

Great Books for Transit Readers

by Ms. Pasek, Transit Middle Librarian

“Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him.”

-Maya Angelou



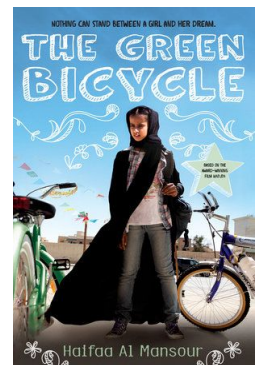
There are many wonderful books to choose from and any reading is good reading. Each book is listed with its title and author. Please note that the grade level recommendations are written with the typical Transit Middle student in mind. Parents are the best judges of a book's suitability for their child based on their child's maturity, reading ability, interests, and values. Also seek suggestions from the wonderful public librarians at the Amherst libraries.

5th and 6th Grade Suggestions

Realistic Fiction - This story could be true but wasn't. Realistic fiction includes stories about sports stars, friendships old and new, and the fun and the difficulty of growing-up at any age.

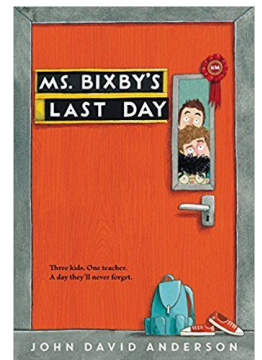
The Green Bicycle by Haifaa Al Mansour

Wadja is your typical spunky 11 year-old girl. She dreams of riding her bike around her town and racing her friends. However, Wadja lives in Saudi Arabia where it is considered improper for girls to ride bikes, along with a lot of other things that Wadja enjoys doing.



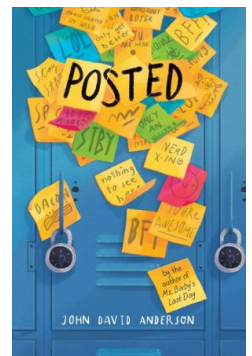
Ms. Bixby's Last Day Last Day by John David Anderson

Ms. Bixby is the best kind of teacher a kid can have, she pays attention and sees the specialness in each of her students. It's almost the end of the school year, and Ms. Bixby announces that she won't be able to spend the last couple weeks of school with her class, she has to start a cancer treatment. Topher, Brand and Steve are devastated, but they are determined to give Ms. Bixby the best last day ever, no matter what it takes.



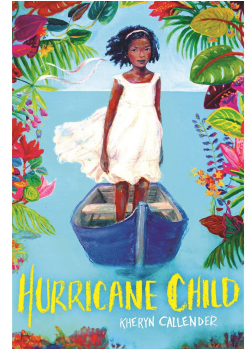
Posted by John David Anderson

Cell phones have been banned at Branton Middle School. Pretty soon the student body figures out a low tech solution, post its. Frost and his friends get in the middle of the war of the post its, when new girl and possibly new friend, Rose, refuses to be bullied easily.



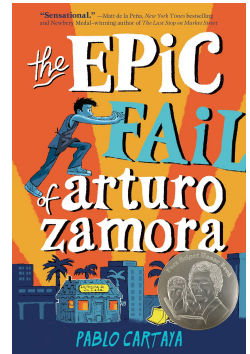
Hurricane Child by Kheryn Callender

Caroline's mother picked up and left one day, she used to send postcards, but she stopped sending them months ago and Caroline has no idea where to look for her. At school she is friendless until the brave and no-nonsense Kalinda comes along. Caroline can tell that Kalinda is a person that can help her find her missing mother.



The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora by Pablo Cartaya

Arturo is working at the family restaurant, if only as the dishwasher, working on getting the girl, at least he is writing some really bad poetry, and spending all the time he can with his sick abuela. When Arturo realizes a land developer has a plan to build a high-rise apartment complex right where his family's restaurant is, he is determined to save the day.

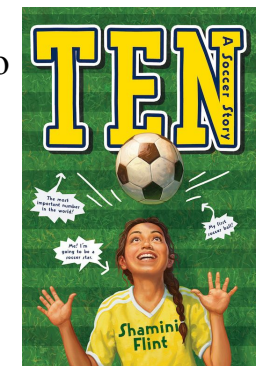


See You in the Cosmos by Jack Cheng

Alex has been working on his big project, blasting a rocket with his golden ipod into space. He's prepared meals for his mom before heading to New Mexico for SHARF, a rocket launching competition, with his dog, Carl Sagan. What starts off as a journey to launch his rocket, becomes a journey to discover more about his dead father, and what having a family means.

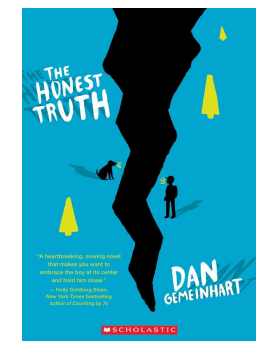
Ten: A Soccer Story by Shamini Flint

Maya loves soccer, even though she's never played a soccer game before she knows she can become a great player. With determination and grit, Maya convinces her mother to get her a soccer ball and she rallies the girls at her school into starting a soccer team, and even earns a chance to visit England and watch her favorite pro team play at Wembley.



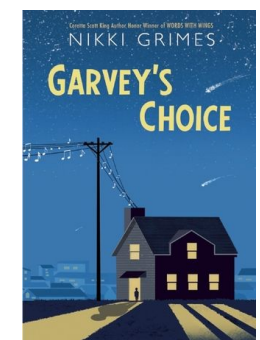
The Honest Truth by Dan Gemeinhart

All Mark wants to do before he dies is climb Mount Rainier with the best dog in the world, Beau. For this eleven year old cancer patient, time is growing short. Despite the obstacles, Mark aims to achieve his goal.



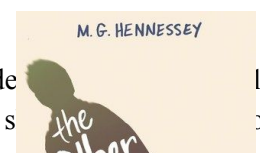
George by Alex Gino

Melissa is a girl, but everyone else thinks of her as a boy because of what they see on the outside. Melissa can't even audition for the part of Charlotte, in *Charlotte's Web*. With the help of her friend Kelly, Melissa will show the world who she really is.



Garvey's Choice by Nikki Grimes

Garvey loves his family, but they just don't get him, especially his father. Garvey loves astronomy, Garvey's father wants him to love football. When



Garvey joins the school chorus, it's in secret. Garvey's friends encourage him to show off his voice, but he's not sure he's ready.

The Other Boy by M.G. Hennessy

Shane is a boy who loves baseball, and spends his spare time working on a graphic novel. Shane also has a secret, or what his mother would call "private information". When Shane, was born, people thought he was a girl. Now, there is a risk that people who knew him as a girl, will share his "private" information.

Every Shiny Thing by Cordelia Jensen and Laurie Morrison

When Lauren's brother Ryan is sent to a special school for teens on the autism spectrum, she is sure it's not the best place for him. When Sierra moves in next door after being placed in foster care, she is shocked by the big homes and fancy stuff. Lauren convinces Sierra that it's time to play Robin Hood, the stuff that the rich don't need, will go to help those that have less! Sierra wants to help her new friend, but is stealing ever the right thing to do?

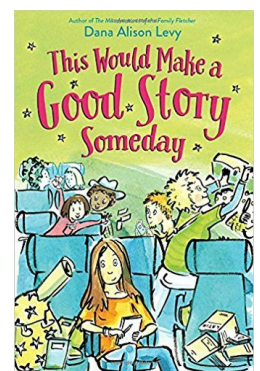


Amina's Voice by Hena Khan

Amina's best friend is Soojin, but now Soojin wants to hang out with Emily, a girl who's made fun of both of them. Soojin is trying to convince Amina that Emily has changed her ways and would make a great new friend, but Soojin isn't so sure.

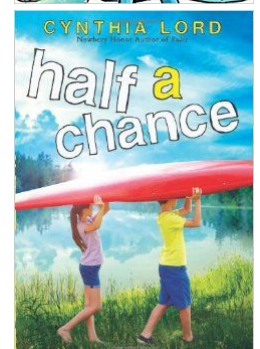
This Would Make a Good Story Someday by Dana Alison Levy

When Mimi, her step-mom, wins a writing grant that comes with a cross country train ride, all of Sara's summer plans for personal improvement are ruined. How is she supposed to execute her self-improvement plans while stuck on a train with the entire family? Worse still, she's stuck with another family that she *really* doesn't want to hang out with. Sara's trip will help her discover America, and quite possibly, herself.



Half a Chance by Cynthia Lord

Lucy has just moved with both her parents, and her father takes off immediately for one of his photography trips. Her chance to connect with him, and show him her talents comes in the form of a photo contest that he will be judging. As she takes pictures of new friends and neighbors she realizes that pictures don't just capture happy memories but difficult things as well.



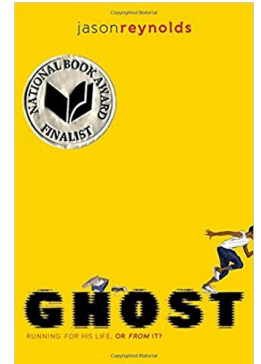
A Long Pitch Home by Natalie Dias Lorenzi



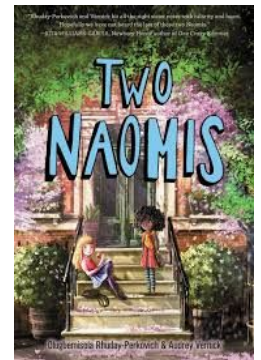
Bilal's father promises him that the day he moves to America, July 4, his birthday, will be the best day of his life. Bilal knows it can't be the best day of his life, without his father, who is stuck behind in Pakistan. Bilal tries to adjust to his new life in America, but it's frustrating, he's the only one who's never played baseball, and even though he's studied English he can't seem to keep up. Bilal is doing his best to be brave for his father, and adapt to life in America.

Ghost by Jason Reynolds

Castle, also known as Ghost, knows that he is a fast runner, so when some "track" kids are showing off, he can't help but show them what's what. Now, if he wants to take up the offer of joining this elite team, he'll have to stay on the straight and narrow track.

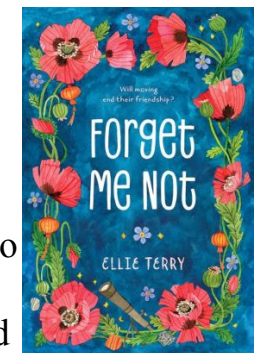


Two Naomis by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich and Audrey Verick
Naomi E. loves spending lazy Saturdays with her dad, Naomi Marie starts clubs at the local library, and practices using big words. When Naomi E.'s dad, and Naomi Marie's mom start dating, the Naomi's protest being thrown together and encouraged to act like sisters, because they totally don't have things in common.



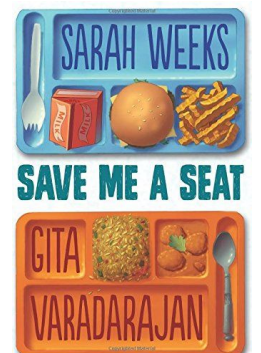
Short by Holly Goldberg Sloan

When her mom forces her to try out as a munchkin for the local university's production of *The Wizard of Oz*, Julia is not thrilled. Pretty soon though she is caught up in munchkinland and is absorbing everything about the world of the theater. Julia will grow more than she ever thought during her *Wizard of Oz* summer, but not in the way she'd hoped to grow.



Forget Me Not by Ellie Terry

Calliope June has started at 11 new school in less than ten years. Her tourette's, which she's supposed to keep secret, makes it even harder for her to make friends. Jinsong is president of student government and Callie's new neighbor. He thinks Callie is smart and pretty, but is reluctant to be her friend in school since no one else sees how cool she really is.



Save Me a Seat by Gita Varadarajan and Sarah Weeks

Ravi has just moved to the United States from India, but he's confident he'll do well in school and make a lot of friends, he was a top student at his school in India. Joe has always lived in his town, but he's confident this is going to be the worst school year ever. Joe's always been the outcast, the tall kid with big feet who has to go to speech class, and this year his Mom is working as a school lunch monitor. So embarrassing! Ravi knows right away that Joe isn't the kind of kid who could ever be his friend, but there's always more to people than meets the eye.



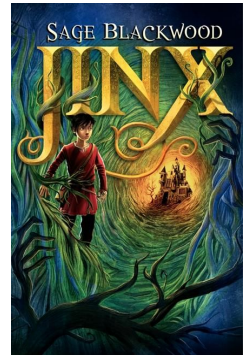
***The Way to Bea* by Kat Yeh**

Bea used to be best friends with S, but all of a sudden, at the beginning of 7th grade, S just started ignoring her. Bea is lost in 7th grade and her parents are distracted since her father's comic book got a movie deal and her artist mom is pregnant with her little brother or sister. When Bea meets Will, the boy obsessed with labyrinths, she may have met a friend to navigate the maze of 7th grade with her.

Science Fiction & Fantasy - Want to visit a place where magic could happen? In science fiction we read stories of once impossible things that could come to be with the right type of hard work and scientific advances. In fantasy the magic is real.

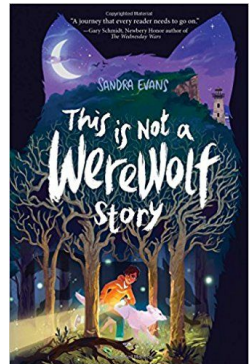
***Jinx* by Sage Blackwood**

Jinx was left in the forest by his less than loving parents. Much like Hansel and Gretel though, he is determined to survive. Jinx ends up following Simon Magus home, a wizard who hear fears might be evil, but really just act cranky. Jinx discovers he has powers that even Simon doesn't have and will have to use them to save himself, and quite possibly his world.



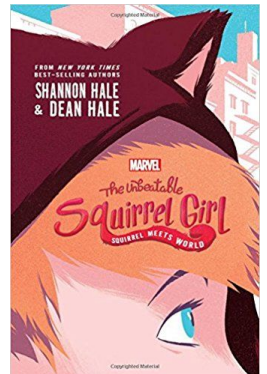
***This is Not a Werewolf Story* by Sandra Evans**

Raul is not a werewolf. Werewolves are mean, nasty, and out to hurt people. They half-person and half-wolf. When Raul becomes a wolf, he isn't out to get anyone, he's part of the natural world. Raul wants to protect the forest and its magic, but his gym teacher seems to have some woods magic of his own, and he's not using the magic for good.



***The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl: Squirrel Meets World* by Shannon Hale & Dean Hale**

Doreen Green has just moved to a new town. With her inexhaustible energy, infinite optimism, and her sometimes inadvisable positivity, Doreen is confident she can adjust to life in New Jersey. What Doreen isn't allowed to tell anyone though is that she has a super awesome fluffy human-sized squirrel tale, that gives her awesome balance and speed. In fact, she has the proportional powers of a squirrel. She knows she's not allowed to reveal her super squirrel abilities, but when a baby's life is at risk, she can't keep her true self a secret.



***Me and Marvin Gardens* by Amy Sarig King**

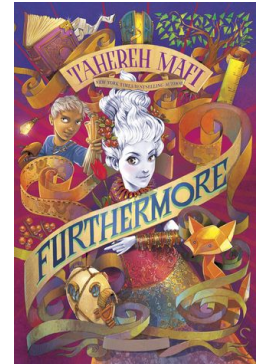
Obe is not a popular kid at school, and much worse to him he's been watching his family's land be bulldozed for new developments. Out on one of his nature walks, Obe discovers Marvin, he not quite a dog, or a pig, but



seems like a mix of both. Marvin's favorite food is plastic. Obe may have discovered a whole new species.

Furthermore by Tahereh Mafi

Alice is a girl without color, which is difficult in a world where more color means you're more magical. She only desires to find her father, who went missing three years ago. In order to do that though, she will need to work with her archenemy, Oliver, whose own magical ability is wrapped up in deceit.



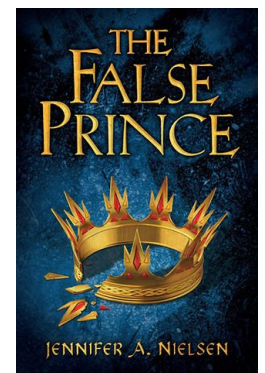
Love Sugar Magic: A Dash of Trouble by Anna Meriano

Leo's favorite holiday is Dia de los Muertos, and every year her family bakery Love & Sugar is at the center of the celebrations. Leo's mom and four older sisters are spending Halloween working at the bakery. Sick of being left out of all the fun, Leo sneaks out of school to spy on her family and she's shocked to learn that she's part of a family of brujas, or witches. Leo is definitely not waiting until she's older to learn how to do magic.



The Apprentice Witch by James Nicol

Arianwyn has failed her test to become a full fledged witch, but after her grandmother pulls some strings she ends up in the sleepy remote village of Lull, which is desperate for any witch to help with their occasional demon and dark spirits. Arianwyn might be over her head, but with the help of a new friend, a magical hare, and a kind demon, she just might scrape by.

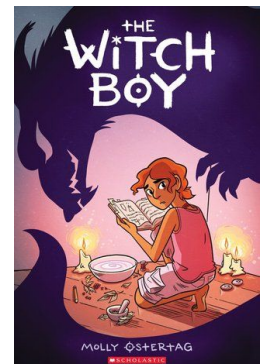


The False Prince by Jennifer A. Nielsen

The king, queen, and crowned prince have all been killed. However, the younger prince has been missing presumed dead for more than two years. A nobleman adopts four young orphan boys hoping to shape at least one into the missing prince. Pretending to be royalty isn't a safe game to play.

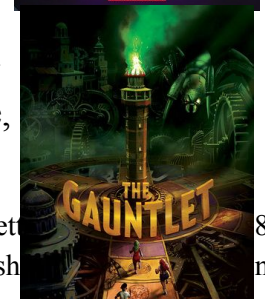
The Witch Boy by Molly Ostertag

In Aster's community only girls can be witches, but Aster is drawn to magic, and knows he could use it to help people if only he was trained properly. A mysterious element is attacking boys in his town, and Aster is determined to tackle this problem with magic.



The Gauntlet by Karuna Riazi

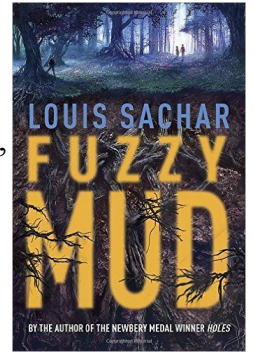
It's Farah's twelfth birthday, and it should be fun, but she's busy watching her younger brother Ahmad. She sneaks off with her friends to play a board game, but the new game her aunt gave her is much more than she bargained for.



Soon, she and her friends are trapped in the game The Gauntlet, if they don't win they will be stuck inside the game forever. They'd refuse to play, but it turns out The Gauntlet has captured Ahmad.

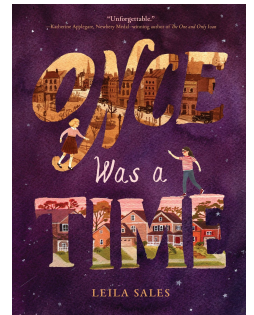
Fuzzy Mud by Louis Sachar

Tamaya and Marshall cut through the woods one day to escape a school bully. The bully, Chad, anticipates their plan and meets them in the woods, Tamaya throws mud at Chad. They escape, but Tamaya's hand develops a strange rash, and Chad doesn't show up to school, his parents say he never came home. What's up with the fuzzy mud out in the woods?



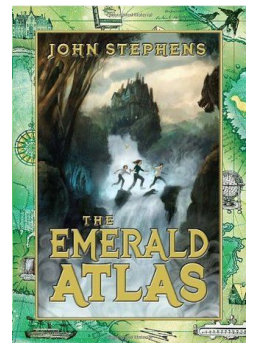
Once was a Time by Leila Sales

Lottie and her friend Kitty are kidnaped in attempt to force Lottie's father to spill all his scientific research about time travel. Just when things look toughest, a time travel portal appears and Lottie escapes to an unfamiliar future, but Kitty doesn't make it with her. Kitty has to figure out, how to live in the future without her best friend.



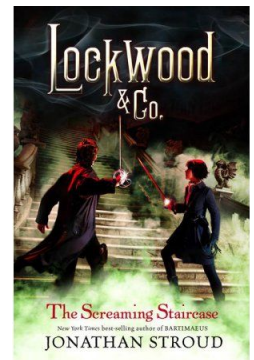
The Emerald Atlas by John Stephens

Kate, Michael, and Emma are orphans who know nothing about their parents or what caused them to be orphans for as long as they can remember. They don't know that they've been secretly protected from the dangerous knowledge of their past for a long time, but that protection can no longer hold, and they must confront their past to change their future.



The Screaming Staircase by Jonathan Stroud

In the haunted British Isles, when living citizens must lock themselves indoors at night, the only protection are the young people who have the talent to see and hear the spirits that never went into the afterlife. Lockwood & company is one ramshackle operation, and when they screw up a case and get into massive debt, the only way they have of preserving their business is to take on the most haunted house in England.



The Prince and the Dressmaker by Jen Wang

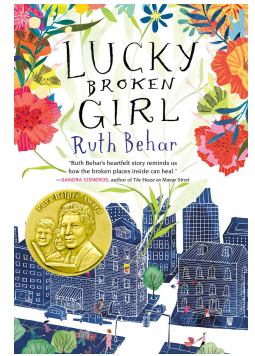
Prince Sebastian is supposed to be looking for a bride, but he would much rather spend his time with his new dressmaker coming up with beautiful ball gowns for his alter ego Lady Crystallia. Frances is Prince Sebastian's friend and dressmaker, she loves making beautiful gowns for Sebastian, but because Lady Crystallia's true identity is a secret, so is Frances. In order for Sebastian to be happy, he'll have to come out of the closet, wearing his dresses.

Historical Fiction - Historical fiction makes the past a real place you can visit.

Learn what adventures people had when they headed west on the Oregon Trail and explore what life might have been like in the past.

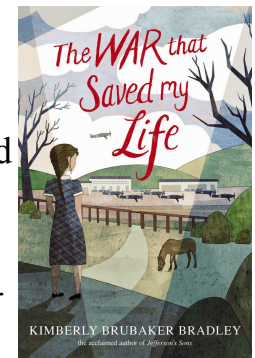
Lucky Broken Girl by Ruth Behar

Ruthie is getting used to her life in America after moving from Cuba, her English has improved so she can move into the “smart” class, and her father just bought her a new pair of go go boots. Then the unthinkable happens, as a result of a horrible car accident she is stuck in a body cast and can’t get out of bed. Confined to her bed Ruthie has her mom, a visiting teacher, and a neighbor to build a whole world out of.



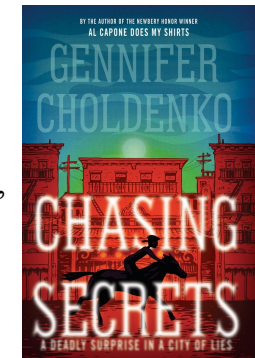
The War that Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Ada’s lived her whole life in a tiny room with a mother who compares her to trash and a younger brother whom she loves. When war comes to England and children are evacuated out of London, Ada makes her escape. Susan is assigned to take Ada and her brother in, she never wanted children, and Ada and Jamie never had a loving mother, but war makes for unusual new families.



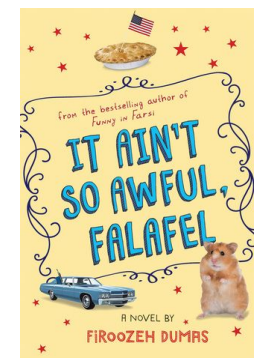
Chasing Secrets by Gennifer Choldenko · Historical Fiction

Lizzie dreams of someday becoming a doctor like her father, she follows him out on house calls and assists him with his patients, but her aunt would much rather Lizzie practice acting like a lady at Miss Barstow’s school for girls. When Jing, Lizzie’s friend and her family’s cook, doesn’t come home at night, she’s shocked to find Jing’s son, Noah, hiding in Jing’s room. Lizzie is responsible for keeping Noah secret and safe, and finding Jing the Chinatown quarantine.



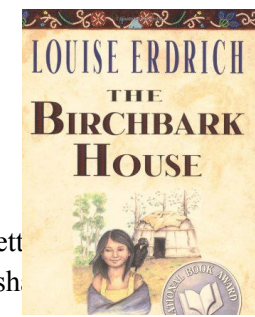
It Ain’t So Awful, Falafel by Firoozeh Dumas

Zomorod has been moving back and forth between Iran and California for most of her life, but when Dad gets a job in Newport beach, Zomorod, who has renamed herself Cindy, is determined to fit in. Things seem to be going well at her new middle school until an extremist group in Iran takes hostages and no one in America likes Iranians anymore.



The Wild Book by Margarita Engle

Fefa hates being the youngest with lots of brothers and sisters, but what she hates even more is that no matter how hard she tries, she can’t read. The doctor says she has word blindness and that she’ll never be able to read, but Fefa’s mother says that it will just take patience and practice. Learning to read might just save Fefa’s family.



***The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich**

Omakayas is a spirited girl. She admires her older sister, finds her younger brother annoying and treasures her youngest baby brother. Omakayas would much rather play than work on tanning the buffalo hides for her mother. When the dreaded smallpox infects her community, she must take on responsibilities even greater than the tanning.

***Some Kind of Courage* by Dan Gemeinhart**

After his supposed guardian sells his pony for drinking money, Joseph has nothing left to lose. He takes off after his pony, Sarah, determined to get back the only family he has left. Along the way Joseph will have to make choices about who to trust, to be selfish or selfless, and what makes a family.

***The Inquisitor's Tale* by Adam Gidwitz · Historical Fiction**

Travelers at an inn share what they know of the three children who have become the enemies of the king of France. Jean is a peasant girl with visions of the future, William is a young monk with super strength, and Jacob is a young Jewish boy who has the ability to heal. They all had to flee their homes for different reasons and their special abilities make them the perfect people to carry out a special and holy mission.

***Refugee* by Alan Gratz**

Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are all refugees, leaving political oppression, famine, and violence. Josef is fleeing the Nazis, in 1930's Germany, Isabel and her family are fleeing Castro and the lack of food in Cuba in 1994, and Mahmoud is leaving Syria and its civil war. While they all come from different times and places they share common troubles and fears. They are all hoping for a safe place to call home.

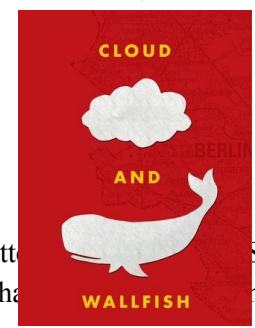
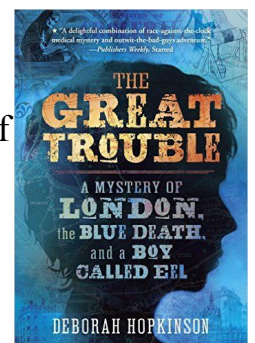
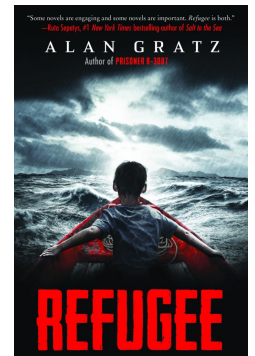
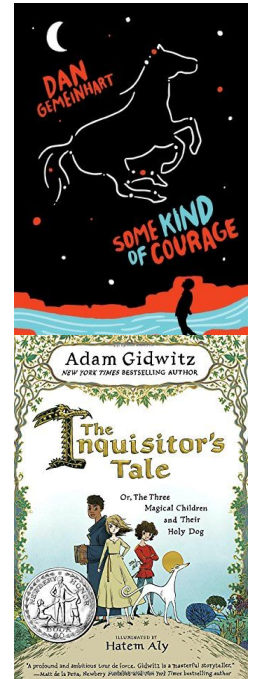
***The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel* by Deborah Hopkinson**

London is succumbing to the blue death once again. Eel already has enough difficulty avoiding trouble, aka his nasty stepfather. Eel gets the opportunity of a lifetime to work with Dr. Snow, who has his own theories about the blue death. Maybe Eel can save himself, and the people of London.

***Dash* by Kirby Larson**

Ever since Pearl Harbor happened, Mitsi's friends have disappeared. They ignore her, or worse leave her nasty notes because the Japanese have bombed her country. Mitsi never expects to be kicked out of her home, but she is, and even worse her beloved dog Dash can't come with her family to their new assigned home.

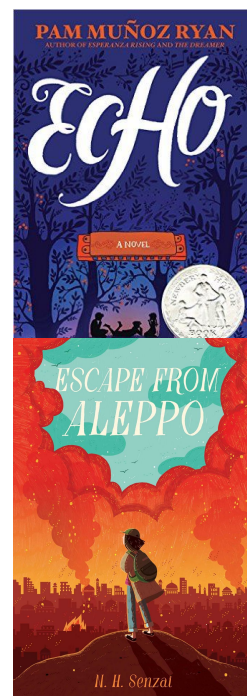
***Cloud and Wallfish* by Anne Nesbet**



One day Noah's parents pick him up from school and announce that they are moving, immediately. They're not moving just anywhere, they are moving to East Berlin and will be living behind the Iron Curtain. Not only are they moving, but Noah has to have a new name, and a new birthday as well. In East Berlin Noah and his family have to watch what they say and do, and it's hard for Noah to make friends when he is not even allowed to go to school. Noah is determined to figure out what is going on.

***Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan**

Friedrich is a German boy with a large birthmark on his face in a society that values "perfection" and regularity. Mike is an orphan in Pennsylvania where there are a lot of poor boys who need homes and don't have one. Ivy, a Mexican American girl, struggles when she is forced into a school that is far beneath her ability just because of her race. A simple harmonica unites them across time, space, and struggles. Music lends them all strength and leads them to peace.



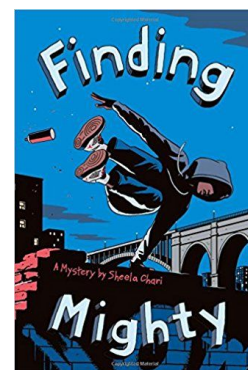
***Escape from Aleppo* by N.H. Senzai**

Ever since Nadia's twelfth birthday her home in Aleppo, Syria has become more and more dangerous to stay in. When Nadia's family learns there is going to be bombing in their area they make a plan to flee for their lives, but when Nadia gets separated from her family she is left to fend for herself and must make her way through many dangers in order to reunite with the ones she loves.

Mysteries - See if you can figure out who committed the crime before our sleuths do when you read a good mystery.

***Finding Mighty* by Sheela Chari**

Myla and Peter are starting middle school as new neighbors, but they have more than geography in common. Myla has a necklace a local gang desperately wants to take from her. Peter's brother has disappeared, and Peter thinks it may be tied to mysterious graffiti. Myla and Peter's mysteries are connected and they'll have to work together to figure out what's going on, and how some missing diamonds play a part in their story.



***Under the Egg* by Laura Marx Fitzgerald**

Theodora thinks she discovered a beautiful, old painting that belonged to her dead grandfather. Selling it would greatly help her family finances, but her grandfather used to be a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Did he steal this fabulous painting and then hide it? Theodora will have to find out before she can think about helping her family out of their financial difficulties.



***Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library* by Chris Grabenstein**

Kyle Keeley has won the ultimate prize. A first look and an all night stay in his town's brand new library built by Luigi Lemoncello, the world's most famous and creative gamemaker. But when the night ends, the games are only just beginning. If they can figure out how to escape the library, they'll have a chance at fame and fortune.

The Parker Inheritance by Varian Johnson

Candice is stuck in the small town of Lambert, South Carolina for the summer. It seems like it's going to be pretty dull until she discovers a letter in box that's labeled with her name. The letter reveals a past injustice that needs to be put right, and if Candice can figure out what the clues reveal there might just be a treasure waiting for the whole town at the end of it.

Spirit Hunters by Ellen Oh

Harper feels creeped out by her new home the moment she steps inside, but her family thinks she's being silly, especially because she has a history of lying. When Harper's younger brother Michael starts acting strange, and talking to people no one else can see, she knows she has to help him.

Ripper by Stefan Petrucha

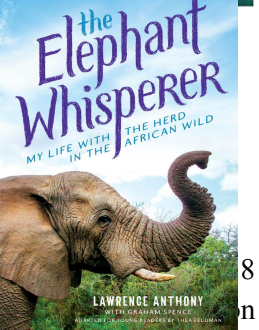
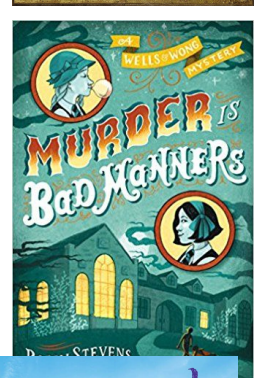
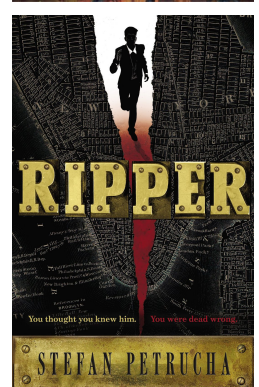
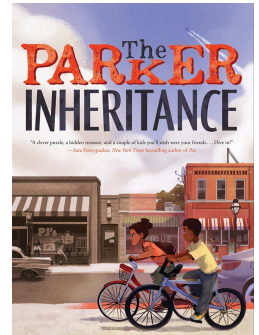
Carver Young's dream has come true, he's been adopted by Detective Hawking of the Pinkerton detective agency. In no time he's working on solving the mystery of his biological father and caught up in the case of Jack the Ripper, a serial killer who has disappeared from London, only to turn up in New York. Pretty soon though, Carver is in deeper with the Ripper than he wants to be.

Murder is Bad Manners by Robin Stevens

Daisy Wells is the perfect English schoolgirl, at least on the outside and Hazel Wong is the "exotic" student from Hong Kong, nervous and ready to fit in. Together they have a murder to solve. Hazel discovered the body of Miss Bell, her teacher. When she went to grab help, the body disappeared and nobody believes that it was even really there. Murder is not only wrong, it's bad manners.

Non-Fiction - Sometimes facts are more interesting than fiction. Explore the real world around you with books about science, art, history, and more.

The Elephant Whisperer (Young Readers Adaptation): My Life with the Herd in the African Wild by Lawrence Anthony



Lawrence had opened a wildlife reserve in South Africa when he was asked to take on an elephant herd that had a reputation for escaping their captors. Lawrence had no experience with elephants, but if he didn't take them, they would be shot. Lawrence decided to take on this "troublesome" herd. What followed was a learning experience about communicating with elephants, and discovering how humans fit into the wild world.

The Boys in the Boat (Young Readers Adaptation): The True Story of an American Team's Epic Journey to Win Gold at the 1936 Olympics by Daniel James Brown

Nine young men, many who struggled to get enough food through the lean times of the Depression, became the US representatives at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Their victories were in face of being the underdog, they weren't as well trained, and didn't come from the background of the typical rower. Their doggedness became an inspiration for Americans who were watching the Nazis rise as World War II was brewing.

Titanic: Voices from the Disaster by Deborah Hopkinson

Everyone knows the story to the Titanic, but in this non-fiction novel become a passenger on the doomed ship with a minute by minute account using primary sources and see exactly what happened that fateful night.

42 Is Not Just a Number by Doreen Rappaport

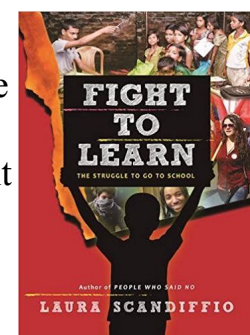
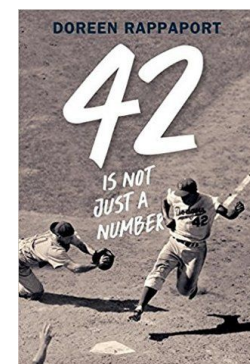
Jackie Robinson is known for his historical breaking of the color barrier in major league baseball. This brief look at the life the Jackie Robinson tells the stories, not just of baseball but the other color barriers Jackie worked to break through in education, the army, and the social sphere. This biography is wonderful for history buffs and sports fans alike.

Fight to Learn: The Struggle to Go to School by Laura Scandiffio

Some children dread going to school and coming home with homework, but many children all over the world are denied their right to learn and would give anything to receive a good education. *Fight to Learn* tells the story of children and adults all over the world who are standing up for everyone's right to education.

Faster Higher Smarter: Bright Ideas that Transformed Sports by Simon Shapiro

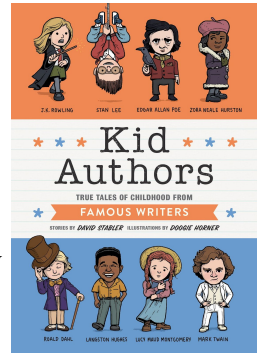
How can science class and PE class possibly be related? Knowing your science can help you improve your sport. Simple explanations and diagrams make it clear how physics has created for more exciting sports. *Faster Higher*



Smarter highlights innovations, accidents, and the trial and error that have made sports stars go farther, jumper high, and change their game.

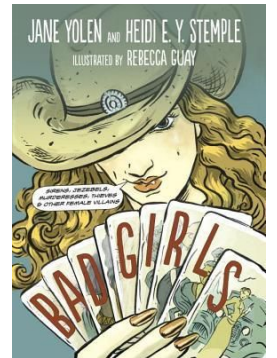
Kid Authors: True Tales of Childhood from Famous Writers by David Stabler and Illustrations by Doogie Horner

Before they were world famous, they were just regular kids. The famous authors you know and love faced bullies, mean teachers, sibling squabbles, and other challenges. Read about what your favorite authors were like as kids!



Bad Girls: Sirens, Jezebels, Murderesses, Thieves & Other Female Villains by Jane Yolen and Heidi E.Y. Stemple

Have you ever heard of Bonnie of Bonnie & Clyde fame? Or Lizzie Borden, Cleopatra, or Typhoid Mary? Read about these infamous women and you be the judge: were these women truly bad, or just poorly remembered by history?



7th and 8th Grade Suggestions

Realistic Fiction - This story could be true but wasn't. Realistic fiction includes stories about sports stars, friendships old and new, and the fun and the difficulty of growing-up at any age.

Solo by Kwame Alexander

Blade is the son of a rock star legend, but it hasn't brought him any happiness. Ever since his Mom died his father has been in and out of rehab and the paparazzi loves to write about all his father's screw-ups. When Blade finds out a big family secret it makes him question everything about his life.

Saints and Misfits by S.K. Ali

Janna's has been continually harassed and even assaulted by another teen at her mosque, but hasn't told anyone since he has a reputation and a pious Muslim and comes from a good family. Janna's not having a crisis of faith, but she doesn't know what to do with her crush on a non-Muslim guy, it's totally haram, and her brother's moved back home so she won't even have her own bedroom anymore.

Far from the Tree by Robin Benway

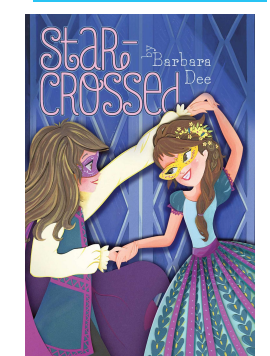
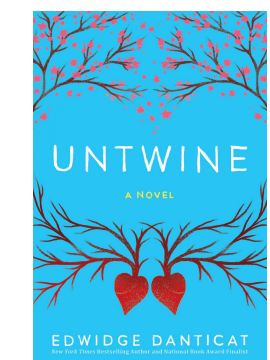
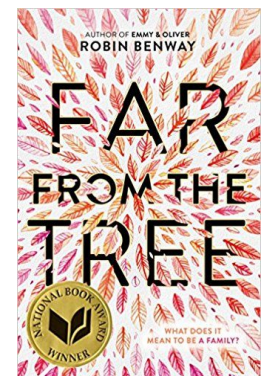
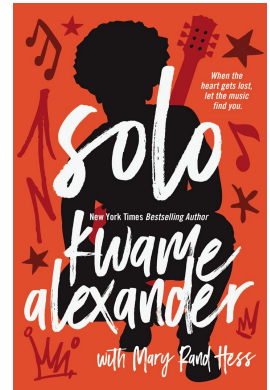
At sixteen Grace has just given birth to a beautiful baby girl and gave her up for adoption. Although she had never been interested in finding her own birth mother, she has finally decided to ask her parents about where she came from. Turns out, she's a middle child with an abrasive younger bio sister, and quiet older bio brother. Together they'll learn a little bit more about where they belong.

Untwine by Edwidge Danticat

Identical twin sisters Giselle and Isabelle are best friends with a shared history from birth. When their family is in a devastating car accident, Giselle will have to unwrap her life from Isabelle's and learn to grow on her own.

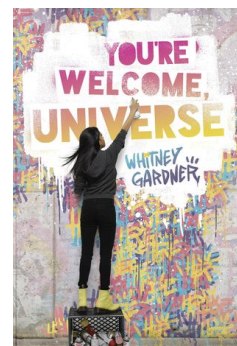
Star-Crossed by Barbara Dee

Mattie is super excited for the class play, *Romeo & Juliet*, she's not confident in her acting abilities, but she is more excited to spend time with the new girl Gemma, who makes the perfect Juliet. Mattie's friend Lucy notice's that Mattie seems extra interested in Gemma, maybe it's even a crush. Mattie tries to figure it all out, can she like girls and still like boys? When Mattie is suddenly pushed into the part of Romeo all the feelings start going into the play!



You're Welcome, Universe by Whitney Gardner

After being kicked out of a private school for the deaf for graffiti, Julia's mothers enroll her in the local public school where she'll be "mainstreamed" with other hearing kids. Julia only cares about her art, but her mothers would KILL her if she was caught again. A new friend encourages Julia, but a rival graffiti artist keeps messing up her work.

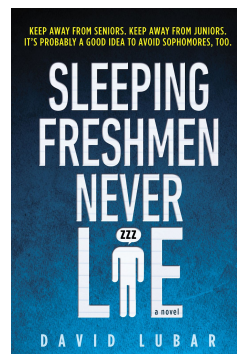


Since You Asked by Maureen Goo

When Holly's snarky and provocative fake newspaper column accidentally get printed in the school paper she becomes an overnight sensation. Some love her brutal honesty, and others hate her for it. Being a high school sophomore with strict Korean parents was never going to be easy, but this is a nightmare.

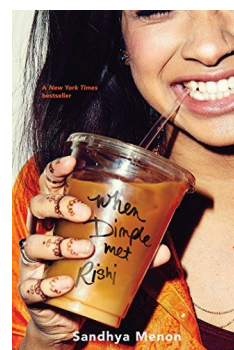
Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie by David Lubar

Scott knew High School wasn't going to be easy, but this is ridiculous. Moreover, Scott's mom is pregnant. Since Scott will be a big brother for the first time, he's recording all his tips about how to survive high school for his new sibling. But there's no teacher like experience.



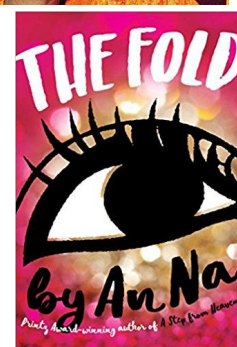
When Dimple Met Rishi by Sandhya Menon

Dimple knows her parents want to find her the "Ideal Indian Husband" but she has plans to start her own app and when her parents give their approval to special program for web developers she's ecstatic. Rishi Patel is happy to go along with the life his parents want for him, including becoming a doctor and marrying the woman they choose for him. When Rishi is sent to a special summer program to meet his future wife, he has no idea Dimple is not in on the plan to marry him.



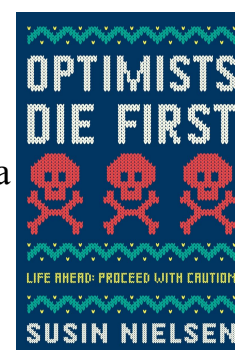
The Fold by An Na

When Joyce's aunt wins some money she offers to pay for plastic surgery for Joyce to give her eyes "the fold". Joyce is reluctant to go under the knife, but when it comes to John Ford Kang she's willing to go the distance in order to get the guy.



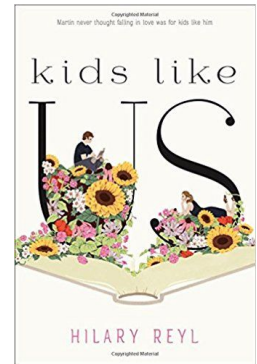
Optimists Die First by Susin Nielsen

If it can go wrong, Petula knows about it, and is prepared to avoid it in anyway possible. Forced to go to art therapy with the school's other weirdos and rejects, Petula meets the seemingly normal Jacob. Petula and Jacob partner on a video project to recast *Wuthering Heights* with cats. After their success Petula and Jacob discover they can use film to explore more than feline literature.



***Kids Like Us* by Hilary Reyl**

Martin is in France for the summer with his mother and sister. Fortunately, he is a fluent French speaker. Challengingly, he is in a new environment where people are not used to his stammering, echolalia, or his constant references to *In Search of Lost Time* by Marcel Proust. Martin is on the autism spectrum. Being in France gives Martin the perfect environment to discover all his favorite characters. Martin thinks he has found his love interest, his own personal Gilberte.



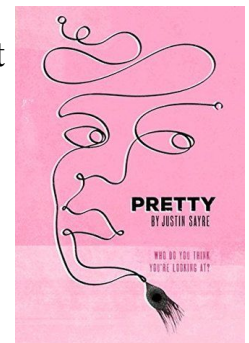
***All American Boys* by Jayson Reynolds & Brendan Kiely**

Rashad is at the local convenient store picking up a snack before his Friday night partying, then before he knows why he is being accused of shoplifting and beat so badly he's hospitalized. Quinn sees the beating, the police officer who did it is his role model, and he finds it difficult to believe he would hurt someone who didn't do anything wrong. The incident sets off tension and discussions of race through the community.



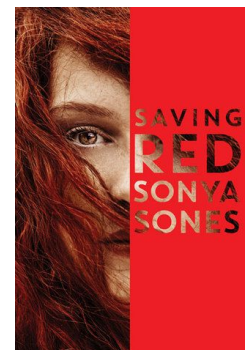
***Pretty* by Justin Sayre**

Sophie is pretty, fashion forward, and a hard working student. To her friends, it looks like Sophie glides smoothly through life, but when Sophie gets home she never knows what to expect. Some nights Sophie's mother is fun and loving, going through the fashion rags with her, other nights, after a long day of drinking, Sophie's mother screams at her, calling her nasty names. When Sophie's aunt moves in temporarily, Sophie is challenged with a whole new way of living.



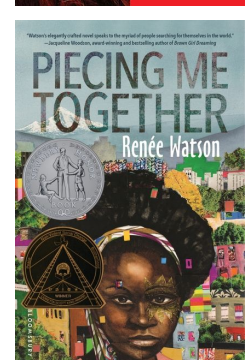
***Saving Red* by Sonya Sones**

Molly was isolated and depressed until she met, Red, who is reckless and nothing but fun. Molly is determined to save Red, but Red doesn't want to accept help, when offered charity she says, "I'd better not." If Molly saves Red though, she'd also be rescuing herself.



***Piecing Me Together* by Renee Watson**

It seems like everyone in Jade's life thinks she needs help. Jade knows that she's a black girl whose poor and growing up in a so-called bad neighborhood, but Jade knows she can give something to the world, and the help people offer her can feel condescending. When Jade joins Woman to Woman a mentorship program, she knows they have things to teach her, but she can be a teacher too.



***Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon**

Madeline is allergic to everything, literally everything. She's managed with being cooped up inside, but when a new family with a young (and attractive) teenage boy moves in next door, Maddy wonders if life's worth living



without taking any risks.

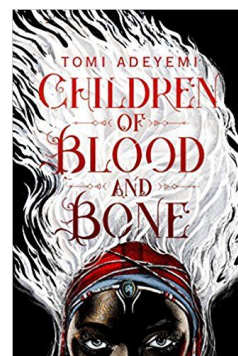
***Gem & Dixie* by Sara Zarr**

Gem hasn't had security in her life, but she's always been there for her younger sister, Dixie. When Gem and Dixie's father shows up after having disappeared for years, Gem and Dixie use some of the money he accidentally leaves them to have some fun. Gem is certain she can make sure Dixie and she stay safe, but Dixie doesn't want to follow Gem's plan.

Science Fiction & Fantasy - Want to visit a place where magic could happen? In science fiction we read stories of once impossible things that could come to be with the right type of hard work and scientific advances. In fantasy the magic is real.

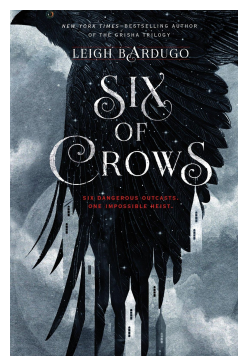
***Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi**

When a runaway princess with a magical artifact bumps into Zelig at the market, Zelig's destiny is thrown upon her. Now she, the escaped Princess Amari, and Zelig's brother must race to gather the 3 missing magical artifacts and perform a ceremony that will bring magic back to Orisha. While Zelig runs, the crowned prince Inan will follow with a magic of his own.



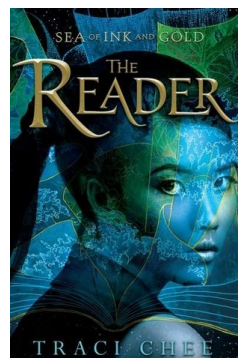
***Six of Crows* by Leigh Bardugo**

Kaz and his crew of thugs and thieves can earn enough to live like kings forever if they can do the impossible. Their task: break into an impenetrable fortress, stop the production of a magic enhancing drug, and oh, face an army with group of six.



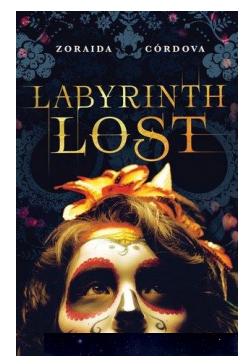
***The Reader* by Traci Chee**

Once there was, and one day there will be. This is the beginning of every story. After the murder of her parents Sefia is on the run with a close family friend, the only memento she has of her parents is a flat square object she has always carried but never looked too closely at. Lon is taken as an apprentice librarian by a strange man who promises him powers. Eventually their stories will come together.



***Labyrinth Lost* by Zoraida Cordova**

Alex's family has been waiting for her powers to appear. She comes from a long line of powerful brujas or witches and they're awaiting her deathday to bless her. Alex's powers scare her and she's suppressed them for as long as she can. When her deathday finally arrives, she'll do anything to get rid of her powers, but she might not like the cost.



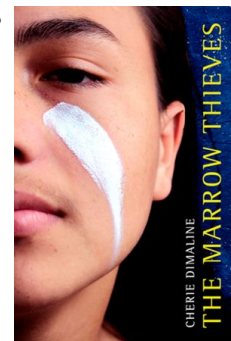
***On the Edge of Gone* by Corinne Duyvis**



A giant meteor is hitting the earth. Denise, like many, has no permanent shelter or way off the planet. When a last minute change of plans means there is a possibility of getting off Earth, Denise has to wonder, who gets to decide who lives and who dies?

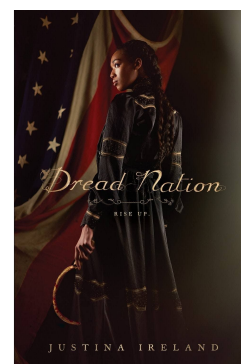
The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline

In the future, North America has been plagued with a disease that robs people of their ability to dream. French and all other native peoples are mysteriously immune from this illness, and therefore hunted for their bone marrow to create treatments for sufferers. French and the rag tag and worn down group he is traveling with struggle to survive in this apocalyptic future.



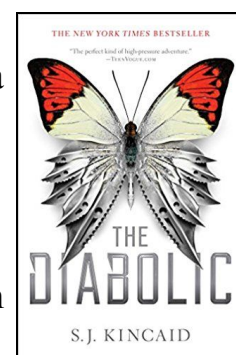
Dread Nation by Justina Ireland

The War Between the States ended when the dead rose from the battlefields of Gettysburg. Jane McKeene was an infant when the dead rose, but as the half black daughter of a white woman she has been recruited along with other native and negro children to learn to put down the dead, and become Attendants to protect wealthy whites. When Jane becomes caught in the middle of a conspiracy, she wishes it was just the dead she had to fight.



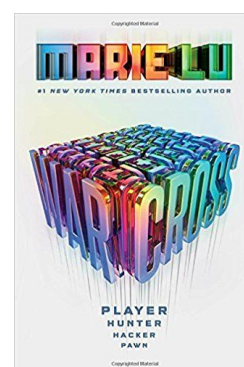
The Diabolic by S. J. Kincaid

Nemesis is a Diabolic, a genetically altered human, born and bred to protect the daughter of wealthy and powerful galactic Senator Imperion, Sidonia. Nemesis would do anything to protect Sidonia, but when the Emperor puts Sidonia's life at risk by demanding her presence at court in exchange for her father's crimes, Nemesis must go to court in Sidonia's place and pretend to be a wealthy, elite daughter, rather than the killer she is.



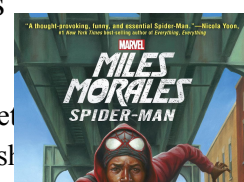
The Secret of a Heart Note by Stacey Lee

Mimosa has been training to be an aromateur, a maker of love potions, her whole life. When it comes to be an aromateur, the cardinal rule is, don't fall in love, if you do, you'll lose your sense of smell (and your gift for making love potions!). Mimosa accidentally gives someone the love potion meant for another, and when she starts to fall for the school soccer star she might not ever be able to fix her mistake.



Warcross by Marie Lu

Emika has seventeen dollars in her bank account and owes three months worth of rent, in other words, she's desperate. In an attempt to steal a valuable game object she hacks into the international Warcross championships, only to accidentally reveal herself and her hack to the entire world. Sure she is going to be arrested, Emika is shocked when Hideo Tanaka the inventor of Warcross offers her a job to investigate security problems in Warcross instead!

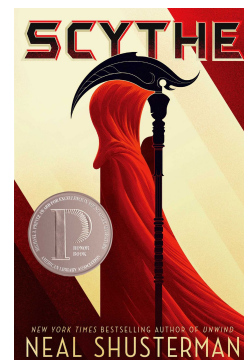


Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds

Miles is trying to do the right thing, but sometimes that means leaving class because his spidey sense is tingling and going to fight the bad guys. The thing is, he can't exactly reveal his superhero identity as Spider-Man to everyone. So this time leaving class without an excuse meant suspension. Miles wants to live up to being a superhero, but his dad wasn't always a good guy, and his uncle was even worse. Miles is worried he's destined to be a villain instead of hero.

Scythe by Neal Shusterman

Citra and Rowan are living in the age of immortality. No one dies, no one gets sick, and when you get old you can just set yourself back to a younger age. The human population still needs to be controlled, and that's the Scythe's job, to end the life of some people so the rest of humanity may continue in peace and prosperity. Citra and Rowan are taken on as Scythe apprentices and learn the Scythe's job is more complex than they imagine.

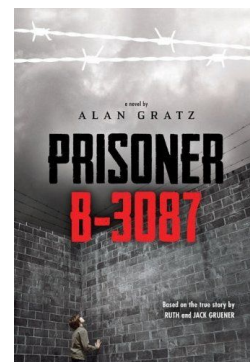


Historical Fiction - Historical fiction makes the past a real place you can visit.

Learn what adventures people had when they headed west on the Oregon Trail and explore what life might have been like in the past.

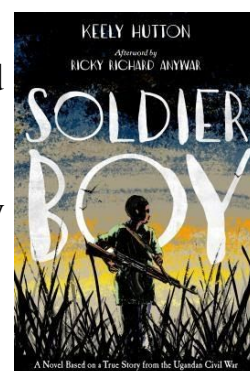
Prisoner B-3087 by Alan Gratz

Yanek is a young Jewish boy in Nazi occupied Poland. Despite all the privations, he and his family struggle to stay together and make a life for themselves, but when first Yanek's parents are taken away, and then Yanek is as well, every moment is a struggle for survival.



Soldier Boy: A Novel Based on a True Story from the Ugandan Civil War by Keely Hutton

In 1989 Ricky, his brother, and other boys from his village were abducted and forced to become soldiers in the Lord's Resistance Army. Ricky and the other boys witness brutal atrocities, suffer from starvation, and lack of basic shelter and sanitation, and are forced with violence to commit terrible deeds. Twenty years later, Sam has been rescued from Lord's Resistance Army, but after being with them for more than three years, he doesn't know how to live outside of being a soldier.



Night Witches: A Novel of World War II by Kathryn Lasky

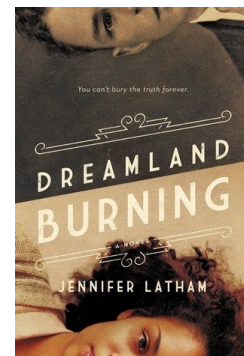
Valya knows how to fly, she might even be better than her older sister, Tatyana, who is better than her at everything else. Valya joins her sister, a



Night Witch, brave female pilots who bomb the Nazi's under the cover of night. When Tatyana's plane is shot down, and Tatyana goes missing Valya can give up or continue to fight.

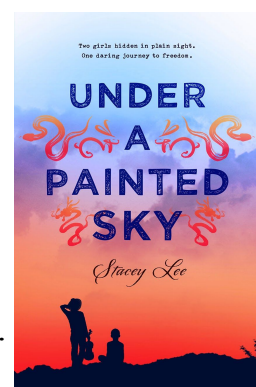
Dreamland Burning by Jennifer Latham

On the first day of summer break Rowan Chase discovers that a body was buried under her parents garage. She didn't expect to investigate a 100 year old murder on her summer break, but it certainly won't be boring. Will Tillman was there when the murder happened during Tulsa's race riots, and his story will reveal the details of the murder.



Under a Painted Sky by Stacey Lee

Sammy and Andy are traveling the Oregon Trail trying to make it to California. This would be difficult enough for anyone but Sammy and Andy are actually Samantha and Annamae, a Chinese American and a runaway slave trying to reunite with those who can help them after being attacked by an unscrupulous business man. Their survival will ensure their life and their freedom.

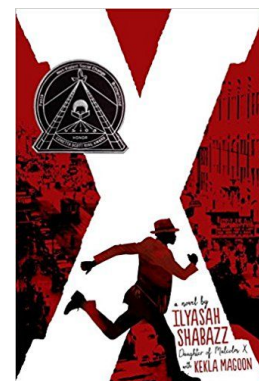


Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys

The tragic stories of World War II seem to be endless. Four teenagers, each with their own secrets, are fleeing Prussia to escape the invading Soviet army. Fighting to board the Wilhelm Gosloff, a German transport ship that offers the promise of escape, but turns out to be a trap.

X: A Novel by Ilyasah Shabazz with Kekla Magoon

After a difficult childhood, Malcom Little moves in with his half-sister Ella in Boston. Hard work and "opportunity" didn't work out for his family. Making a break with his family's past, he embraces jazz, dancing, and small time crime. As his new life expands, his problems increase. Neither hard work, nor crime, seem to improve the life of young black men in the 1940s.



Mysteries - See if you can figure out who committed the crime before our sleuths do when you read a good mystery.

These Shallow Graves by Jennifer Donnelly

Jo admires the work of pioneering reporters like Nellie Bly, but as a young, rich, and beautiful woman she is destined to marry and start a family. When her father is found dead, she is distraught. It cannot be an accident, and when she meets a handsome reporter who is looking into the truth, she won't turn back until she gets her answers.



Hidden by Helen Frost

When Darra's father accidentally kidnapped Wren, the two girls' lives became opposite sides of a single coin. Six years later Darra and Wren meet at summer camp and have to face their past.

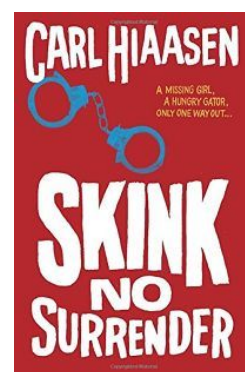
Fake ID by Lamar Giles

Nick (not his real name), is hiding in plain sight. His family has been placed under witness protection, and Nick's job is to keep a low profile. His new friend, Eli Cruz, is not as interested in the low-profile and is ready to solve a crime when he is found brutally murdered. Now Nick has to figure out what Eli was killed for.



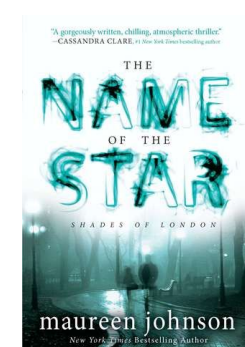
Skink No Surrender by Carl Hiaasen

Richard's wild-child cousin Malley has gone missing, run off with some guy she met on the Internet. When Richard meets Skink, environmental vigilante, Skink discovers that his missing cousin may be in even more trouble than they think. Richard and Skink go on a quest to find Malley before she goes missing for good.



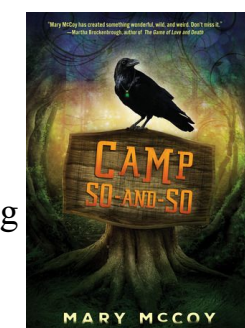
The Everafter by Amy Huntley

Madison is dead, that she knows, but she doesn't know how she died. The only thing with her in the afterlife are all the items that she lost while she was living. Each item is attached to a memory of her life. Hopefully, Madison will be able to use the items to solve the mystery of her death.



The Name of the Star by Maureen Johnson

Rory is set to enjoy a year of studying abroad at a fancy London boarding school, when a Jack the Ripper copycat killer makes everyone a little more tense. Unadvisedly, Rory sneaks out some friends one night and sees a guy hanging out near her school. Turns out, he the prime suspect, and Rory is the only one who's seen him.



Camp So-and-So by Mary McCoy · Mystery

Twenty-five girls arrive at Camp So and So expecting a week of bonfires, hiking, and crafts. Yet each group of five girls encounter something completely different. Cabin One is in a camp competition with the neighboring rich kids camp, Cabin Two is busy escaping a murderer in the woods, Cabin Three have found their soulmates, Cabin Four have been given a quest and are ready to slay the beast and the release the person imprisoned, and Cabin Five has been trapped in their cabin by a high wall of brambles. What is up with Camp So and So?

I am Princess X by Cherie Priest

May is a lonely teenager, still troubled by the loss of her childhood best friend. When she returns to her childhood hometown to visit her distant father, she starts seeing the drawings that Libby, her dead best friend, had

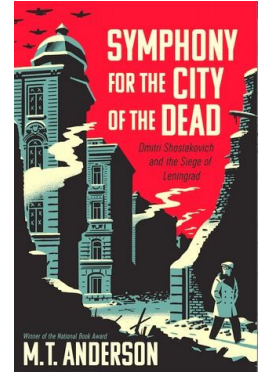


drawn for her all over town. If Libby is dead, who is making these drawings? And if Libby's not dead, May has to find her.

Non-Fiction - Sometimes facts are more interesting than fiction. Explore the real world around you with books about science, art, history, and more.

Symphony for the City of the Dead: Dmitri Shostakovich and the Siege of Leningrad by M.T. Anderson

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in the city of St. Petersburg, but through violent cultural revolution that city became Petrograd, and then Leningrad. A gift musician, Dmitri became a composer, and while no one might think that a composer could contribute to a war, Dmitri's 7th Symphony became the spark that would help Russia survive World War II, and would bring hope to the city of Leningrad when all truly seemed hopeless.



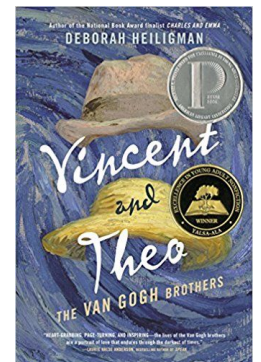
March Forward, Girl: From Young Warrior to Little Rock Nine by Melba Pattillo Beals

Melba Beal changed history when along with eight other black students she integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. What made Melba want to take on the challenge of joining an all white high school when she knew she would face anger, discrimination, and even death threats. Melba recounts her childhood years facing discrimination in ways big and small, and her reflections on what motivated her to become a champion for civil rights.



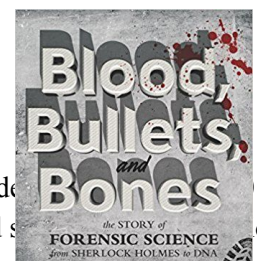
In the Shadow of Liberty by Kenneth C. Davis

The United States was built with the minds and work of men, like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, however the work of the enslaved people "owned" by the founding fathers, and what they accomplished is often overshadowed. *In the Shadow of Liberty* presents the story of five enslaved people who "belonged" to four of our early presidents.



Vincent and Theo: The Van Gogh Brothers by Deborah Heiligman

The name Vincent Van Gogh is known to people world wide. Very few people know that without his younger brother, Theo, we would not have Vincent's paintings to enjoy. While Vincent struggle to perfect his art he always sought the input of his brother, an art dealer and supporter of the Impressionist movement of art. Pushing his brother to become a better artist, Theo supported Vincent financially and emotionally. This family story shows that genius cannot flourish without love and family.

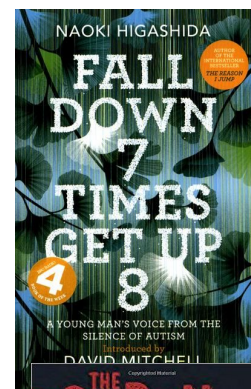


Blood, Bullets, and Bones: The Story of Forensic Science from Sherlock Holmes to DNA by Bridget Heos

Nowadays citizens have become acquainted with the work of detectives and crime scene investigators, but before modern science how were crimes solved, and how did crime solvers develop the methods that are still used today. In *Blood, Bullets, and Bones*, Bridget Heos shares true crimes and the methods that early detectives used to solve them to help make sure those who committed crimes, wouldn't commit any more.

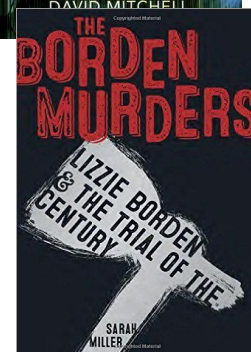
Fall Down 7 Times Get Up 8 by Naoki Higashida

Naoki Higashida is a Japanese man with profound autism. He is unable to communicate through speech, but by using an alphabet grid to communicate he has been able to express himself and what life is like for one person with severe non verbal autism. Everyone should read this book.



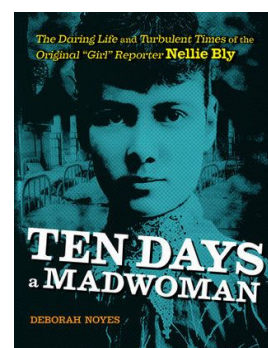
The Borden Murders: Lizzie Borden & the Trial of the Century by Sarah Miller

In 1892 Lizzie Borden's father and step-mother were brutally murdered with a hatchet in their own home. Lizzie was home at the time of the murders, but she wasn't attacked, nor did she report hearing or seeing an attacker. Lizzie Borden was tried and acquitted for the murder of her parents, but to this day we still wonder, did she do it, and if so, why?



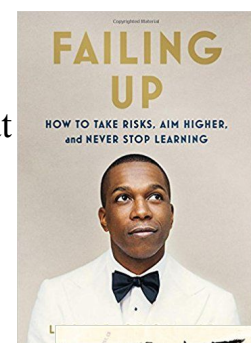
Ten Days a Madwoman by Deborah Noyes

Nellie Bly was told there wasn't a need for female reporters, but Nellie took on any challenge sent her way and wrote about it with style and panache. Learn about some of the amazing things she accomplished including going undercover as a mental patient and traveling around the world in under 80 days.



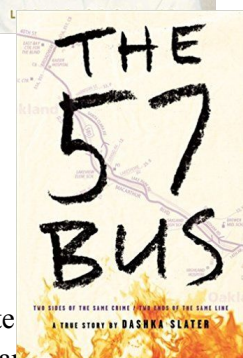
Failing Up: How to Take Risks, Aim Higher, and Never Stop Learning by Leslie Odom Jr.

Leslie Odom Jr. is now famous for his role as Aaron Burr in the hit musical, *Hamilton*. The road to *Hamilton* though, was not easy, and required risks that would potentially devastate his career. In this memoir Leslie reflects on the importance of making difficult choices and being willing to fail in order to succeed and become better at the things that are important to you.



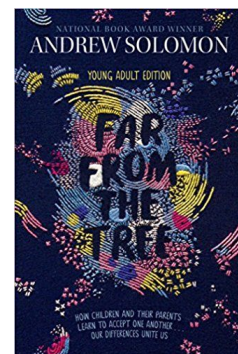
The 57 Bus: Two Sides of the Same Crime & Two Ends of the Same Line by Dashka Slater

Sasha was napping on their bus ride home, Richard was just goofing off on the bus with his friends. When Richard lit Sasha's skirt on fire, it became a widely publicized hate crime that changed both their lives.



Far From the Tree by Andrew Solomon

Andrew Solomon tells the true stories of parents and children with identities integral to their sense of personhood and experience of the world, but vastly different from one another. In these stories parents and children struggle to understand their different experiences, while loving one another fiercely.



Pride: Celebrating Diversity & Community by Robin Stevenson

June is Gay Pride Month, a time when people celebrate being part of a diverse community. It is a time for LGBTQ people to celebrate their love, especially when their love is not always welcome. *Pride: Celebrating Diversity & Community* is a primer for understanding pride month, how it's celebrated, how for the LGBTQ community has come, and how far it has to go.

