

Maine Regional Library System  
32nd Annual Reading Round-Up of Children's and Young Adult Literature  
April 28, 2022

MAINE EXAMINATION COLLECTION OF CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

**Cream of the Crop**

Total books: 86

**KEY**

<b>L</b>	<b>Library binding</b>	<b>[GN]</b>	<b>Graphic Novel</b>
<b>R</b>	<b>Reinforced trade binding</b>	<b>[M]</b>	<b>Maine Author, Illustrator, Setting</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>Trade binding</b>		

**PICTURE BOOK FICTION [total books in this category: [20]**

Arnaldo, Monica. *Are You a Cheeseburger?* Katherine Tegen Books. 9780063003941, T \$17.99 (preK-Gr 2). Grub the raccoon finds Seed one night while looking for something yummy to eat in a garbage can (preferably his favorite food, cheeseburgers). Seed says that she is waiting for someone to plant her so that she can grow into something special. Grub wonders what special thing Seed will grow into, could it be that Seed will grow cheeseburgers? Grub plants Seed to find out. What grows is a special friendship. This adorable story would make a perfect addition to a food, gardening, or friendship storytime.

de la Peña, Matt *Milo Imagines the World*. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers. 9780399549083, T \$18.99 (Gr 1-2). Brown-skinned Milo and his sister ride the subway together in anticipation of something exciting. To pass the time Milo draws pictures of the other subway riders and imagines their lives. The lives vary; some are troubled, some are amazing. When they reach their stop, Milo notices another subway rider going to the same destination he is and realizes that you never know what people might have in common with other people. This causes him to reevaluate the lives he has envisioned. This is an excellent book for all of us who need to be reminded that you never know what someone might be struggling with and that there might be more that unites us than divides us. The illustrations by Christian Robinson are full of color and important details and bring Milo's imagination to life.

Finison, Carrie. *Don't Hug Doug*. Putnam Publishing Group. 9781984813022, T \$16.99 (Gr K-2). Doug doesn't like hugs. He thinks hugs are too squeezey, too squashy, too squooshy, too smooshy. He'd much rather give a high five--or a low five, a side five, a double five, or a spinny five. This book is about consent and accepting differences in others. The only way to know if someone likes hugs is to ask them. The digitally-rendered illustrations by Daniel Wiseman are colorful and help convey Doug's emotions—both positive and negative. This book is a fabulous way to introduce consent and it's a way for kids who don't like to be touched to see themselves in a book.

Griffin, Molly. *Ten Beautiful Things*. Charlesbridge. 9781580899369, R \$16.99 (Gr K-3). Lily is not happy that she is going to live with her grandmother in the middle of Iowa; it's a big and scary change. As Lily travels to her new home, Gram suggests she look for ten beautiful things. This suggestion turns the trip into an awakening for Lily of all that is around her as she travels: sunrises, birds, mud, and relationships. Illustrator Maribel Lechuga's cinematic illustrations perfectly capture Griffin's words and remind the reader that there is beauty everywhere if one just looks

Ho, Joanna. *Eyes That Kiss in the Corners*. Harper Collins. 9780062915627, T \$17.99 (K-Gr 2). A young girl notices her eyes are different from some of her friends' eyes. Instead of having big eyes with long lashes, hers "kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea." This story is not only a tale of self-acceptance, it also honors her heritage as she realizes she shares her eye shape with beloved women—her Mama, Amah, and little sister Mei-Mei. The lyrical text and expressive illustrations feature lots of Asian culture and imagery. The digitally-rendered artwork by Dung Ho is gorgeous and colorful. It brings the emotions of a strong familial bond to life while weaving in the poetic details of the text effortlessly.

Howe, James. *Tyrone O'Saurus Dreams*. Candlewick. 9781536210873, T \$17.99 (PreK-Gr 2). The duo of Howe and Randy Cecil are back (*Brontorina*) with another lovable dino who is trying to figure out their place in the world. Tyrone doesn't want to be any of the things others think he should be, a dentist, a lawyer, a football player. He wants his own dream and when he discovers dancing, he knows he has found his purpose. Bold colors and full-page illustrations with clear, spare text will make this book a hit at a dino-themed story time or in a unit on having the courage to be who you truly are.

LaRochelle, David. *How to Apologize*. Candlewick Press. 9781536209440, T \$17.99 (preK-Gr 2). Apologizing when we do something wrong, whether on purpose or by accident is a very important thing. But sometimes it is hard to do. This adorable book gives a clear and simple message on how to and how not to apologize as well as different ways to apologize. The gentle humor and bright cartoonish illustrations by Mike Wohnoutka bring this book together making it the perfect instructional tool to teach little ones to say 'I am sorry.'

Lawson, JonArno. ***Over the Shop***. Candlewick Press. 9781536201475, T \$16.99 (PreK-Gr 3). A little girl's grandparents own a rundown building- their shop on the first floor, their apartment on the second, and a vacant apartment they need to rent. While many are interested, the work to renovate the apartment sends most away, until a young couple with a vision of what could be agree to rent it. In doing so, they not only transform the apartment, but the building, its inhabitants, and the neighbors. This wordless book with illustrations of ink and watercolor by Qin Leng doesn't need text to tell a story of friends, love, and companionship.

Lightman, Alan & Olga Pastuchiv. ***Ada and the Galaxies***. MIT KIDs Press. 9781536215618, [M] \$17.99 (Gr K-3). Ada is a stargazer, but living in New York, the stars are hard to see, so when she goes to visit her grandparents in Maine not only does she see the stars, but she and the reader are introduced to all the Maine coast can offer. With ink and watercolor illustration, along with photographs taken by the Hubble Telescope and layered with watercolor illustrations, Susanna Chapman brings the stars to life. The perfect introduction to astronomy and nature, not to mention everything Maine offers young scientists. Use as an introduction for units on nature, astronomy and Maine.

Marlow, Layn. ***Noah's Seal***. Candlewick Press. 9781536218510, T \$17.99 (PreK-Gr 3). Quiet magic, imagination, and a bit of adventure are words used to describe this story of family and the sea. Noah wants to see seals but until Gran's boat is repaired, they remain on the beach. Noah creates a seal of sand to pass the time until a storm comes up and he has to leave it. Readers will want to find out what becomes of his seal and if the magic of the sea will bring Noah his wish. Soft illustrations of sea tones make this a story to be read on a beach, a cozy seat, or in a classroom. Add to any units on the sea and all that lives on or in it.,

McNamara, Margaret. ***The Little Library***. Schwartz & Wade. 9780525578338, [M] \$17.99 (PreK-Gr 3). Mr. Tiffin's classroom is back and this time the reader meets the new librarian and a boy, Jake, that can read but hasn't yet found the "right book". With the patience and understanding of a savvy librarian, Jake not only finds his book but makes it possible for all to read during the summer when the school library is closed. This author/illustrator duo of McNamara and G. Brian Karas has made all readers a part of Mr. Tiffin's classroom and in doing so gently makes them better readers and better people.

Newman, Lesléa. ***123 Cats: A Cat Counting Book***. Candlewick. 9781536209952, T \$7.99 (PreK). The dark shades of the cats and the amount of white space make this board book just right for babies to focus on the illustrations by Isabella Kung. Readers, both adult and child, will appreciate the rhyming text and simple concepts. Best of all are the mannerisms of individual cats as they play and interact. The numbers are large and bold while the background is minimal. A great addition to any board book collection.

Norman, Kim. ***One-osaurus, Two-osaurus***. Candlewick Press. 9781536201796, T \$16.99 (PreK-Gr 2). Ten dinosaurs are playing hide-and-seek in this delightfully funny rhyming counting book. Bright illustrations by Pierre Collet-Derby add to this roaring addition to a dinosaur storytime. This one is meant to be read out loud and with enthusiastic participation. A clever and funny addition to any concept book collection.

Pham, LeUyen. ***Outside, Inside***. Roaring Brook Press. 9781250798350, T \$18.99 (Gr K-5). Something has happened outside and now friends, neighbors, and whole communities are staying inside. This beautifully written and illustrated story explores how the world changed during the Covid-19 pandemic and highlights the importance of supporting each other and our community, both locally and globally. Through illustrated portrait-like scenes, Pham shows the effect of the shift on peoples' lives, underscores the lives of essential workers, and touches on the Black Lives Matter protests during the summer of 2020, offering educators or parents a path for frank discussion about racial injustice. This hopeful book encourages readers to consider their own, ongoing paths through the pandemic, without ever downplaying the seriousness.

Rosen, Sybil. ***Carpenter's Helper***. Schwartz & Wade Books. 9780593123201, T \$17.99 (Gr K-2). Renata is a young brown-skinned girl who is remodeling her bathroom with her Papi. They're just about to install windows when a wren flies through and builds a nest in the unfinished space. Papi and Renata watch as the wrens build the nest, incubate the eggs, and then rear the young chicks. Once the chicks have fledged, they know it's safe to finish work on the bathroom. This is a tender story about compassion for all creatures. It is a wonderfully positive representation of a father/daughter relationship as well with no mention of another parent. The illustrations are colorful and full of little details that really help bring the story to life. A sweet story with themes of nature, girl power, and compassion.

Strerer, Gideon. ***Midnight Fair***. Candlewick. 9781536211153, T \$16.99 (Pre-K-Gr 2). This is a beautifully illustrated wordless picture book about what happens at the fair during the night when it's closed. Not surprisingly, the animals of the forest come out and take full advantage of all the fun the fair has to offer—they ride the carousel, they play the games, they eat the food. The mixed media illustrations by Mariachiara di Giorgio feature gorgeous and brightly colored watercolors that really convey the magic of the fair at night. Hand this book to fans of wordless books who love a little imagination and fun in their stories.

Sterling, Michelle. ***When Lola Visits***. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780062972859, T \$17.99 (Gr K-2). This picture book by both a debut author and illustrator, Aaron Asis, is an exploration of summer through the sense of smell and the memories that those smells bring to mind. Told through the eyes of a little girl, summer doesn't really begin until her Lola (grandma) comes on her annual visit from the Philippines. Lola's traditional Filipino cooking is mixed with typical American summer activities to create this delightful celebration of summer. Use in a storytime or lesson about senses and poetry. What does summer smell like to you?

Stutzman, Jonathan. *Bear is a Bear*. Balzer + Bray. 9780062880512, T \$15.99 (Gr K-2). With sumptuous illustrations by Dan Santat, this oversized picture book is a beautiful and heartwarming story about a girl and her teddy bear. Bear is not just a bear. Bear is a tissue, a soft pillow, a pirate, an artist. Bear is full of love. This is an ode to the special stuffie in your life and all of the different roles that the stuffie takes on, exactly what you need at the right moment in time. A perfect bedtime story to share with your special stuffie.

Tabor, Corey R. *Mel Fell*. Balzer + Bray. 9780062878014, T \$17.99 (preK-Gr 2). Mel is a kingfisher chick who decides it is time to learn to fly, so she jumps off her tree branch and she falls. On her way down, many of her neighbors, squirrels, bees, a spider, and a snail, alternately try to help catch her or give her words of encouragement, until Mel crashes into the water just like a kingfisher is supposed to. The clever format of the book guides the reader to flip the book around as Mel catches a fish and flies back up toward her nest. There is an author's note in the backmatter about kingfishers to help give young readers context about Mel's flight. A wonderful read aloud.

Yoon, Helen. *Sheepish (Wolf Under Cover)*. Candlewick Press. 9781536207323, T \$17.99 (preK-Gr 2). In this sweet heart-warming story, Wolf dresses up like a sheep and sneaks into the sheep pasture pretending to be a woolly ovine. His plan is to be so helpful that the sheep will trust him and then he can make the sheep into tasty snacks. Wolf's plan works, but maybe too well. With few words and creatively detailed illustrations, this picture book would be a great interactive read aloud or fun for a unit on idioms.

#### **PICTURE BOOK NONFICTION [total books in this category: [8]**

Fox, J.F. *Napoleon Vs. The Bunnies*. Kids Can Press. 9781525302022, T \$17.99 (Gr K-3). Napoleon wanted to have a celebratory rabbit hunt after he signed his 1807 treaty with Russia. Tasked with finding the rabbits, his Chief of Staff just bought them all from local farmers. The rabbits were so domesticated that they ran right toward Napoleon because they assumed he had food for them. He panicked and ran and the rest is human/rabbit history. Really funny story, cute illustrations by Anna Kwan, and the bonus of a few French vocabulary words, this is a great read aloud picture book for just about anyone.

Holasová, Aneta Frantiska. *Bruno the Beekeeper: A Honey Primer*. Candlewick. 9781536214611, R \$19.99 (Gr 3-6). Bruno, a beekeeping bear, takes the reader through the seasons of the year, showing them what is required of a beekeeper. With a homey, folksy tone and illustrations in honey hues, Bruno explains each step in the caring and raising of bees. This picture book offering can be used as a step-by-step guide for the beginning beekeeper, and also in units about bees and their importance in our lives. Pair with *If the Bees Disappeared* by Lily Williams, *Bee: A Peek-Through Picture Book* by Britta Tecentrup, *Honeybee: the Busy Life of Apis Mellifera* by Candace Fleming, and *The Way of the Hive* by Jay Hosler.

Ignotofsky, Rachel. *What's Inside a Flower?: And Other Questions About Science and Nature*. Crown Books. 9780593176474, T \$17.99 (Gr K-4). Flowers grow everywhere and are so common they are often taken for granted. But have you ever wondered what's inside a flower, how they bloom, what makes the science of flowers so special? Author Ignotofsky answers the questions young botanists may have in easily understandable text supported by bright, detailed illustrations. This is a selection that can be read through or studied page by page. If you are a parent or teacher planning a flower garden, this is the book to start with. A stunning STEAM offering.

Lasky, Katherine. *She Caught the Light: Williamina Stevens Fleming: Astronomer*. HarperCollins. 9780062849304, T \$18.99 (Gr 1-6). With a background in photography and a fascination for light, Mina Stevens Fleming became an astronomer in a time when women weren't allowed to look through the lens of a telescope! Her work led to the sorting and classifying of stars and their composition. Author Lasky, together with illustrator Julianna Swaney, has brought to light another woman of science whose story has been lost. Use this with units on Women's History and astronomy especially *Always Looking Up: Nancy Grace Roman Astronomer* by Laura Gehl and *Look Up: Henrietta Leavitt* by Robert Burleigh.

Martin, Marc. *Masters of Disguise: Camouflaging Creatures and Magnificent Mimics*. Candlewick Studio. 9781536214055, R \$18.99 (Gr K-4). The animals found in the pages of this book all have diverse and unique ways of disguising themselves and staying out of sight. Some change their color or pattern, others blend in as sticks, flowers, even coating themselves with algae! Readers meet twelve animals - mammals, reptiles, insects, and learn their means of disguise. Young scientists also have the opportunity to find them as they hide in plain sight on facing pages. Illustrations done in watercolor and pencil are stunning and support the text. This STEAM selection can be used in units on animal survival or in art classes.

Montgomery, Heather. *What's In Your Pocket?: Collecting Nature's Treasures*. Charlesbridge. 9781623541224, R \$17.99 (Gr K-3). This picture book is for those nature-loving, curiosity-filled, budding scientists constantly bringing home all manner of "stuff" in their pockets. Author Montgomery introduces the reader to nine young nature-lovers who would go on to become famous scientists, Jane Goodall, Charles Darwin, and Mary Anning to name three. With their "younger selves" described on one page and their accomplishments on the facing page, the text offers little a-ha moments. The writing is understandable and illustrations from Maribel Lechuga beautifully complement each entry. This STEAM offering is a good introduction to the scientific method and can be paired with individual books on the scientists featured in the bibliography or with the book *Ten Beautiful Things* by Molly Beth Griffin.

Shreeve, Elizabeth. *Out of the Blue: How Animals Evolved from Prehistoric Seas*. Candlewick. 9781536214109, R \$17.99 (Gr 1-4). All life can be traced back to the oceans. Author Shreeve takes the reader back millions of years to the first microbes as they emerge in the

water covering the earth. The oceans are the home to the earliest creatures. Each period in earth's timeline is explained in text clear and understandable for young scientists and the bright detailed illustrations by Frann Preston-Gannon support the text. From tiny microbes to the age of mammals, this 32-page offering gives STEAM enthusiasts the earth's beginnings. Use this with units on the ocean, the Earth's beginnings, and how each species came to be.

Sisteré, Mariona Tolosa and Ellas Educan Collective. *The Secret Life of Viruses: Incredible Science Facts About Germs, Vaccines, and What You Can Do To Stay Healthy*. Sourcebooks Explore. 9781728239767, T \$17.99 (Gr 4-6). Before Covid, what most people knew of viruses was that they caused the common cold and the flu. Now, the word "virus" is part of our everyday language. But what is a virus? Where do they come from? What are they made of? How do humans get them? And how do they avoid them? Author Sisteré gives young readers the answers to these questions and anything else virus-related. Told in comic-style illustrations and information balloons, this STEM selection is a timely book that offers answers and promotes mindful habits. Pair with *June Almeida, Virus Detective* by Suzanne Slade, and Don Brown's *Fever Year* and *Big Ideas that Changed the World: A Shot In the Arm*.

#### CHAPTER BOOK NONFICTION [total books in this category: 10]

Chambers, Veronica. *Call and Response: The Story of Black Lives Matter*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Versify. 9780358573418, T \$21.99 (Gr 5-8). A timely resource on the history of Black Lives Matter. Featuring in-depth reporting, a wide range of powerful photographs, insightful quotes from various people, timelines, and engaging graphics, this book is important for young readers and adults today. It provides the background stories of the activists and organizers and how they are working to build momentum to make meaningful, much needed change in the world.

Cross, Alan, Emme Cross, and Nicole Mortillaro. *The Science of Song: How and Why We Make Music*. Kids Can Press. 9781771387873, R \$17.99 (Gr 3-5). "Stick a sock in it!" You'll learn the origin of this phrase and so much more in this engaging book. Detailing the science of how music is created – the technology, the engineering, and the mathematics – along with the motivation behind that creation, and the delivery of the product to listeners, this book will appeal to those interested in the process and progression of a topic through time. The authors also include a short playlist on each double-page spread that readers can use to delve further as well as a robust glossary. There is an interesting author note about the origin of the book, and a short bibliography.

Feder, Tyler. *Dancing at the Pity Party: A Dead Mom Graphic Memoir*. Dial Books. 9780525553021, [GN] \$18.99 (Gr 8 & up). Tyler Feder shares her story of her mother's first oncology appointment to facing reality as a motherless daughter in this frank and refreshingly funny graphic memoir.

Hopkinson, Deborah. *We Must Not Forget: Holocaust Stories of Survival and Resistance*. Scholastic Focus. 9781338255775, T \$18.99 (Gr 5-8). Featuring the first-hand stories of Holocaust survivors from Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Poland, these heart-breaking stories and accompanying photographs will help readers understand the magnitude of the Holocaust and the millions who were killed. Thoroughly-researched with suggestions for further reading, this is a great place to begin the search for primary sources. Each story ends with a "Look, Listen, Remember" link to an audio or video interview with the survivor.

Hosler, Jay. *The Way of the Hive*. HarperAlley. 9780063007352, [GN] \$12.99 (Gr 3-8). Using the story of Nyuki ("bee" in Swahili), Hosler offers the full story of a bee's life from larva to death (in a heart-tugging scene). The book reads like an adventure and infuses storytelling into the mechanics of the lives of these fascinating, necessary pollinators. Budding entomologists, those interested in apiculture, and fans of the Science Comics series will enjoy this book. Copious notes at the end provide additional information about the scientific concepts and bee functions touched upon in the book. A stellar addition to a NF graphic novel section.

Hudson, Wade. *Recognize: An Anthology Honoring and Amplifying Black Life*. Crown Publishing. 9780593381595, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). Prominent Black creators lend their voices, their insights, and their talents to an inspiring anthology that celebrates Black culture and Black life. Essays, poems, short stories, and historical excerpts blend with a full-color insert of art to embody the emotion of the text. This book is great for middle grade readers looking to understand what it's like to be Black in America.

Kendi, Ibram X. & Jason Reynolds. *Stamped: Racism, AntiRacism, and You*. Little, Brown and Company. 9780316453692, T \$14.99 (Gr 7 & up). A history of racist and antiracist ideas in America, from their roots in Europe until today, adapted from the National Book Award winner *Stamped from the Beginning*.

Sullivan, Tom. *Escape at 10,000 Feet: D.B. Cooper and the Missing Money*. Balzer + Bray. 9780062991515, [GN] \$12.99 (Gr 3-8). Unsolved Case Files is a new series of nonfiction graphic novels featuring high-profile crimes or escapes that have never been solved. This first book in the series focuses on the only unsolved skyjacking in American history. In 1971, a man boarded a plane, requested money and some parachutes, then jumped out of the back of the plane. He was never seen again. The text is interspersed with many images of actual evidence as well as extra sidebar bits of information about the time period or the nature of the crime. This is a fun series that will delight young sleuths.

Thomas, Mindy and Guy Raz. *Wow in the World: The How and Why of the Human Body: From Your Tongue to Your Toes and All the Guts In Between*. Clarion Books. 9780358306634, [GN] \$19.99 (Gr 3-5). The first book in a high-interest series based on the "Wow in

the World” podcast by Thomas and Raz. The authors mix in fun facts along with their tips on health and hygiene thereby creating an educational \*and\* entertaining read. This book won’t provide a ton of depth (except for the eight-page spread on poop) but it does provide clear explanations for functions and body parts. The drawings by Jack Teagle are excellent and confer a lot of information. There is a glossary, a bibliography, an index, QR codes to take readers to the podcast sections, and extensive Source Notes.

Yelchin, Eugene. *The Genius Under the Table: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*. Candlewick. 9781536215526, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-7). Eugene (Yevgeny) Yelchin remembers growing up in Cold War Russia in this fascinating, laugh-out-loud, yet heartbreaking memoir. Young Eugene, his brother, father, mother, and grandmother share one room in a communal apartment. Eugene, desperate to find a talent that will help him leave Russia, spends nights drawing under his grandmother’s table. The deadpan delivery of the story will have readers laughing, but readers shouldn’t get lulled into thinking this will be a light recounting of Yelchin’s rise to success in art and his eventual move to the USA. Instead, it’s a devastating family story about the cost of secrets. There is a strength to this family that is inspiring in the chaos of today’s world. It also will resonate with any child who feels that information is being withheld from them; while it won’t help them discover information in their own families, it will help explain why a family might keep secrets from its own members.

#### **CHAPTER BOOK FICTION [total books in this category: 48]**

Albus, Kate. *A Place to Hang the Moon*. Margaret Ferguson Books. 9780823447053, T \$17.99 (Gr 4-6). William, Edmund, and Anna are not terribly upset when their cold, distant, unloving grandmother dies. But she was their last living relative and guardian, so now they must find someone else willing to care for all three of them. Not an easy task with the country at war. The family lawyer comes up with a preposterous plan: have the children join a school group being evacuated from London to the countryside and hope that the family that takes the children in will want to keep them after the war is over. The children move from situation to situation, dealing with bullies, hunger, and cold, but the one constant source of happiness in their life is the warmth of the town lending library and the librarian, Mrs. Muller. Similar to *Number the Stars*, this is a perfect pick for historical fiction/WWII fans for middle grade readers.

Alston, B.B. *Amari and the Night Brothers*. Balzer & Bray. 9780062975164, T \$17.99 (Gr 4 and up). Amari’s brother Quinton has gone missing, so when a messenger appears with a mysterious message for Amari inviting her to a secret summer camp, the same that Q attended, she accepts. She quickly learns that not all is as it appears as she is ensnared in an ancient battle in a world she knew nothing about, but in which she features prominently. This book is so much more than a girl searching for her brother. Amari and her family live in subsidized housing, and she’s been bullied at school in the past. This book covers topics like racial and socioeconomic inequality, friendship, the Black experience, bullying, and it does so with grace and ease. It is a fast-paced, action-packed, character-driven story that will keep readers engaged and waiting with great anticipation for the sequel. Give to fantasy lovers and fans of Harry Potter.

Bauer, Marion. *Sunshine*. Candlewick. 9781536214116, R \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). For most of Ben’s life, it has been just Ben, his dad and his dog, Sunshine. Now that he is older, he has questions, why did his mother leave, did she love him? When he gets the chance to spend a week with her at her cabin on an island, he plans on getting answers. Readers will discover alongside Ben the reasons for her leaving as his week is filled with self discovery, facing fears, and forgiveness. This will resonate with children who are worried, scared, dealing with divorce and wondering how they come out the other side. Pair it with Katherine Applegate’s *Crenshaw*.

Billingsley, Franny. *The Robber Girl*. Candlewick Press. 9780763669560, T \$18.99 (Gr 7 & up) The Robber Girl has lived with the Gentlemen Robbers for as long as she can remember. When a heist goes wrong, she ends up staying with a kind town judge and his wife in their picture-perfect cottage, while the lead Gentleman Robber is jailed and awaits trial. Formerly nameless, she chooses to call herself Starling, and while learning about the town and people around her, her past begins to reveal itself. Young Starling carries her faithful dagger with her everywhere, and although carefully hidden, the dagger has a voice of its own and guides her as she is faced with difficult decisions. The trouble comes when she tries to peel herself away from the grasp of the dagger and the Gentlemen in order to find her true self. This book is listed elsewhere as a middle grade novel, but we recommend it as a younger YA option. With important themes such as abuse and trauma laced together with mystery and an old Western flair, this book will certainly appeal to readers transitioning into more serious content.

Bird, Betsy. *Long Road to the Circus*. Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers. 9780593303986, T \$16.99 (Gr 3-5). The year is 1920 and, according to adventure-seeking, twelve-year-old Suzie, nothing ever happens in the small town of Burr Oak, Michigan. Suzie, who lives on a farm, where she competes for her parent's attention with her many siblings, and tries to steer clear of her cantankerous grandmother. But then world traveler Uncle Fred moves in. He is supposed to be helping on the farm, but Suzie spots him sneaking away in the early mornings. Determined to find out what Uncle Fred is doing, Suzie follows him and finds herself face to face with Burr Oak’s most famous citizen, the legendary former circus queen Madame Marantette. And her amazing ostriches. Suzie takes one look at those ostriches and realizes that they are her ticket out of Burr Oak, all she has to do is learn to ride one of them. An adventurous and funny historical fiction; includes an author note about the real Madame Marantette.

Carter, Caela. *Fifty-Four Things Wrong with Gwendolyn Rogers*. Quill Tree Books. 9780062996633, T \$16.99 (Gr 4 & up) Gwendolyn Rogers wants to be good; she really does. Because of the way her brain is wired and the way no one can determine how to categorize her, she just can’t be. Gwen has adopted a list of 54 things wrong with her as identified in her inconclusive IEP, and she recites this list daily. She has a half-brother with similar tendencies, and a loyal group of friends. When she finally finds the right therapist, the adults in

Gwen's life begin to see how to help her succeed, how to support her instead of how to change her. Many students will resonate with Gwen. They will feel connected to her inability to be how adults want her to be as opposed to simply being herself. This book is real and funny and, at times, difficult. It has a very positive portrayal of therapy and is a welcome addition to all libraries.

Charles, Tami. **Muted**. Scholastic Press. 9781338673524, T \$15.99 (Gr 9-12). Denver and her bandmates are positively sure that they will be the next big thing. So when they go to a concert of their favorite singer, Mercury Ellis, and he hears their voices and encourages them, they are ready to follow Mercury anywhere. But soon his interest turns to control as he dictates their every decision in this excellent novel in verse. They are kept separated, must wear clothes he picks out, and are treated horribly in this book that feels like it was pulled from the headlines. The narrative switches back and forth from what is happening to Denver onstage and offstage, locked in her room, to Denver returning home on a plane with her father. The ending will positively shock readers. Give to readers of Tiffany Jackson or Angie Thomas.

Clayton, Dhonielle / Jackson, Tiffany D. / Stone, Nic / Thomas, Angie / Woodfolk, Ashley / Yoon, Nicola. **Blackout**. Quill Tree Books. 9780063088092, T \$19.99 (Gr 7-9) Six interconnected short stories take place in New York City during a blackout. While the characters have to make adjustments as the city grinds to a halt, they discover that the people who live there come alive in new ways. A young adult novel that is well-written and would be enjoyed by teens who appreciate romance and human connection, this book focuses carefully on the perspectives of Black adolescents. One unique feature of this book is that one of the stories is broken up into chapters and wedged between the other stories. This longer story helps to weave everything together and makes for a dynamic reader experience.

Cushman, Karen. **War and Millie McGonigle**. Knopf. 9781984850102, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). Millie McGonigle shouldn't have a care in the world. She lives by the ocean in sunny California and her days should be filled with friends, sand, and surf. But her grandmother, who loved her best, has just died, she has a sickly younger sister who demands a lot of attention, and World War II is at her doorstep causing food rationing, loss of jobs, and problematic neighbor relations. How does a twelve year old find her way? A good look at the toll that war takes on families, friends, and neighbors. Pair with *The Summer We Found the Baby* by Amy Hest, and *When The World Was Ours* by Liz Kessler.

Day, Christine. **The Sea in Winter**. Heartdrum. 9780062872043, T \$16.99 (Gr 4 & up) Maisie Cannon loves ballet — it's what she does. When a knee injury stops her dancing, she feels hopeless and lost. While she loves learning about her Native history, she's not looking forward to her family's trip to the Makah community of her mother's youth, and she's struggling to keep a strong face when inside she's full of turmoil and anxiety. A potential reinjury of her knee while hiking sets her over the edge, and all her emotions come spilling out. She reconnects with her family, and finds some wonderful coping strategies to help her through this difficult time. This is a beautiful book about family, depression, anxiety, and finding oneself even when that's ever-changing. Maisie has many of the same struggles that middle schoolers have, and kids will relate. The story is well-written, engaging, and easy-to-follow and includes insight into Indigenous culture.

Elhillo, Safia. **Home Is Not A Country**. Make Me A World. 9780593177051, T \$14.99 (Gr 7-10). Beautifully written in verse, this novel is haunting, magical, real, and important as it reveals how new immigrants are frequently treated in our country. Set just after the events of 9/11, Nima's family lives in the US, but originated from an unnamed Arabic country. Nima feels lost. When her best friend is attacked in a hate crime, Nima finds herself even more alone. This book offers a portrait of a teenage girl who wants to know herself and feel comfortable in her new country, but is still dealing with the loss of her identity back in her home country. This book paints a challenging portrait of a teen struggling to find and accept the real version of herself.

Elliott, David. **The Seventh Raven**. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 9780358252115, T \$17.99 (Gr 7-9). A fanciful and enticing retelling of a Brother's Grimm fairy tale. This compelling fantasy is complemented by haunting graphic black and white art work by Rovina Cai which expresses feelings of entrapment felt by the brothers. Only one of the seven ravens is pleased to be released by his father and loves to fly. This flowing verse novel is a must read for middle school students. Listening to *The Seventh Raven* as a read aloud is more than satisfactory.

Faruqi, Reem. **Unsettled**. HarperCollins. 9780063044708, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). Not all families move to the United States due to unrest in their native land. Nurah's father takes a job in the US and moves his family from Pakistan to Georgia. But that doesn't make life any easier for Nurah. She misses EVERYTHING from her old life and struggles to fit into a new culture that includes bullying, abuse, and loss of identity. Told in verse, the reader struggles along with Nurah as she acclimates to her new life. Pair this with *One Good Thing About America* by Ruth Freeman, *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan and *Other Words for Home* by Jasmine Warga.

Fipps, Lisa. **Starfish**. Nancy Paulsen Books. 9781984814500, T \$17.99 (Gr 4 & up). Ever since Ellie wore a whale swimsuit and made a big splash at her fifth birthday party, she's been bullied about her weight. To cope, she tries to live by the Fat Girl Rules—like "no making waves," "avoid eating in public," and "don't move so fast that your body jiggles." And she's found her safe space—her swimming pool—where she feels weightless in a fat-obsessed world. While Ellie's mom thinks criticizing Ellie's weight will motivate her to diet, Ellie has allies in her dad, her therapist, and her new neighbor, Catalina. With this support buoying her, Ellie might finally be able to cast aside the Fat Girl Rules and starfish in real life--by unapologetically being her own fabulous self. This is a beautifully written story in verse about finding yourself and being true to who you really are. Based on the author's experiences as a kid, it can be difficult to read but will resonate with many readers of all ages. It will also give perspective to bystanders about fat shaming and bullying.

Flake, Sharon. **The Life I'm In**. Scholastic Pr. 9781338573176, T \$18.99 (Gr 10-12) Simultaneously difficult to read and impossible to put down, this companion novel to Flake's *The Skin I'm In* picks up several years later with the first book's bully as the main character. When Char's parents died, her older sister became her guardian and her whole world flipped upside down. She ends up running away, parenting an infant that is not her own, and becoming trapped in a human trafficking situation. This book is not a feel-good read, but it is so important, and very well-written.

Gardner, Faith. **Girl On The Line**. Harper Teen. 9780063022300, T \$17.99 (Gr 8-11). The author offers readers the opportunity to look inside the mind of a suicide attempt survivor. This story moves powerfully forward revealing information concerning mental illness as Journey helps others dealing with issues of mental health, sexual orientation, and family crisis. The use of poetry enhances the storyline and helps facilitate an atmosphere of feeling and healing. An authentic and important story, one that is far too often invisible.

Glasgow, Kathleen. **You'd Be Home Now**. Delacorte Press. 9780525708049, T \$18.99 (Gr 9-12). Emory has always felt invisible in her wealthy family next to her beautiful, smart older sister and drug-addicted older brother. But a car accident one night changes everything. Her brother Joey is sent to rehab while Emory has to deal with healing her own injuries as she navigates the loathing felt by the community for the death of her classmate. Things get even harder for her as her parents expect her to be Joey's keeper upon his return and to keep him from relapsing. Not only does this novel tackle the timely issue of how drug addiction can affect a whole family and community, it also takes an honest look at issues like self-esteem, teen sex, suicide, and having the courage to be true to oneself.

Gerber, Alyson. **Taking Up Space**. Scholastic, Inc. 9781338186000, T \$17.99 (Gr 4-7). Sarah is a 12-year-old whose mother has an eating disorder. Mom's food issues and lack of food in the house have spilled over to Sarah, who is constantly hungry and is developing her own eating disorder. Sarah loves basketball but she is also maturing and growing and the changes in her body are impacting her level of play. Besides her eating problems, Sarah has other issues with her best friend, with bullies on the basketball team, and with a cooking contest that could change her life. With a nudge from Sarah's best friend, a caring coach is able to get her the help she needs in the form of therapy, setting Sarah on the path to recovery.

Harris, Pamela N. **When You Look Like Us**. Quill Tree Books. 9780062945891, T \$17.99 (Gr 9-12). When sixteen-year-old Jayson's sister Nicole, who is a Black teen, doesn't come home after a late-night party, it takes him a few days of keeping it from their grandmother guardian MiMi before he comes to the realization that she may be in trouble. Besides his white friend Bowie and the pastor's daughter from his church, Jayson doesn't see anyone else taking Nic's disappearance seriously. When the Black police officer and the media insinuate that Nic is at fault due to her choices, Jayson realizes that he has to take matters into his own hands. A novel highlighting the indifference over abuse and danger Black women face without any sympathy or assistance from the systems in place to help people. A riveting, suspenseful page turner that will appeal to readers of Karen McManus or Faridah Àbíké-Íyímídé.

Jackson, Tiffany. **White Smoke**. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780063029095, T \$18.99 (Gr 9-12). A classic haunted house horror/thriller with many subplots including drug addiction and recovery, the bi-racial blended family dynamic, gentrification, urban folklore, and sinister business dealings. A promising track star at her California high school, Marigold suffers a traumatic incident leaving her with severe anxiety. Treated with percocet prescribed by the doctors and self medicating with marijuana, Marigold overdoses, ends up in a treatment center and is expelled from school. After her release, Marigold and her newly blended family head across the country for a fresh start in the midwest where her mom has been offered a free house for an artist's residency. Once they get there, they quickly realize the depressed town, dilapidated neighborhood, and creepy house have sinister secrets.

Kelly, Erin Entrada. **Maybe Maybe Marisol Rainey**. 9780062970428, T \$16.00 (Gr 2-5). Marisol is a delightful, endearing character who has a penchant for naming inanimate objects and a healthy fear of many, usual childhood things, the most absorbing being climbing the tree (Peppina) in her backyard. Marisol's mother is Filipino and her father is white, and is also away working on an oil rig, so in addition to feeling different for having a parent from another country, she also acutely misses her dad. Her nemesis, Evie, has a way of pointing out how much fun she has with her own dad, which hurts Marisol's heart. However, Marisol has a best friend, Jada, who helps her feel

like she is enough even with her sadness and fears. A wonderful book for readers who know what it's like to worry about everything and who are still defining for themselves what it means to be brave. The start of a series.

Kessler, Liz. *When The World Was Ours*. Aladdin. 9781534499652, T \$13.99 (Gr 6-9). Before WWII began three children in Austria shared a close relationship. When the war is over, their families are forever changed and the friends do not live happily ever after. The storyline is powerful, exposing the suffering, humiliation, and terror of the Jewish population which lead to hate crimes and deportation. Even as this book exposes inhumanity it also notes the existence of compassion, kindness, and resilience. Consider it as a companion with Anne Frank's *Diary Of A Young Girl*.

LaRocca, Rajani. *Red, White and Whole*. Quill Tree Books. 9780063047426, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-8). Reha is Indian American, and she feels torn between being true to her family and her heritage while fitting in with the other kids at school. When her mother becomes ill, Reha is determined to help heal her. As Reha struggles with her mother's illness and dire prognosis, she realizes how she relies on her friends to help her. This is a beautifully written novel in verse. The text flows seamlessly through a difficult subject and plot line. Reha is relatable as she struggles with many issues typical of any middle schooler. She's also deeply devoted to her family and her Indian heritage. Navigating these two identities is at the core of this book about family, friendship, loss, and finding oneself.

LaRochelle, David. *See the Dog: Three Stories about a Cat*. Candlewick Press. 9781536216295, T \$8.99 (preK-Gr 2). In a sequel to his award-winning early reader, *See the Cat: Three stories About a Dog*, LaRochelle shares the dog's story. Unfortunately, the dog is sick so the cat happily takes his place. The cat's self-assured exuberance turns to annoyance, frustration, and fear as she tries to act like the dog. Thank goodness the dog returns, which leads to an adorable happy ending. Told in three parts, this story is cute, engaging, and leaves the reader wanting to turn the page to see what the cat will have to do next. Perfect for beginning readers.

Leimbach, Marti. *Dragonfly Girl*. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780062995865, T \$17.99 (Gr 8-12). Kira is a nerdy misfit, loving science but barely passing high school. Living with her cancer-stricken mom, who is deeply in debt to a loan shark, she enters a prestigious science contest. When she wins, she goes to Sweden to present her research and collect the cash prize, but a rival young scientist with a grudge bitterly reveals that she is ineligible because she is only in high school. Luckily, she is offered a job in a secret laboratory by a professor who knew her brilliant, dead father. Soon after starting work, she brings a rat back from the dead. Now considered a scientific genius, she is thrust into the world of international intrigue, and ends up fighting for her life, far from friends and family. A fast-paced, exciting read, there is an abundance of scientific dialogue throughout the book, but it's written to be accessible and doesn't slow down the action. For anyone who loves James Bond or Jason Bourne type thrillers.

Lloyd, Megan Wagner. *Allergic*. Graphix. 9781338568905, [GN] \$12.99 (Gr 4-7). Maggie is finally allowed to get a dog, but when she takes the pup home she learns that she is wildly allergic to all things furred and feathered. She tries other pets from lizards to turtles to tarantulas (!!), but none of these quite fit. Resigned to allergy shots (which will lessen but not eliminate her allergic reactions) and a pet-less life, Mia is devastated. When a new neighbor, Claire, moves in next door, Maggie is thrilled to have a friend to take her mind off of her dog-free life. In a typical coming-of-age story, things go terribly wrong before finding a satisfying resolution. Lloyd's story is well-crafted and Michelle Mee Nutter's cozy illustrations perfectly capture the turmoil and melodrama of the thoughts and feelings of a middle grader. Fans of RainaTelgemeier and Jennifer Holmes will gravitate to this book, but all lovers of graphic novels will gobble it up.

Lucianovic, Stephanie V.W. *The League of Picky Eaters*. Clarion Books. 9780358379867, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). It's not easy being a picky eater in the food-obsessed town of Muffuletta. As a person who likes her food simple, Minerva struggles to fit in. When she gets placed in the Remedial Eating class in 6th grade, things get worse. Until she finds out about LOPE: the League of Picky Eaters. She goes from eating-outcast to a beloved member of a group of picky people who would like to honor her rather than shame her. Readers with sensitive stomachs might blanch at some of the food descriptions, but for those with strong stomachs, they will be rewarded with new food lingo and a story about fitting in and self-discovery that is delicious.

Mafi, Tahereh. *An Emotion of Great Delight*. HarperCollins Children's Books. 9780062972415, T \$19.99 (Gr 7-9.) Shadi and her family are Muslim and living in a post-9/11 world. She struggles to deal with the grief of numerous traumatic events, including her father being hospitalized long-term, her brother dying, and the unexplained loss of her best friend. Readers begin to wonder how we might make space for joy in our lives, even while we are grieving. Themes include mental health (suicide ideation and self-harm), Islamophobia, and relationships.

McCauley, Kyrie. *We Can Be Heroes*. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780062885050, T \$17.99 (Gr 8-10). Gun violence is the major theme of this beautifully written contemporary YA book which successfully tackles multiple tough topics. The tale is told by four characters; the ghost of a tragic crime victim, her two best friends, and a podcaster. Mature themes, diverse characters on a quest for vengeance as well



as justice make this a stunning paranormal book sure to appeal to high school students.

McNicoll, Elle. *A Kind of Spark*. Crown Books for Young Readers. 978-0-5933-7426-9, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). Addie is an eleven-year-old girl who is neurodivergent and has always felt that she should change in order to make other people more comfortable. She has a horrible teacher who bullies her without trying to understand her. Her best friend deserts her for another girl. Fortunately, Addie has a great relationship with the school librarian and one of her sisters, and she loves studying sharks. When a field trip ignites Addie's concern for the women in her community who were killed because they were different and believed to be witches, Addie fights for a memorial for them. Written by a neurodivergent author, the autistic perspective is written with insight and offers a window into respectful, compassionate treatment for those on the autism spectrum.

Mercado, Yehudi. *Chunky*. Katherine Tegan Books. 9780062972781, [GN] \$12.99 (Gr 4-8). A wonderful addition to the growing autobiographical graphic memoir list for upper elementary and middle grade readers, this one from a Mexican, Jewish, fat-positive perspective. Mercado has fictionalized his struggle with weight due to a health issue. Hudi is better at comedy than at anything sports-related, but his athletic father encourages him to try sports to control his weight, and Hudi has a winning attitude and a willingness to try. This is when his imaginary mascot, Chunky, shows up. Chunky is there to cheer Hudi on in all of his athletic endeavors, but he is also there to remind him that it's okay to want to pursue a dream of bright lights and laughter. When Hudi finds a sport that he is actually good at but which compromises who he is, he alienates his biggest fan and finally comes to understand that he has to find activities that make him happy and feed his heart even if they don't help shrink his belly. Wonderful, bright illustrations and touches of humor will engage readers and leave them chuckling with and cheering for Hudi. Give to fans of *El Deafo*, *Short & Skinny*, *Smile*, or *New Kid*.

Mullaly, Heather. *The Legend of Hobart*. Favored Oak Press. 9781736477380, T \$16.99 (Gr 3-5). Twelve-year-old Hobart is tired of being overlooked by his family and being the town bully's favorite target. He may be small, have a funny name, and stutter, but Hobart is determined to do something heroic and earn a place at Knight School. After several failed attempts to be heroic in his own village, Hobart sets out on the most heroic quest of all, slaying a dragon. On his journey to the dragon's lair, Hobart's earnest mishaps get him mixed up in all sorts of adventure and nothing turns out quite as he thought it would. With its slim size (94 pages), quick humor, elements of adventure, and clever twist on fairytale elements, this heartwarming story is perfect for fantasy readers.

Nielsen, Jennifer. A. *Rescue*. Scholastic Press. 9781338620993, T \$15.99 (Gr 4 & up). Meg Kenyon's father left their home in France to fight for the Allied forces during World War II. Learning that he was taken hostage by the Nazis, all she has from him are the codes he left her to decipher. When Meg finds an injured British spy in her grandmother's barn, she sees an opportunity to save her father. The dynamic of deciphering codes will engage readers and keep them guessing about what's coming next. This is an extremely well-written and engaging story of family, history, and survival.

Oh, Ellen. *Finding Junie Kim*. HarperCollins. 9780062987983, T \$16.99 (Gr 5-7). Part contemporary, part historical, this is a middle grade novel about a Korean American girl who turns the lessons from her grandparents' experiences in Korea during the 1950s into the strength to counter the hateful actions of racists in her school. A hate crime at her school mobilizes some students of color, many Junie's friends, but triggers the anxiety and depression Junie was already feeling due to bullying and microaggressions. Junie does suffer from suicidal ideation, but through therapy and weekly meetings with her grandfather in which he shares stories from his youth during the Korean War, Junie is able to find coping mechanisms and to reconnect with her friends. Oh uses a story from her own mother's childhood in Korea as an anchor for the plot and it is deftly woven into the family lore in the book. This is an important story for library collections.

Oshiro, Mark. *The Insiders*. HarperCollins. 9780063008106, T \$16.99 (Gr 4 & up). Héctor Muñoz has just moved from the San Francisco area to Orangevale, CA, and it is a far cry from the only home he knew before now. Back home, being gay wasn't a big deal; at Orangevale Middle School, however, things are not so simple. When trying to escape bullies one day, Héctor finds himself in what he thought was the janitor's closet. The room magically transforms into a room that provides whatever Héctor needs in the moment—even two new friends from other parts of the country. Héctor and his friends use the room to overcome obstacles and, in the process, find their voices and comfort in being themselves. The characters are relatable, and their struggles are real and contemporary. The story is engaging, well-paced, and fun to read. This is a great book for fans of fantasy but also those fans of realistic fiction as the magic of the room is not the primary focus.

Ostertag, Molly. *The Girl From the Sea*. Graphix. 9781338540574, [GN] \$14.99 (Gr 7 & up). Readers will appreciate that Ostertag fills the text with meaningful context and has drawn fantastic illustrations complete with outstanding color selections. Recommended as a perfect middle school and teen romance that combines selkie mythology with a human teen who is reluctant to come out as gay. This graphic novel is creative and inclusive, a must read love story with deep emotional realism.

Palacio, R.J. ***Pony***. Knopf For Young Readers. 9780553508116, T \$17.99 (Gr 5-7). *Pony* is an adventure quest story about a boy, his imaginary friend, and a magical pony. This unique storyline is set in the late 1800's in a wild west environment. Well-developed characters, action drama, issues of trust, and love combine to complete a near-perfect package for readers. With lyrical writing, readers will hold their breath as they anticipate the next development.

Quigley, Dawn. ***Jo Jo Makoons: The Used-to-Be Best Friend***. Heartdrum. 9780063015388, T \$15.99 (Gr K-3). In this adorably silly early chapter book, Jo Jo Makoons is an energetic and spunky Ojibwe first-grader learning how to solve problems: at home, at school, and in the realm of friendship, making friends in a funny and often quirky manner. Quigley does an amazing job of capturing Jo Jo's thoughts, concerns, and funny misunderstandings including whether or not her cat, Mimi, will deflate when she gets her vaccines. And illustrator Tara Audibert does a solid job illustrating the exuberance of Jo Jo's personality. Ojibwe and Michif words, as well as cultural traditions, are sprinkled throughout the story. The definitions of the words can be found in Jo Jo's Glossary at the end of the book. There is also an author's note for further explanation of the Ojibwe language and culture. This is the first book in the series.

Schreier, Eliot. ***The Darkness Outside Us***. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780062888280, T \$17.00 (Gr 8 & up) Ambrose and Kodiak are alone in space. Far into the future, there are only two remaining countries on earth, locked in a Cold War, yet working together to find a new planet to inhabit. A joint rescue mission has been launched to rescue Ambrose's sister Minerva, who is sending distress signals from the new planet's first colony. On its surface a slick, fast-paced engaging sci fi thriller. But beneath the mystery and tale of survival is a beautifully written novel about love and humanity. The book's two compelling characters show us love and grief and loneliness and hope over and over in stunning displays of introspection and intimacy against the backdrop of the vastness of space. An absolute must read.

Sekaran, Shanthi. ***The Samosa Rebellion***. Katherine Tegen Books. 9780063051539, T \$16.99 (Gr 4 & up). Muki has always lived on the island of Mariposa. His parents moved there before he was born—it's the only home he's ever known. When the government divides the citizens of Mariposa into two factions—butterflies and moths—Muki and his family are at risk. Butterflies are people with long family histories on Mariposa, and anyone newer than three generations is considered a moth. This is a harrowing tale of courage, family, strength, and determination. Though set on the fictional island of Mariposa, the theme touches on many contemporary immigration issues and does so in an age appropriate and accessible way. The story is engaging, Muki is a very relatable character (as are his friends and family), and readers will find themselves thinking about Muki and his fellow Mariposans long after finishing this book.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich, ed. ***Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids***. Heartdrum. 9780062869944, T \$16.99 (Gr 4 & up). An anthology of short stories and poems themed around an intertribal powwow, written by major Indigenous authors including Joseph Bruchac, Carole Lindstrom, Rebecca Roanhorse, and Traci Sorell. This book is a must-buy for every collection. The stories and poems all revolve around the theme of community—some are humorous, some more serious, but all of them celebrate Native culture. Backpages include glossaries defining words from various Nations, including Cree, Choctaw, Navajo, and Ojibwe. The author bios and notes at the end of the book also add to the collection and emphasize the need for more Indigenous representation in literature.

Sorosiak, Carlie. ***Leonard (My Life as a Cat)***. Walker Books US. 9781536207705, T \$17.99 (Gr 3-6). Leonard the cat narrates this story. Leonard is also an extraterrestrial being whose inhabitants visit Earth to experience life in a corporal body when they reach 300 years old. Leonard intended to experience life on Earth as a Yellowstone forest ranger but ended up as a cat in South Carolina. He is rescued from a flood by Olive, who may need some rescuing of her own, and soon they are inseparable. This book is heartwarming and hilarious — at one point Olive describes middle school as “being dropped on an alien planet.” Leonard is a highly intelligent extraterrestrial being who also has feline impulses he cannot control—like destroying curtains, purring, and kneading. Hand this book to cat lovers and anyone who enjoys a fun read.

Thomas, Angie. ***Concrete Rose***. Balzer + Bray. 9780062846716, T \$19.99 (Gr 10-12). Thomas's prequel to acclaimed *The Hate U Give*, *Concrete Rose* details Maverick's life as a teen father in Garden Heights while his own father serves time in prison. Faced with decisions about how to support his child, Maverick is not always a likable character, which is part of what makes this book so appealing. Black boys and men in the United States are usually faced with far more challenges than their white counterparts, and Thomas cracks open stereotypes and gives voice to one compelling story.

Torres, J. ***Stealing Home***. Kids Can Press. 9781525303340, [GN] \$17.99 (Gr 4-7). Historical fiction graphic novel set in Vancouver, British Columbia at the start of WWII. Baseball-loving Sandy and his family are living in Vancouver when the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor. It isn't long before they are ripped away from their everyday life and sent to an internment camp. Sandy has difficulty adjusting to life at the camp and struggles to maintain a relationship with his father. Playing baseball brings back a sense of normalcy and camaraderie to an otherwise helpless and depressing situation. The book includes extended background information in an afterword by

Susan Aihoshi and resources for learning more. Pair with *Love in the Library* for younger readers and *They Called Us Enemy* for older readers.

Ursu, Anne. *The Troubled Girls of Dragomir Academy*. Walden Pond Press. 9780062275127, T \$17.99 (Gr 4-8). In the Kingdom of Illyria, boys are sought out and tested for magical talent so that they might become sorcerer's capable of defending the land against a deadly curse known as the Dread. When Marya accidentally disrupts her brother Luka's test, she is sent to Dragomir Academy, a school for troubled girls. She quickly realizes that what the girls of Illyria have been told their whole lives is not the full truth, and that those with power will do anything to keep it for themselves. A feminist fantasy showing strong female characters fighting for their place in a patriarchal society with a critical message about the question that we all must remember to ask ourselves: "Who does the story serve?"

Warga, Jasmine. *The Shape of Thunder*. Balzer + Bray. 9780062956675, T \$16.99 (Gr 4-6). How do you mend a friendship that has been shattered by a school shooting? The event has torn Cora's and Quinn's lives apart and a year after the event, Quinn decides the only way to save them both is to travel back in time and stop the event from happening. Begrudgingly, Cora is drawn into this plan and the two work on changing the past. Readers will suspend disbelief about time travel and root for these girls to succeed. Themes of loss, friendship, heartache, and believing in the impossible make this a read they won't easily forget.

West, Jacqueline. *Long Lost*. Greenwillow Books. 9780062691750, T \$16.99 (Grades 4-6). Leaving her friends behind, Fiona is forced to move to a new town with her family to be closer to the ice skating rink where her sister trains. With nothing to do, Fiona makes her way to the town library where she finds an old mystery novel and quickly becomes hooked. Forced to leave the book, half-read, at the library because she doesn't have a library card yet, Fiona eagerly returns the next day to finish the book, only to find that the book is no longer on the shelf and the librarian has never heard of it. As Fiona tries to solve the mystery of the missing book, she starts to realize the similarities between the places described in the book and her new town, and then things start to get even stranger. With sibling drama, a mystery, a story told in two time periods, and a ghost story, this book has something to pique the interest of any adventurous reader.

Youssef, Bassem. *The Magical Reality of Nadia*. Scholastic Inc. 9781338572285, T \$14.99 (Gr 3-6). Fact-loving Nadia is an exuberant and brainy Egyptian-American who loves bobblehead dolls and has a great group of friends who refer to themselves as the Nerd Patrol. Sixth grade holds lots of new adventures for Nadia and the Nerd Patrol: a new student who likes to tease Nadia about her heritage, a competition to design a display for the local museum, and most unusual is a quirky Egyptian spirit named Titi, who Nadia has accidentally released from her antique Egyptian Hippo locket. This adorably wacky realistic fiction is filled with facts, humor, and a touch of magic. Adding to its unique style, the book format is a mix of traditional text as well as paneled illustrations by illustrator Catherine R. Daly. This is the first book in a series.

#### **SPECIAL THANKS TO THE CREAM OF THE CROP COMMITTEE**

**Kristi Favaloro** - Teen Services Librarian, Skidompha Library

**Patti Francis** - School Librarian, Freeport Elementary Schools

**Kathy George** - Children's Services Librarian, Gray Public Library

**Jan Hamilton** -- Retired Youth Services Librarian

**Kerrie Lattari** – School Librarian, York Middle School

**Jill O'Connor** - Youth Services Librarian, Merrill Memorial Library

**Lee Remick** - School Librarian Assistant, York Middle School

**Jessie Trafton** - Youth Services Librarian, Skidompha Library

## 2022 National Award Winners

Award books listed here may or may not be included in the “Cream of the Crop” list.

**American Indian Youth Literature Award** - Announced in even years and established to identify and honor the very best writing and illustrations by and about American Indians.

Picture Book Winner: *Herizon*, written by Daniel W. Vandever [Diné], illustrated by Corey Begay [Diné]

Honors: *Diné Bich'eeke Yishleeh* [Diné Bizaad]/*Becoming Miss Navajo* [English], Jolyana Begay-Kroupa [Diné]

*Classified: The Secret Career of Mary Gold Ross, Cherokee Aerospace Engineer*, by Traci Sorell [Cherokee], illustrated by Natasha Donovan [Métis]

*Learning My Rights with Mousewoman*, written and illustrated by Morgan Asoyuf [Ts'msyen]

*I Sang You Down from the Stars*, Tasha Spillet-Sumner [Cree and Trinidadian], illustrated by Michaela Goade [Tlingit & Haida]

*We Are Still Here! Native American Truths Everyone Should Know*, Traci Sorell [Cherokee], illustrated by Frané Lessac

Middle Grade Winner: *Healer of the Water Monster*, written by Brian Young [Diné], cover art by Shonto Begay [Diné]

Honors: *Ella Cara Deloria: Dakota Language Protector*, Diane Wilson [Dakota], illustrated by Tashia Hart [Red Lake Anishinaabe]

*Indigenous Peoples' Day*, Katrina M. Phillips [Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe], illustrated by Tashia Hart [Red Lake Anishinaabe]

*Jo Jo Makoons: The Used-to-Be Best Friend*, Dawn Quigley [Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe], illustrated by Tara Audibert [Wolastoqey]

*Peggy Flanagan: Ogimaa Kwe, Lieutenant Governor*, Jessica Engelking [White Earth Band of Ojibwe], illustrated by Tashia Hart [Red Lake Anishinaabe]

*The Sea in Winter*, Christine Day [Upper Skagit], cover art by Michaela Goade [Tlingit and Haida]

Young Adult Book: *Apple (Skin to the Core)*, written by Eric Gansworth [Onondaga], cover art by Filip Peraić

Honors: *Elatsoe*, Darcie Little Badger [Lipan Apache Tribe], cover art and illustrations by Rovina Cai

*Firekeeper's Daughter*, Angeline Boulley [Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians], cover art by Moses Lunham [Ojibway and Chippewa]

*Hunting by Stars*, Cherie Dimaline [Métis Nation of Ontario], cover art by Stephen Gladue [Fishing Lake Métis Settlement]

*Notable Native People: 50 Indigenous Leaders, Dreamers, and Changemakers from Past and Present*, Adrienne Keene [Cherokee Nation], illustrated by Ciara Sana [Chamoru]

*Soldiers Unknown*, by Chag Lowry [Yurok, Maidu and Achumawi], illustrated by Rahsan Ekedal

**Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature** - Award promotes Asian/Pacific American culture and heritage and is awarded based on literary and artistic merit.

Picture Book Winner: *Watercress*, written by Andrea Wang, illustrated by Jason Chin

Picture Book Honor Book: *A Boy Named Isamu: A Story of Isamu Noguchi*, written and illustrated by James Yang

Children's Literature: *Amina's Song*, written by Hena Khan

Children's Honor Book: *Finding Junie Kim*, written by Ellen Oh

Young Adult Literature: *Last Night at the Telegraph Club*, written by Malinda Lo

Young Adult Honor Book: *We Are Not Free*, written by Traci Chee

**Caldecott Medal** – Awarded to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children.

Winner: *Watercress*, illustrated by Jason Chin, written by Andrea Wang

Honors: *Have You Ever Seen a Flower?*, illustrated and written by Shawn Harris

*Mel Fell*, illustrated and written by Corey R. Tabor

*Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre*, illustrated by Floyd Cooper, and written by Carole Boston Weatherford

*Wonder Walkers*, illustrated and written by Micha Archer

**Charlotte Zolotow Award** – Awarded for outstanding writing in a picture book for children in the birth-through-seven age range published in the United States.

Winner: *Evelyn Del Rey Is Moving Away*, written by Meg Medina, illustrated by Sonia Sánchez

**Children's Literature Legacy Award** - Honors an author or illustrator whose books, published in the United States, have made, over a period of years, a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children through books that demonstrate integrity and respect for all children's lives and experiences.

Grace Lin. Since the publication of her first book, *The Ugly Vegetables*, in 1999, Lin has written and/or illustrated more than 40 books for children, including collaborations with other authors. Her many awards include a 2010 Newbery Honor for *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*, a 2011 Geisel Honor for *Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same*, and a 2019 Caldecott Honor for *A Big Mooncake for Little Star*.

**Coretta Scott King Award** – Recognizes outstanding books for young adults and children by African American authors and illustrators that reflect the African American experience.

### **CSK Author Award**

Winner: *Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre*, written by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Floyd Cooper

Honors: *Home Is Not a Country*, Safia Elhillo

*Revolution in Our Time: The Black Panther Party's Promise to the People*, Kekla Magoon

*The People Remember*, Ibi Zoboi, illustrated by Loveis Wise

### **CSK Illustrator Award**

Winner: *Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre*, illustrated by Floyd Cooper, written by Carole Boston Weatherford

Honors: *Nina: A Story of Nina Simone*, illustrated by Christian Robinson, written by Traci N. Todd

*We Wait for the Sun*, illustrated by Raissa Figueroa, written by Dovey Johnson Roundtree & Katie McCabe

*Soul Food Sunday*, illustrated by C.G. Esperanza, written by Winsome Bingham

### **Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Author Award:**

*Me (Moth)*, Amber McBride.

### **Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe New Talent Illustrator Award:**

*The Me I Choose to Be*, illustrated by Regis and Kahran Bethencourt, written by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

### **Coretta Scott King – Virginia Hamilton Award for Lifetime Achievement.**

Nikki Grimes. Grimes has been widely recognized for her distinguished contribution to children's and young adult literature, winning numerous major awards. After more than 77 books, she has sealed her legacy by weaving poetry and novels in verse into an impressive body of work. Grimes currently resides in Corona, California, where she continues her powerful writing.

**Excellence in Early Learning Digital Media Award** – Awarded to a digital media producer that has created distinguished digital media for an early learning audience.

Winner: *Alma's Way* produced by Fred Rogers Productions

Honor Recipients: *Goodnight, World!* produced by Sesame Workshop and Headspace

*Tab Time* produced by Kids at Play and Scale Productions

**Katahdin Award** – A lifetime achievement award given by the Youth Services Section of the Maine Library Association to recognize an outstanding body of work of children's literature in Maine by one author or illustrator. The award may be given annually but may not necessarily be given each year.

Winner: Cynthia Lord

**Lupine Award** – Presented annually by the Youth Services Section of the Maine Library Association, to recognize an outstanding contribution to children's literature in Maine.

### **Picture Book**

Winner: *The First Blade of Sweetgrass*, written by Suzanne Greenlaw and Gabriel Frey, illustrated by Nancy Baker

Honor: *The Little Library*, written by Margaret McNamara, illustrated by G. Brian Karas

### **J/YA**

Winner: *Down to Earth*, written by Betty Culley

Honor: *Franklin Endicott and the Third Key*, written by Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by Chris Van Dusen

**Margaret A. Edwards Award** – Recognizes an author and his/her body of work for outstanding contribution to young adult literature.

A.S. King is the winner. King's books include: *Ask the Passengers*, *Glory O'Brien's History of the Future*, and *Please Ignore Vera Dietz*, among other titles.

**Mildred L. Batchelder Award** – Awarded to an American publisher for a children's book considered to be the most outstanding of those books originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country and subsequently translated into English and published in the United States.

Winner: *Temple Alley Summer*, originally published in Japanese as *Kimyōji Yokochō no Natsu*, written by Sachiko Kashiwaba, illustrated by Miho Satake, translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa

Honors: *Coffee, Rabbit, Snowdrop, Lost*, written by Betina Birkjær, illustrated by Anna Margrethe Kjærgaard, translated by Sinéad Quirke Køngerskov

*In the Meadow of Fantasies*, written by Hadi Mohammadi, illustrated by Nooshin Safakhoo, translated by Sara Khalili

*The Most Beautiful Story*, written by Brynjulf Jung Tjønn, illustrated by Øyvind Torseter, translated by Kari Dickson

*Sato the Rabbit*, written and illustrated by Yuki Ainoya, translated by Michael Blaskowsky

*The Sea-Ringed World: Sacred Stories of the Americas*, written by María García Esperón, illustrated by Amanda Mijangos, translated by David Bowles

**Newbery Medal** – The most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.

Winner: *The Last Cuentista*, Donna Barbra Higuera

Honors: *Red, White, and Whole*, Rajani LaRocca  
*A Snake Falls to Earth*, Darcie Little Badger  
*Too Bright to See*, Kyle Lukoff  
*Watercress*, Andrea Wang, illustrated by Jason Chin

**Odyssey Award** - Awarded for best audiobook produced for children and/or young adults, available in English in the United States.

Winner for Children: *Boogie Boogie, Y'all*, written and narrated by C. G. Esperanza

Winner for Young Adults: *When You Look Like Us*, written by Pamela N. Harris and narrated by Preston Butler III

Honors: *Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah*, written by Laurie Ann Thompson and narrated by Adjoa Andoh  
*I Talk Like a River*, written and narrated by Jordan Scott  
*Perfectly Parvin*, written by Olivia Abtahi and narrated by Mitra Jouhari

**Printz (Michael L.) Award** – Awarded for a book that exemplifies literary excellence in young adult literature.

Winner: *The Firekeeper's Daughter*, Angeline Boulley

Honors: *Concrete Rose*, Angie Thomas

*Last Night at the Telegraph Club*, Malinda Lo

*Revolution in Our Time: The Black Panther Party's Promise to the People*, Kekla Magoon

*Starfish*, Lisa Fipps

**Pura Belpré** – Presented to a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth.

**Children's Author Award**

Winner: *The Last Cuentista*, written by Donna Barba Higuera

Honors: *Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna*, written by Alda P. Dobbs

*Child of the Flower-Song People: Luz Jiménez, Daughter of the Nahuatl*, written by Gloria Amescua, illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh

*De aquí como el coquí*, written and illustrated by Nomar Perez, translated by Farah Perez

**Young Adult Author Award**

Winner: *How Moon Fuentez Fell in Love with the Universe*, Raquel Vasquez Gilliland

Honors: *Fifteen Hundred Miles from the Sun*, written by Jonny Garza Villa

*Somewhere Between Bitter and Sweet*, written by Laekan Zea Kemp

*Where I Belong*, written by Marcia Argueta Mickelson

**Illustrator Award**

Winner: *¡Vamos! Let's Cross The Bridge*, illustrated and written by Raúl Gonzalez

Honors: *Boogie Boogie, Y'all*, illustrated and written by C. G. Esperanza

*Bright Star*, illustrated and written by Yuyi Morales

*De aquí como el coquí*, illustrated and written by Nomar Perez, translated by Farah Perez

*May Your Life Be Deliciosa*, illustrated by Loris Lora, written by Michael Genhart

**Robert F. Sibert Medal** – Honors the most distinguished informational book published in English in the preceding year for its significant contribution to children's literature.

Winner: *The People's Painter: How Ben Shahn Fought for Justice with Art*, written by Cynthia Levinson, illustrated by Evan Turk

Honors: *The Great Stink: How Joseph Bazalgette Solved London's Poop Pollution Problem*, written by Colleen Paeff, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter

*Fallout: Spies, Superbombs, and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown*, written by Steve Sheinkin

*We Are Still Here!: Native American Truths Everyone Should Know*, written by Traci Sorell, illustrated by Frané Lessac

*Summertime Sleepers: Animals That Estivate*, written by Melissa Stewart, illustrated by Sarah S. Brannen

*Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre*, written by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Floyd Cooper

**Schneider Family Book Award** – Honors an author or illustrator for a book that embodies an artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences.

Children's Winner (birth-age 8): *My City Speaks*, written by Darren Lebeuf, illustrated by Ashley Barron

Children's Honor Book: *A Walk in the Words*, written and illustrated by Hudson Talbott

*A Sky-Blue Bench*, written by Bahram Rahman, illustrated by Peggy Collins

Middle Grade Winner (age 9-13): *A Bird Will Soar*, written by Alison Green Myers

Middle Grade Honor Book: *Stuntboy, in the Meantime*, written by Jason Reynolds, illustrated by Raúl the Third

*A Kind of Spark*, written by Elle McNicoll

Teen Winner (age 14-18): *Words in My Hands*, written and illustrated by Asphyxia

Teen Honor Book: *A Face for Picasso: Coming of Age with Crouzon Syndrome*, written by Ariel Henley

**Stonewall Book Award - Mike Morgan & Larry Romans Children's & Young Adult Literature Award** – Given annually to English language children's and young adult books of exceptional merit relating to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender experience.

Children's Winner: *Too Bright to See*, Kyle Lukoff

Young Adult Winner: *The Last Night at the Telegraph Club*, Malinda Lo

Honors: *Almost Flying*, written by Jake Maia Arlow

*The Darkness Outside Us*, written by Eliot Schrefer

*Grandad's Camper*, written and illustrated by Harry Woodgate

**The Sydney Taylor Book Award** - Given annually to outstanding books for children and teens that authentically portray the Jewish experience.

Picture Book Winner: *The Passover Guest*, Susan Kusel, illustrated by Sean Rubin

Picture Book Honors: *Nicky & Vera: A Quiet Hero of the Holocaust and the Children He Rescued*, written and illustrated by Peter Sis

*Dear Mr. Dickens*, Nancy Churnin, illustrated by Bethany Stancliffe

*The Christmas Mitzvah*, Jeff Gottesfeld, illustrated by Michelle Laurentia Agatha

Middle Grade Winner: *How to Find What You're Not Looking For*, Veera Hiranandani

Middle Grade Honors: *The Genius Under the Table: Growing up Behind the Iron Curtain*, written and illustrated by Eugene Yelchin

*Linked*, by Gordon Korman

Young Adult Winner: *The City Beautiful*, Aden Polydoros

Young Adult Honors: *The Last Words We Said*, Leah Scheier

*Whistle: A New Gotham City Hero*, E. Lockhart, illustrated by Manuel Preitano

*The Summer of Lost Letters*, Hannah Reynolds

**The Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award** – Recognizes an author or entity who has made a substantial contribution over time to the genre of Jewish children's literature.

This year's winner is Jane Yolen.

**Theodor Seuss Geisel Award** – Honors the author of the most distinguished contribution to the body of American children's literature known as 'beginning reader books' published in the United States during the preceding year.

Winner: *Fox at Night*, written and illustrated by Corey R. Tabor

Honors: *Beak & Ally #1: Unlikely Friends*, written and illustrated by Norm Feuti

*I Hop*, written and illustrated by Joe Cepeda

*Nothing Fits a Dinosaur*, written and illustrated by Jonathan Fenske

**William C. Morris Award** – Honors a debut book published by a first-time author writing for teens and celebrating impressive new voices in young adult literature.

*The Firekeeper's Daughter*, Angeline Boulley

**YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults** – Honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults ages 12 -18.

Winner: *Ambushed!: The Assassination Plot Against President Garfield*, written by Gail Jarrow

Finalists: *Black Birds in the Sky: The Story and Legacy of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre*, written by Brandy Colbert

*From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial that Galvanized the Asian American Movement*, written by Paula Yoo

*In the Shadow of the Fallen Towers: The Seconds, Minutes, Hours, Days, Weeks, Months and Years after the 9/11 Attacks*, written and illustrated by Don Brown

*The Woman All Spies Fear: Code Breaker Elizebeth Smith Friedman and Her Hidden Life*, written by Amy Butler Greenfield