Cultish: The Language of Fanaticism
Amanda Montell

This book describes the language of fanatic groups, ranging from The Peoples Temple to MLMs. It’s a fascinating look at how language can influence people. This book is available as a print book or as an audiobook, and the author has a podcast, too, for further listening! ~Megan S. (CW: suicide, abuse, alcoholism)

Lessons in Chemistry
Bonnie Garmus

Set in the 1960s, a smart, capable, independent woman is trying to build a career as a scientist in a man’s world and raise her child on her own. Despite some heavy subjects, the story remains upbeat and often humorous, with charming characters, including a dog named six thirty. ~Melissa S. (CW: rape)

The Comfort Book
Matt Haig

I find myself turning to this after too many gray days in a row. It is indeed a book for when you need to reset a bad day or to find some hope while grieving. The author of The Midnight Library knows what he’s about. ~Trisha R. (CW: depictions of severe depression)
The Last of Us

A virus spreads, turning infected humans into monsters. Although the story centers on the main characters’ journey, it also portrays the emotional toll experienced by many over the loss of modern civilization and the things we can resort to during times of fear and uncertainty. ~Sam R. (CW: violence and gore throughout)

An Immense World

This book explores how animals sense the world. Yong includes a rich variety of animals, from dogs to star-nosed moles, and senses that humans don’t have. It’s fascinating to conceptualize how animals experience life. The world is truly immense, and it is absolutely wonderful! ~Megan S.

I Have Some Questions for You

Podcasts, #metoo, questionable student/teacher relationships: a boarding school alum returns to campus and investigates a suspicious death that occurred 30 years ago. ~Nicole B. (CW: physical abuse, eating disorders)
What We Do in the Shadows

This vampiric comedy set in an old house in Long Island is a laugh a minute! Done in pseudo-documentary style, the show follows four vampires and their familiar as they try to navigate modern life. ~Anne J.

The Personality Brokers
Merve Emre

Are you an INFJ? or an ENTP? Think again! New Yorker Magazine critic, Oxford professor (and recent guest on our Deerfield Public Library Podcast!) delves into the odd history and personalities behind the world’s most famous personality test, proving we’re all more than a "type." ~Dylan Z.

The Hard Crowd
Rachel Kushner

Rachel Kushner is the cool older sister you never had. In this collection of essays, she races motorcycles down to Baja, tends bar for The Stones, waxes about Marguerite Duras, considers the prison industrial complex, and tells of a Gen-X coming of age in San Francisco. ~Stephanie K. (CW: drug use, death, violence)
Minding the Gap

This amazing documentary explores the lives of three skateboarders in Rockford, Illinois. It’s not really a "skateboarding movie," though. It’s about growing up in a working class neighborhood and coping with family trauma. It’s one of the most powerful films I’ve seen.
~Tom W. (CW: family violence, alcoholism)

Cold Comfort Farm

The very sensible Flora Post never fails to cheer me as she tidies lives and arranges marriages for the inhabitants of Cold Comfort Farm in this comedy set in the 1920s. Based on the book by Stella Gibbons. Frankly, this movie is found family for me. ~Trisha R.

Avatar the Last Airbender

What’s better than a healthy dose of cartoons? First released almost 2 decades ago, this show still has massive appeal. A rag tag group of kids trying to fight for peace and unity in a world where people can control the four elements. Binge all 3 seasons! ~Emily K.