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Library’s Annual Winter Reading Challenge Returns Jan. 2

MCPL Challenges Patrons to Read Five Books in Two Months, Participants Earn Prize Mug

Greater Kansas City, MO – Mid-Continent Public Library’s annual Winter Reading Challenge will return this Friday, January 2! This year’s theme, “Endless Journey,” celebrates the uncharted trails and breathtaking new worlds that can be explored between the pages of an exciting book. The program encourages participants to read five books between January 2 and March 15 and is open to all ages. Adults can earn a commemorative coffee mug for completing the Challenge, while kids and teens can earn a book light (all prizes will be offered while supplies last). New this year: the WRC coffee mug was the result of a community design contest!*

“The cold winter days can feel long and dull, but it’s the perfect time to snuggle up with a good book and go on exciting armchair adventures!” said LynnDee Wathen, MCPL’s Reading Initiatives & Display Manager, whose team organizes the Challenge. “Plus, reading offers many benefits beyond just entertainment—like stress reduction and improved sleep—and it sets a great example if you have little ones at home.”

To earn a prize, participants must sign up online at mymcpl.org/WinterReading or by picking up a Winter Reading Challenge program guide booklet at any MCPL branch. All titles must be logged (online or hard copy turned in) by the end of March 15. For those interested in exploring the “Endless Journey” theme, MCPL staff have curated book lists with recommendations of books with various explorations—from sci-fi quests and international thrillers to nonfiction food and travel memoirs and more. However, readers are encouraged to connect with any five titles that spark their interest.

Participants can also enhance their Challenge experience by attending in-person books groups and events, as well as virtual programs through the [Winter Reading Challenge Facebook page](#). For more information about



**Winter Reading Challenge
coffee mug, designed by
Kansas City artist Afton Lin**

the Winter Reading Challenge, including a full list of rules, more details about the prizes, and the suggested reading lists compiled by MCPL staff, visit mymcpl.org/WinterReading.

***About the 2026 Winter Reading Challenge Mug Design:**

For the first time in the program’s history, the Winter Reading Challenge prize mug was the result of a community effort. Dozens of local artists submitted design concepts centered on the theme of “Endless Journey.” The search culminated in the selection of a design by Kansas City, Missouri, artist Afton Lin. Lin’s design highlights the transportation modes on an endless journey. It features tickets and glimpses of new worlds that readers might encounter in their armchair travels. Lin is a graduate of the Kansas City Art Institute and is an illustrator, designer, and storyteller. She is the founder of Taffy Studios.

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About Mid-Continent Public Library

Founded in 1965, Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 34 branches and two Library-To-Go locations and serving approximately 850,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. MCPL is an award-winning library system that strives to enrich citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. Connect with the Library on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mcpl) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/mcpl).