

# UNREAL: NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

WHAT I LEARNED WHILE WORKING AT THE BROOKLYN  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Presented by: Grace Pickering



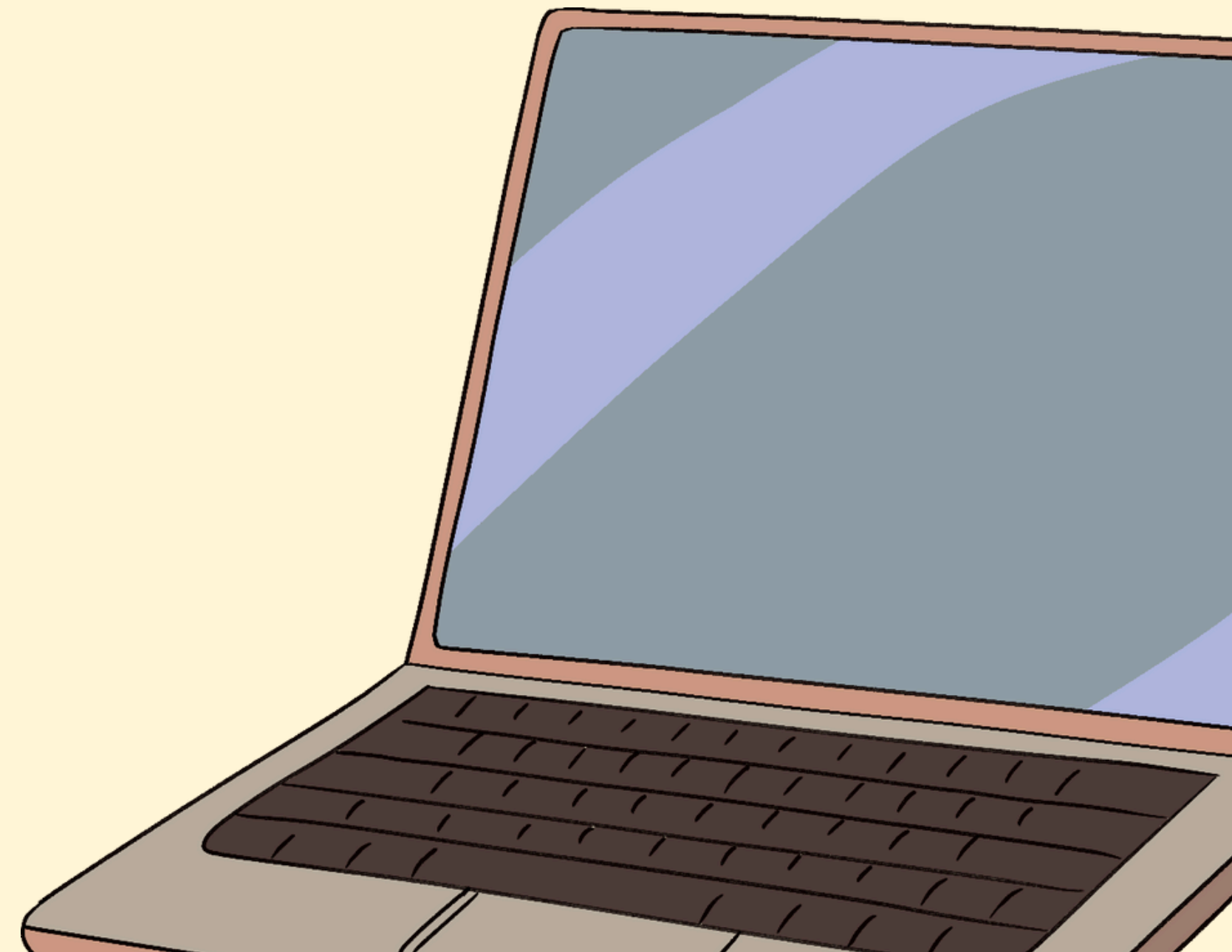
# NON-FICTION



- At the reference desk, we got asked a lot about non-fiction, but it was mostly for school projects
- I got asked only five times by a YA patron in the entire year

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS?

- Children and Young Adults check out non-fiction books at roughly the same proportion as each other i.e. around 12-18% for any given six-month period
- BUT Young Adults make up a much smaller fraction of the circulation overall



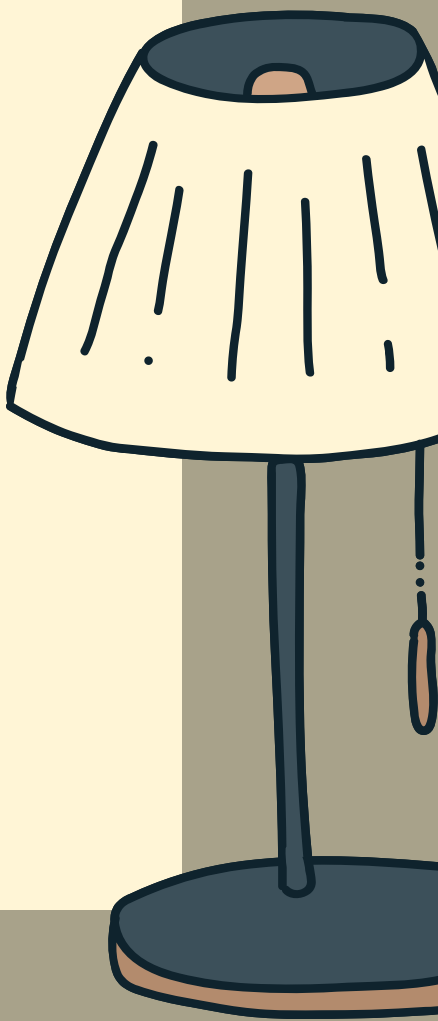
# STATS

## YOUTH WING: JUVENILE TITLES

- Fiction: 70-78% of all checked out titles
- Non-fiction/Informational: 13-15%

## YOUTH WING: YOUNG ADULT TITLES

- Fiction: 7-11% of all checked out titles
- Non-fiction/informational: 2-2.7%



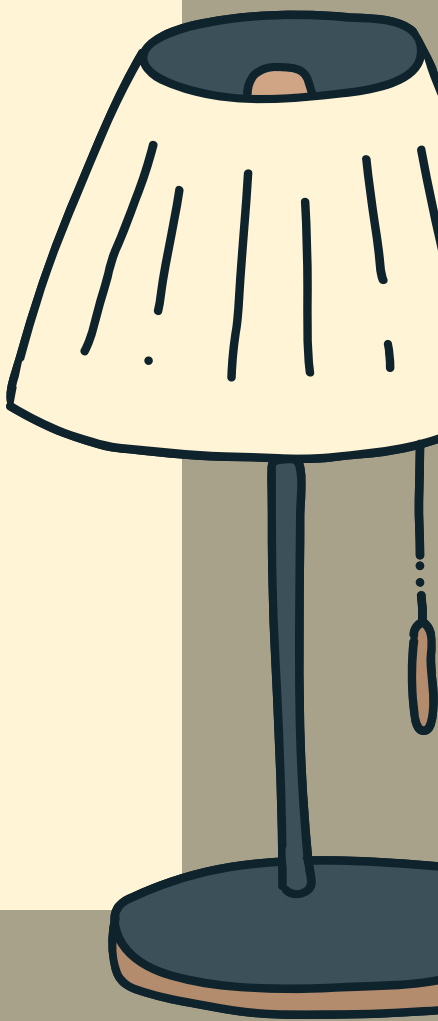
# STATS

## YOUTH PROPORTIONS:

- Juvenile: 15-16% NF
- YA: 13-18% NF

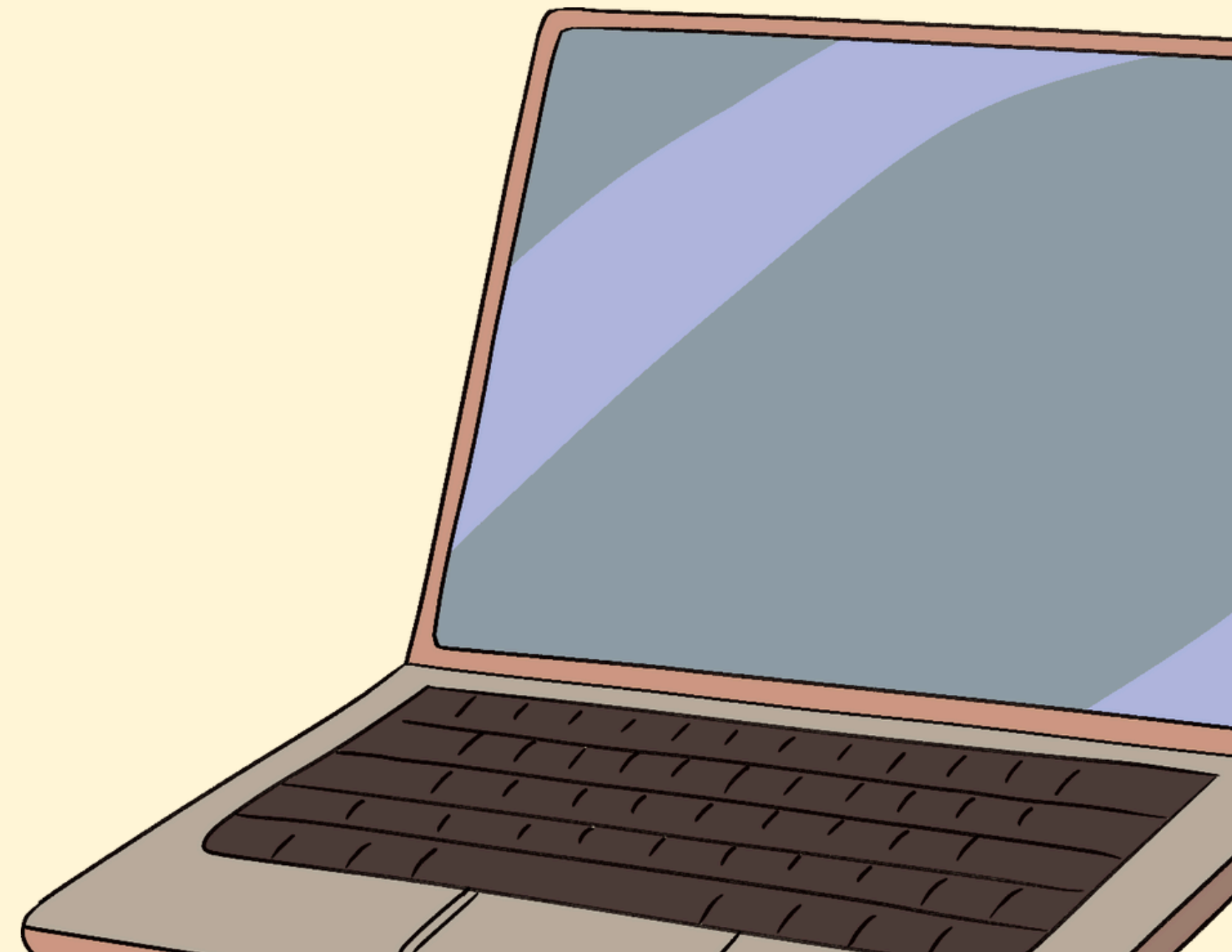
## ADULT PROPORTIONS:

- Non-fiction/informational: is consistently at least 50% of all circulating titles at Central



# WHAT'S HAPPENING?


- Dearth of high quality NF books for YA patrons. (Jensen, 2018)
- This leads to middle grade and YA patrons being directed to the adult sections rather than interests that suit these patrons being available in youth collections.
- Small percentage of classroom collections, even for elementary school children, is NF - sets the pattern. (Baker, 2021)



# WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Collection Development-
  - purchase books of high interest to youth (ascertained through youth boards and surveys)
  - purchase books that are marked for awards (e.g. YALSA, Orbis)
- Display prominently YA NF titles
- Include NF titles in Summer Reading
- Include NF titles in book talks and readers' advisory - there is a lot out there, particularly those who are activist-minded





# THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Don't hesitate to ask any questions!

And thanks to the amazing BPL people who helped me thrive this year:

Yesha, Tatiana, Sheneatha, Raquel, Rakisha, Paquita, Paolo, Lisa, Linda, Leo, Leigh, Gabrielle, Francesca, Emma, Deirdre, Cynthia, Brianna, & Ben



# SOURCES

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SLIDES: Colorful Vintage Elegant Library Furniture Animated Illustration  
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