice to a local society photographer and learns more about deception, ghosts and photography than he could ever have imagined.

Babbitt, Natalie. *Kneeknock Rise*.

Instep is a village at the foot of a cliff called Kneeknock Rise. A terrible moaning can be heard from the cloud of mist, which hides the top of the cliff. No one knows what it is...nobody has ever gone to see and returned!

Balliett, Blue. *Chasing Vermeer*.

When seemingly unrelated and strange events start to happen and a precious Vermeer painting disappears, eleven-year-olds Petra and Calder combine their talents to solve an international art scandal.

The Wright 3

In the midst of a series of unexplained accidents and mysterious coincidences, sixth-graders Calder, Petra, and Tommy lead their classmates in an attempt to keep Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House from being demolished.

The Calder Game

When Calder Pillay travels with his father to a remote village in England, he finds a mix of mazes and mystery . . . including an unexpected Alexander Calder sculpture in the town square. Calder is strangely drawn to the sculpture, while other people have less-than-friendly feelings towards it.

Danger Box

Wealthy Mr. Zip has arranged for a priceless treasure, stolen years ago, to be delivered to him. Before the treasure reaches him, Mr. Zip dies of a heart attack. The story includes a boy who has a different way of seeing, a curious girl who doesn't belong, a missing father, a fire, a stranger and death.

Hold Fast

This is the story of a girl who falls into Chicago's shelter system, and from there must solve the mystery of her father's strange disappearance. Going from the cold, snowy Chicago streets to the darkest corner of the public library, the author writes of an unforgettable hunt for deep truths and a reunited family.

Bell, Juliet. *Kepler's Dream*

While her mother undergoes radical cancer treatment, eleven-year-old Ella stays with her father's mother in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she learns about grammar and family history, and helps investigate the theft of an extremely rare book from her grandmother's library.

Berk, Josh. *Strike Three, You're Dead*

Lenny Norbeck and his friends The Mikes set out to investigate the suspicious death of a young pitcher at a Phillies game. Sequel: ***Say It Ain't So***.

Berlin, Eric *Puzzling World of Winston Breen*

Winston Breen says “the only thing better than discovering a puzzle is stumping someone else with it.” But when his sister uncovers mysterious strips of wood with words and letters on them, even Winston himself is stumped. It’s fun to try and solve the riddles along the way. Sequels: *The Potato Chip Puzzles*, *The Puzzler’s Mansion*

Bloor, Edward. *Taken.*

In 2035 kidnapping rich children has become an industry, but when thirteen-year-old Charity Meyers is taken and held for ransom, she soon discovers that this particular kidnapping is not what it seems.

Tangerine.

Twelve-year-old Paul, who lives in the shadow of his football hero brother Erik, fights for the right to play soccer despite his near blindness and slowly begins to remember the incident that damaged his eyesight.

Bosch, Pseudonymous. *The Name of this Book Is Secret*

This is the story about a secret. but it also contains a secret story.

When adventurous detectives, Cass, an ever-vigilant survivalist, and Max-Ernest, a boy driven by logic, discover the Symphony of Smells, a box filled with smelly vials of colorful ingredients, they accidentally stumble upon a mystery surrounding a dead magician's diary and the hunt for immortality. **Any of the Secret Series**

Butler, Dori Hillestad. *Do You Know the Monkey Man?*

This is a dramatic, suspenseful, and sensitive story of one family's crisis unwittingly brought on by 13-year-old Samantha's search for the truth about her absent father, and what really happened the day her twin sister drowned when they were toddlers.

Christie, Agatha. *And Then There Were None*_(alternate title: *Ten Little Indians*)

Ten people, each with something to hide and something to fear, are invited to a lonely mansion on Indian Island by a host who, surprisingly, fails to appear. And then, one by one, they begin to die. **Also:** Any mystery by Agatha Christie.

Colfer, Eoin. *Half Moon Investigations*

When Fletcher Moon, the youngest detective in the world, is framed for a crime he did not commit, he must team up with the unlikeliest of allies, run from the authorities, and solve the case within twelve hours to clear his name. **Also:** *Artemis Fowl*

Cooney, Caroline. *The Face on the Milk Carton*

Janie Johnson’s realization that the missing three-year-old pictures on her lunchtime milk carton is really herself destroys her sense of security, plunging her into turmoil.

Corriveau, Art. *13 Hangmen*

Five 13-year-old boys are all living in the same house, in the same attic bedroom, but at different times in history! None are ghosts, all are flesh and blood, and somehow all have come together in the attic room, visible only to one another. And all are somehow linked to a murder, a mystery, and a treasure.

Crichton, Michael. *The Great Train Robbery.*

In 1855, mysterious master criminal Edward Pierce plans and carries out, with three accomplices, the impossible robbery of the monthly London-to-Paris train carrying gold bullion for the British army in the Crimea.

De los Santos, Marisa. *Saving Lucas Biggs*

When thirteen-year-old Margaret's father is sentenced to death for a crime he didn't commit, she knows the only way to save him is to use the forbidden family power of time travel.

Dowd, Siobhan. *The London Eye Mystery*

Twelve-year-old Ted, who has Asperger's syndrome, and his older sister, (and nemesis) Kat, team up to solve their cousin Salim's disappearance, seemingly into thin air. Ted is a complex young hero, whose "funny brain . . . runs on a different operating system" and who is obsessed with shipping forecasts and with his inability to connect well with others.

Duncan, Lois. *Don't Look Behind You.*

Seventeen-year-old April finds her comfortable life changed forever when death threatens to her father, a witness in a federal case, force her family to go into hiding under assumed names and flee the pursuit of a hired killer.

Fast, Natalie. *The Secret Apartment*

New to New York City, eleven-year-old Jillian makes friends, spies on her neighbors across the street, and solves a mystery.

Feinstein, John. *Last Shot*

Two aspiring journalists win a coveted press pass to the Final Four basketball playoffs in New Orleans, where they soon learn the games going on behind the scenes turn out to be even more fiercely competitive than those on the court. They have 48 hours to find out who is blackmailing one of the MSU's star players.

Change-up: Mystery at the World Series

Teen reporters Stevie Thomas and Susan Carol Anderson are covering baseball's World Series, and during the course of an interview with a new hot pitcher, they discover more than a few contradictions in his life story. What's he hiding? An embarrassing secret? A possible crime?

Feinstein, John. *Rush for the Gold*

This Sports Beat book is set at the summer Olympics in London. In this book, Susan Carol isn't a reporter—she's an Olympian, competing as a swimmer at her first Olympic games. Stevie is both proud and envious of her athletic prowess. And he's worried by the agents and sponsors and media all wanting to get up close and personal with Susan Carol.

all other Sports Beat books by Feinstein

Fitzgerald, Laura Marx. *Under the egg*

Her grandfather's dying words lead thirteen-year-old Theodora Tenpenny to a valuable, hidden painting she fears may be stolen, but it is her search for answers in her Greenwich Village neighborhood that brings a real treasure.

Flake, Sharon. *Unstoppable Octobia May*

In 1953 ten-year-old Octobia May lives in her Aunt's boarding house in the South, surrounded by an African American community which has its own secrets and internal racism, and spends her days wondering if Mr. Davenport in room 204 is really a vampire--or something else entirely.

Fleischman, Sid. *Jim Ugly*

The adventures of twelve-year-old Jake and Jim Ugly, his father's part-mongrel, part-wolf dog, as they travel through the Old West trying to find out what really happened to Jake's actor father.

Funke, Cornelia. *Thief Lord*

Welcome to the magical underworld of Venice, Italy, where hidden canals, an old theater, and crumbling rooftops shelter runaways and children with incredible stories, the world of the “Thief Lord.”

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*

A toddler's parent are killed by a man on some kind of mysterious mission to wipe out the family but the child escapes to a graveyard and is given the name Nobody. Whenever the boy strays from his usual play among the headstones, he finds new dangers, learns his limitations and strengths, and acquires the skills he needs to survive within the confines of the graveyard and in wider world beyond. **2009 Newbery Award**



Gibbs, Stuart. *Belly Up*

Twelve-year-old Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt Fitzroy has murder on his hands and trouble on his tail. He believes that Henry, the hippo at the brand-new FunJungle, has been murdered. The zoo's top brass claim the hippo went belly up the natural way, but Teddy and his feisty friend Summer McCracken have other ideas. **Sequel: *Poached***

Giles, Gail. *Dead Girls Don't Write Letters.*

Fourteen-year-old Sunny is stunned when a total stranger shows up at her house posing as her older sister Jazz, who supposedly died in a fire months earlier.

Grisham, John. *Theodore Boone: Kid Lawyer.*

Theo Boone hasn't taken the bar, but, at 13, he offers advice to his friends, hangs out at the courthouse, and watches Perry Mason reruns. Things turn serious, however, when a witness to a murder, a young illegal immigrant, comes to Theo with evidence.

Theodore Boone: The Abduction, Theodore Boone: The Accused and Theodore Boone: The Activist

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The House on the Gulf*

A sixteen-year-old boy arranges a house-sitting job for the summer, but he starts acting strangely after his family moves in, and his sister begins to suspect they are not supposed to be there.

Hahn, Mary Downing. *Dead Man in Indian Creek*

When Matt and Parker learn the body they found in Indian Creek is a drug-related death, they fear Parker's mother may be involved.

Deep and Dark and Dangerous: A Ghost Story

When 13 year old Ali spends the summer with her aunt and cousin at the family's vacation home, she stumbles upon a secret that her mother and aunt have been hiding for over thirty years.

Wait Till Helen Comes: A Ghost Story

Hamilton, Virginia. *The House of Dies Drear*

A family of five moves into an enormous house once used as a hiding place for runaway slaves. Mysterious sounds and events and discoveries of secret passageways make the family believe they are in grave danger. Sequel: *The Mystery of Dies Drear*

Hiaasen, Carl. *Scat*

Nick and Marta are determined to find what happened to the biology teacher after she disappears on a school field trip to Black Vine Swamp resulting in a fast paced ecological mystery involving the Florida Panther and a cast of unique characters.

Horowitz, Anthony. *South by Southeast : a Diamond Brothers Mystery*

When a stranger winds up dead in the office of Tim Diamond, the world's worst private detective, and his brainy kid brother, Nick., the two bumbling detectives are left to puzzle over his last words.

Ibbotson, Eve. *The Star of Kazan.*

Annika, a twelve-year-old foundling in late nineteenth-century Vienna, inherits a trunk of costume jewelry, and soon afterwards a woman claiming to be her aristocratic mother arrives and takes her to live in a strangely decrepit mansion in Germany.

Irwin, Hadley. *The Original Freddie Ackerman*

Twelve-year-old Trevor Frederick Ackerman refuses to spend another summer with his extended family of divorced parents and stepbrothers and sisters. When he is sent up to Maine to stay with two eccentric great-aunts, he gets involved with some interesting people and an unexpected mystery. *District reading list*

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The House on the Gulf*

A sixteen-year-old boy arranges a housesitting job for the summer, but he starts acting strangely after his family moves in, and his sister begins to suspect they are not supposed to be there.

King, Laurie. *The Bee Keeper's Apprentice.*

In 1915, long since retired from his observations of criminal humanity, Sherlock Holmes is engaged in a reclusive study of honeybee behavior on the Sussex Downs. Never did he think to meet an intellect to match his own—until his acquaintance with Miss Mary Russell, a very modern fifteen-year-old whose mental acuity is equaled only by her audacity, tenacity, and penchant for trousers and cloth caps.

Also all other Mary Russell mysteries: *A Monstrous Regiment of Women, A Letter of Mary, The Moor*, etc.

Konigsburg, E.L. *From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*

A twelve-year-old girl and her brother run away to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 1968 Newbery award winner *District reading list*

Silent to the Bone.

When he is wrongly accused of gravely injuring his baby half sister, thirteen-year-old Branwell loses his power of speech and only his friend Connor is able to reach him and uncover the truth about what really happened. *District reading list*

Up From Jericho Tel

The spirit of a dead actress turns two children invisible and sends them out among a group of colorful street performers to search for a missing necklace.

Leonard, Julia Platt. *Cold Case*

When thirteen-year-old Oz Keillor finds a dead body in his family's Santa Fe, New Mexico, restaurant, he is determined to solve the mystery in which his older brother is implicated, but which also involves their long-dead father, who was accused of being a spy.

Lane, Andy. *Death Cloud: Sherlock Holmes the Legend Begins*

It is the summer of 1868, and Sherlock Holmes is fourteen. On break from boarding school, he is staying with eccentric strangers—his uncle and aunt—in their vast house in Hampshire. When two local people die from symptoms that resemble the plague, Holmes begins to investigate what really killed them, helped by his new tutor, an American named Amyus Crowe. Also others in the Young Sherlock Holmes series *Rebel Fire*, *Black Ice*, *Fire Storm* and *Snake Bite*

Milford, Kate. *Greenglass House*

At Greenglass House, a smuggler's inn, twelve-year-old Milo, the innkeepers' adopted son, plans to spend his winter holidays relaxing but soon guests are arriving with strange stories about the house sending Milo and Meddy, the cook's daughter, on an adventure.

Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Nightmare*

Emily is sent to a camp for underachievers where she discovers a murderer on the staff who might provide an explanation for her recurring nightmares.

The Other Side of Dark

Seventeen-year-old Stacy awakens from a four-year coma ready to identify, locate, and prosecute the young man who murdered her mother and wounded her.

Priestley, Chris. *Death and the Arrow*

After his friend Will, a pickpocket in London in 1715, is murdered as part of a series of mysterious deaths, fifteen-year-old Tom Marlowe asks his friend Dr. Harker to help find the killer.

Ruby, Lois. *Soon Be Free*

Thirteen-year-old Dana investigates a mystery involving the old Kansas house that her parents have turned into a bed and breakfast business; in a parallel story, a Quaker boy living in the house in 1857 sets out to help some fugitive slaves to freedom.

Penman, Sharon Kay. *The Queen's Man: A Medieval Mystery*

A swashbuckling mystery set in England in the year 1193 traces the investigation of Justin de Quincy, the confidant of Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, in the disappearance of Eleanor's son Richard Lionheart and the rumors concerning a conspiracy involving his brother John.

Perl, Lila. *Dumb Like Me, Olivia Potts*

Olivia prefers being a low achiever to trying to live up to the academic performances of her brother and sister, until she sets out to solve a series of local burglaries.

Pullman, Philip. *Ruby in the Smoke. (Sally Lockhart Trilogy, Book 1)*

In nineteenth-century London, sixteen-year-old Sally, a recent orphan, becomes involved in a deadly search for a mysterious ruby. *District reading list*

Shadow in the North. (Sally Lockhart Trilogy, Book 2)

In 1878 in London, Sally, now twenty-two and established in her own business, and her companions Frederick and Jim try to solve the mystery surrounding the unexpected collapse of a shipping firm and its ties to a sinister corporation called North Star.

Tiger in the Well. (Sally Lockhart Trilogy, Book 3)

In London in 1881, twenty-four-year-old Sally finds her young daughter and her possessions assailed by an unknown enemy, while a shadowy figure known as the Tzaddik involves her in his plot to defraud and exploit the hordes of Jewish immigrants pouring into the country.

Raskin, Ellen. *The Westing Game*

The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance.

Rinaldi, Ann. *The Staircase.*

In 1878, after her mother's death on the way west, thirteen-year-old Lizzy Enders is left by her father at a convent school in Santa Fe, where she must deal with being the only non-Catholic student and where she plays a part in what some consider a miracle.

Sedgwick, Marcus. *She is Not Invisible.*

A London teenager who is blind and her younger brother travel to New York to find their missing father, using clues from his notebook.

Springer, Nancy. *The Case of the Missing Marquess: an Enola Holmes Mystery*

When Sherlock Holmes' much-younger sister Enola's mother disappears, Enola is determined to find her and sets out to the heart of London. Once there, Enola becomes involved in the kidnapping of a young marquess. *Many of the Enola Holmes series are appropriate.*

Stewart, Trenton Lee. *The Mysterious Benedict Society.*

After Reynie Muldoon responds to an advertisement recruiting "gifted children looking for special opportunities," he finds himself in a world of mystery and adventure. The 11-year-old orphan is one of four children to complete a series of challenging and creative tasks, and he, Kate, Constance, and Sticky become the Mysterious Benedict Society.

Also: ***The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Perilous Journey***

The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Prisoner's Dilemma

Stroud, Jonathan. *The Screaming Staircase*

Follows three young operatives of a Psychic Detection Agency as they battle an epidemic of ghosts in London. Sequel: ***The Whispering Skull***

Thompson, John. *Disappearance at Hangman's Bluff : a Felony Bay mystery*

When Abbey and Bee's neighbor's dog, Yemassee, is kidnapped, they decide it's their job to find the men who took him.

Vanderpool Clare. *Moon Over Manifest*

After a life of riding the rails with her father, 12-year-old Abilene can't understand why he has sent her away to stay with Pastor Shady Howard in Manifest, Missouri, a town he left years earlier; but over the summer she pieces together his story. Her disappointment quickly turns to excitement when she discovers a hidden cigar box full of mementos, including some old letters that mention a spy known as the Rattler. **Winner of the 2011 Newbery Award**

Voigt, Cynthia. *The Book of Secrets*

Self-reliant Max Starling, a twelve-year-old detective and problem solver, struggles to keep his identity a secret as he investigates a case of arson, while cryptic messages from his still missing parents indicate that they need rescuing.



Westall, Robert. *Stormsearch*

Tim Vaux's discovery of an antique model ship on an English beach leads him to an unsolved family mystery involving a London heiress, a heartbroken drunkard, and the fanatic miser Black Idris.

White, Ruth. *Belle Prater's Boy* (Newbery Honor Book)

"Around 5:00 a.m. on a warm Sunday morning on October 1953, my Aunt Belle left her bed and vanished from the face of the earth." Everyone in Coal Station, Virginia, has a theory about what happened, but 12-year-old Gypsy wants the facts. When her cousin Woodrow, Aunt Belle's son, moves next door with his grandparents, she has her chance.



Yep, Laurence. *The Mark Twain Murder*

In the summer of 1864 in San Francisco, a teen-age boy meets reporter Mark Twain after a murder and agrees to help him get the story.

The Case of the Goblin Pearls

Lili and her aunt, a Chinese American movie actress, join forces to solve the theft of some priceless pearls and stop the operator of a sweatshop in San Francisco's Chinatown.

Sequel: ***The Case of the Lion Dance***