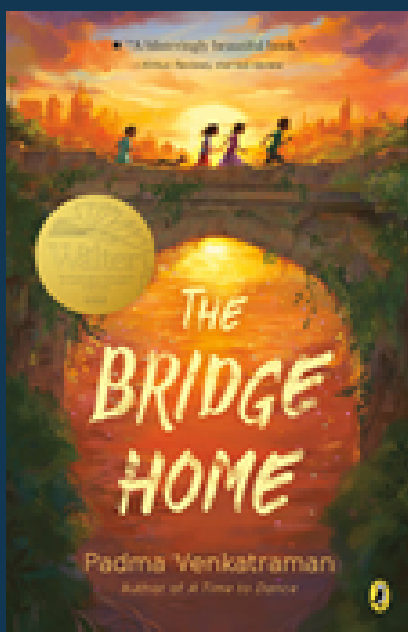




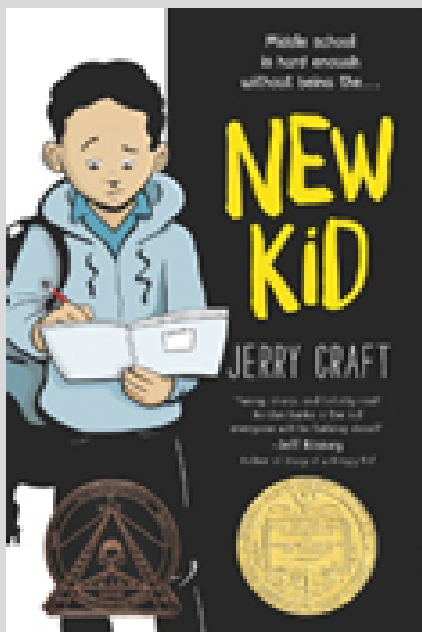
All middle school students are encouraged to read over the summer. Below you will find a list of recommended books to choose from. While the titles in this list are all age appropriate and have been selected specifically for middle school students from 10-13 years of age, these selections span a diverse and inclusive range of reading levels, maturity levels, and cultural areas for middle grade children. Books marked as "middle grade" are appropriate for all middle school students. Books marked as "upper grades" or "high school/young adult crossover" are appropriate for grades 7 and up. We encourage parents to take an active role in helping children choose the books that are the best fit for them and their families. *Common Sense Media: Age Based Media Reviews for Families* ([commonsensemedia.org](https://www.commonsensemedia.org)) is an excellent resource to assist parents in identifying any potentially sensitive areas for their families and determining a “just right” book.



The Bridge Home by Padma Venkatraman

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

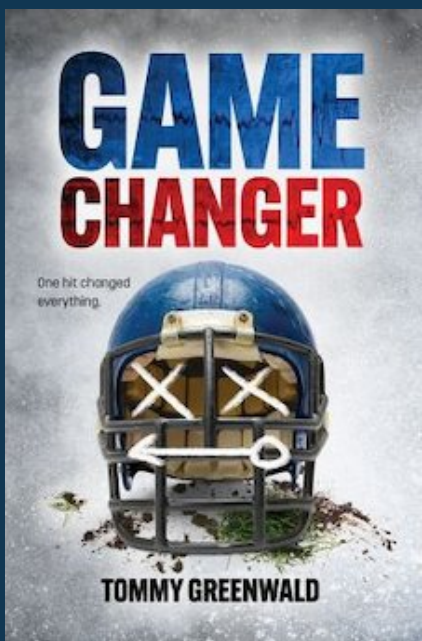
From the publisher: "Four determined homeless children make a life for themselves in Padma Venkatraman's stirring middle-grade debut. Life is harsh on the teeming streets of Chennai, India, so when runaway sisters Viji and Rukku arrive, their prospects look grim. Very quickly, eleven-year-old Viji discovers how vulnerable they are in this uncaring, dangerous world. Fortunately, the girls find shelter--and friendship--on an abandoned bridge that's also the hideout of Muthi and Arul, two homeless boys, and the four of them soon form a family of sorts. And while making their living scavenging the city's trash heaps is the pits, the kids find plenty to take pride in, too. After all, they are now the bosses of themselves and no longer dependent on untrustworthy adults. But when illness strikes, Viji must decide whether to risk seeking help from strangers or to keep holding on to their fragile, hard-fought freedom."



New Kid by Jerry Craft

Graphic novel: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

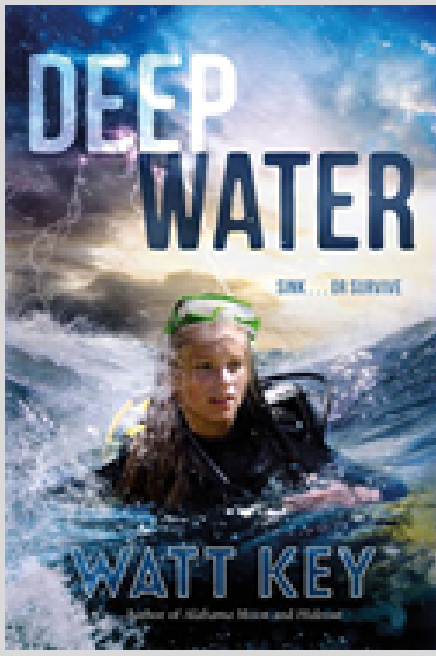
From the publisher: "Perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier and Gene Luen Yang, *New Kid* is a timely, honest graphic novel about starting over at a new school where diversity is low and the struggle to fit in is real, from award-winning author-illustrator Jerry Craft. Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?"



Game Changer by Tommy Greenwald

Fiction: sports Interest Level: Middle grade

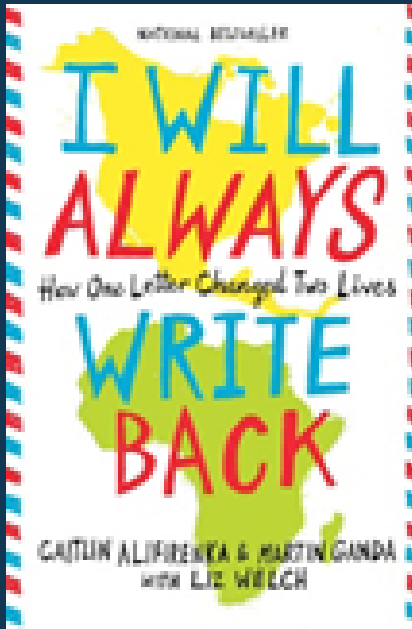
From the publisher: "Thirteen-year-old Teddy Youngblood is in a coma fighting for his life after an unspecified football injury at training camp. His family and friends flock to his bedside to support his recovery--and to discuss the events leading up to the tragic accident. Was this an inevitable result of playing a violent sport, or was something more sinister happening on the field that day? Told in an innovative, multimedia format combining dialogue, texts, newspaper articles, transcripts, an online forum, and Teddy's inner thoughts, *Game Changer* explores the joyous thrills and terrifying risks of America's most popular sport."



Deep Water by Watt Key

Fiction: adventure, survival **Interest Level: Middle grade**

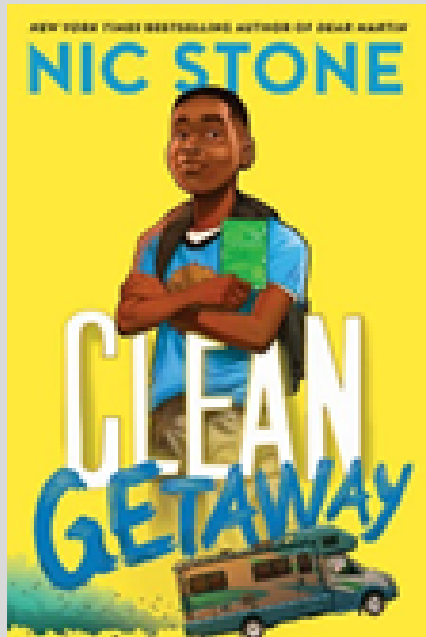
From the publisher: "From Watt Key, the author of the acclaimed Alabama Moon , comes a thrilling middle grade survival story about a scuba dive gone wrong and two enemies who must unite to survive. It's the most important rule of scuba diving: If you don't feel right, don't go down. So after her father falls ill, twelve-year-old Julie Sims must take over and lead two of his clients on a dive miles off the coast of Alabama while her father stays behind in the boat. When the clients, a reckless boy Julie's age and his equally foolhardy father, disregard Julie's instructions during the dive, she quickly realizes she's in over her head. And once she surfaces, things only get worse: One of the clients is in serious condition, and their dive boat has vanished--along with Julie's father, the only person who knows their whereabouts. It's only a matter of time before they die of hypothermia, unless they become shark bait first. Though Julie may not like her clients, it's up to her to save them all."



I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Loves by Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda

Nonfiction: memoirs and biographies **Interest Level: Middle grade**

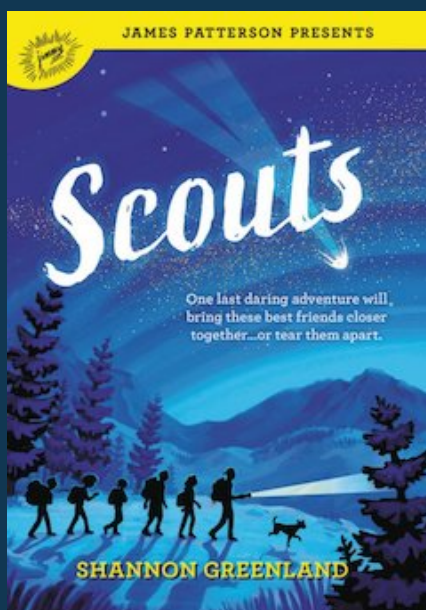
From the publisher: "The New York Times bestselling true story of an all-American girl and a boy from Zimbabwe and the letter that changed both of their lives forever. It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place.Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one.That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives.In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it."



After the Shot Drops by Randy Ribay

Fiction: humor **Interest Level: Middle grade**

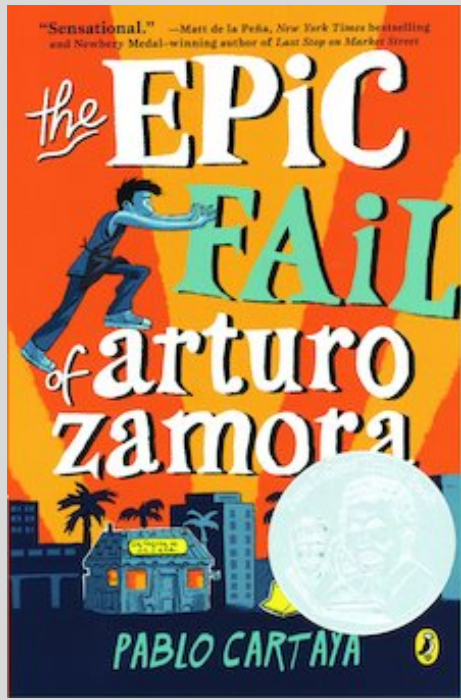
From the publisher: "From #1 New York Times bestselling author Nic Stone comes a middle-grade road-trip story through American race relations past and present, perfect for fans of Jacqueline Woodson and Jason Reynolds. How to Go on an Unplanned Road Trip with Your Grandma: Grab a Suitcase: Prepacked from the big spring break trip that got CANCELLED. Fasten Your Seatbelt: G'ma's never conventional, so this trip won't be either. Use the Green Book: G'ma's most treasured possession. It holds history, memories, and most important, the way home. What Not to Bring: A Cell Phone: Avoid contact with Dad at all costs. Even when G'ma starts acting stranger than usual.Set against the backdrop of the segregation history of the American South, take a trip with this New York Times bestseller and an eleven-year-old boy who is about to discover that the world hasn't always been a welcoming place for kids like him, and things aren't always what they seem--his G'ma included.""



Scouts by Shannon Greenland

Fiction: adventure **Interest Level: Middle grade**

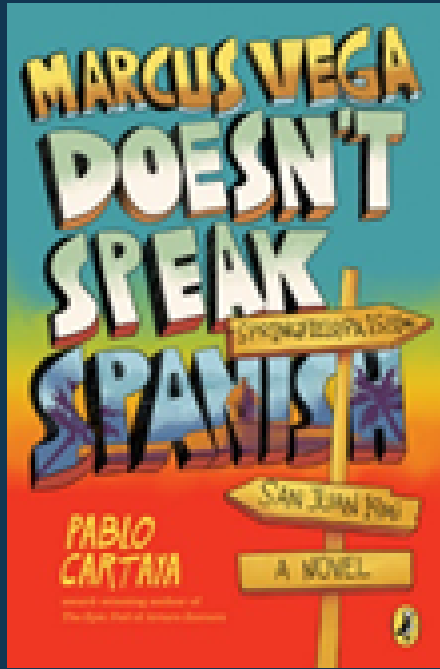
From the publisher: "Stranger Things meets The Goonies in this suspenseful yet heartwarming adventure story about kids who set out to find a crashed meteor . . . but find mystery and danger instead as their friendships begin to fracture.Annie, Beans, Rocky, and Fynn are the Scouts -- best friends who do everything together. It's 1985, and the summer before seventh grade is just beginning. The Scouts decide to secretly climb Old Man Basinger's silo to watch a meteor shower, and when one meteor seems to crash nearby, the Scouts know they have to set out on their next adventure and find it.But their fun overnight jaunt through the woods soon takes a turn for the worst when they discover a series of disturbing clues about the meteor -- and suddenly find themselves on the run from the wild, violent Mason clan. Bonds are tested when new kids join their adventure and the group's true feelings are revealed. Will the Scouts survive this journey together -- or will their unbreakable friendships prove vulnerable after all?



The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora by Pablo Cartaya

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

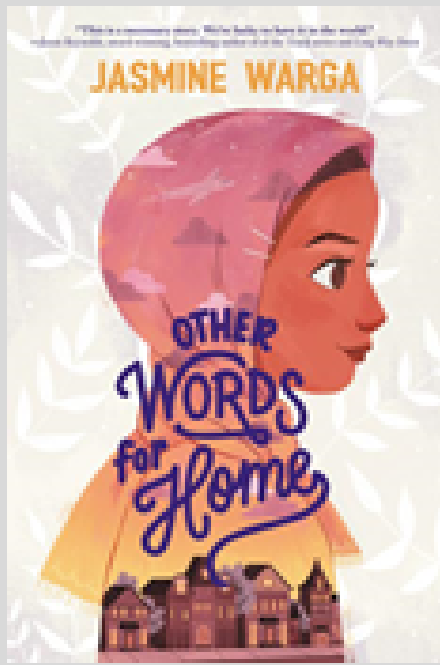
From the publisher: "Save the restaurant. Save the town. Get the girl. Make Abuela proud. Can thirteen-year-old Arturo Zamora do it all or is he in for a BIG, EPIC FAIL? For Arturo, summertime in Miami means playing basketball until dark, sipping mango smoothies, and keeping cool under banyan trees. And maybe a few shifts as junior lunchtime dishwasher at Abuela's restaurant. Maybe. But this summer also includes Carmen, a poetry enthusiast who moves into Arturo's apartment complex and turns his stomach into a deep fryer. He almost doesn't notice the smarmy land developer who rolls into town and threatens to change it. Arturo refuses to let his family and community go down without a fight, and as he schemes with Carmen, Arturo discovers the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of José Martí. Funny and poignant, The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora is the vibrant story of a family, a striking portrait of a town, and one boy's quest to save both, perfect for fans of Rita Williams-Garcia."



Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish by Pablo Cartana

Fiction: adventure **Interest Level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "One boy's search for his father leads him to Puerto Rico in this moving middle-grade novel, for fans of Ghost and See You in the Cosmos. Marcus Vega is six feet tall, 180 pounds, and the owner of a premature mustache. When you look like this and you're only in the eighth grade, you're both a threat and a target. After a fight at school leaves Marcus facing suspension, Marcus's mom decides it's time for a change of environment. She takes Marcus and his younger brother to Puerto Rico to spend a week with relatives they don't remember or have never met. But Marcus can't focus knowing that his father--who walked out of their lives ten years ago--is somewhere on the island. So begins Marcus's incredible journey, a series of misadventures that take him all over Puerto Rico in search of his elusive namesake. Marcus doesn't know if he'll ever find his father, but what he ultimately discovers changes his life. And he even learns a bit of Spanish along the way."



Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Adult crossover

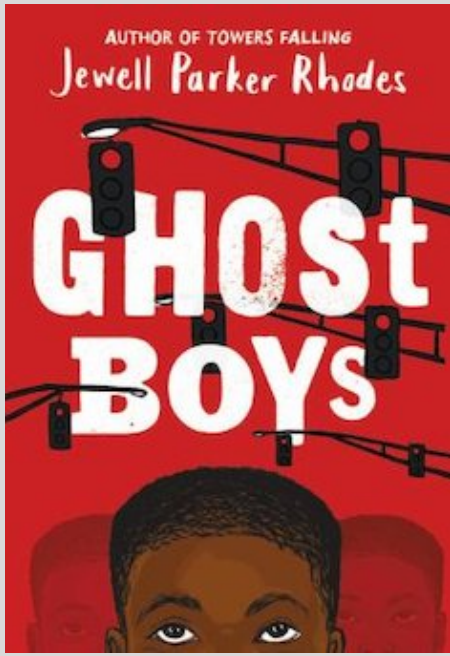
From the publisher: "A gorgeously written, hopeful middle grade novel in verse about a young girl who must leave Syria to move to the United States, perfect for fans of Jason Reynolds and Aisha Saeed. Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind, all the way across the ocean in Syria. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives. At first, everything in America seems too fast and too loud. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the US--and her new label of "Middle Eastern," an identity she's never known before. But this life also brings unexpected surprises--there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is. This lyrical, life-affirming story is about losing and finding home and, most importantly, finding yourself."



We're Not from Here by by Geoff Rodkey

Fiction: science fiction **Interest Level:** Middle grade

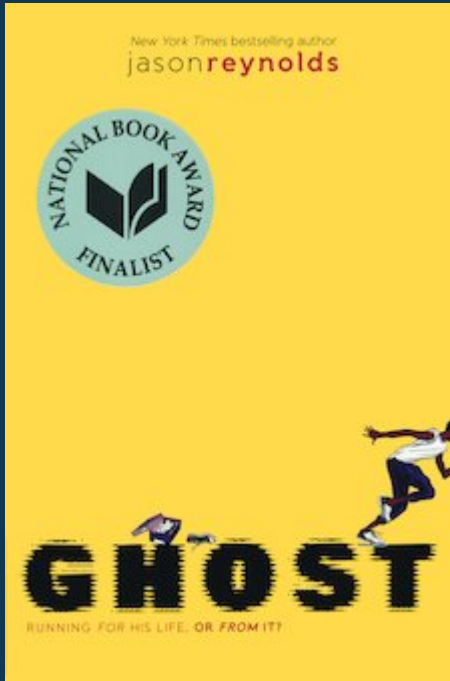
From the publisher: "Imagine being forced to move to a new planet where YOU are the alien! From the creator of the Tapper Twins, New York Times bestselling author Geoff Rodkey delivers a topical, sci-fi middle-grade novel that proves friendship and laughter can transcend even a galaxy of differences. The first time I heard about Planet Choom, we'd been on Mars for almost a year. But life on the Mars station was grim, and since Earth was no longer an option (we may have blown it up), it was time to find a new home. That's how we ended up on Choom with the Zhuri. They're very smart. They also look like giant mosquitos. But that's not why it's so hard to live here. There's a lot that the Zhuri don't like: singing (just ask my sister, Ila), comedy (one joke got me sent to the principal's office), or any kind of emotion. The biggest problem, though? The Zhuri don't like us. And if humankind is going to survive, it's up to my family to change their minds. No pressure."



Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Fiction: historical Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A heartbreaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a police officer, drawing connections through history, from award-winning author Jewell Parker Rhodes.Only the living can make the world better. Live and make it better.Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing.Soon Jerome meets another ghost: Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey towards recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who grapples with her father's actions.Once again Jewell Parker Rhodes deftly weaves historical and socio-political layers into a gripping and poignant story about how children and families face the complexities of today's world, and how one boy grows to understand American blackness in the aftermath of his own death."



Ghost by Jason Reynolds

Fiction: sports (track), realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

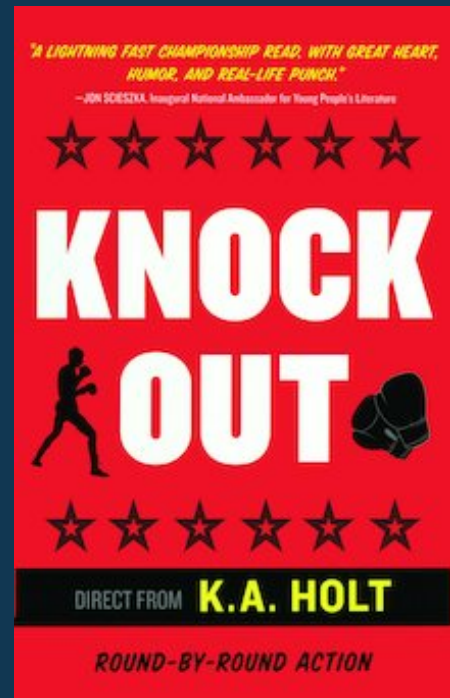
From the publisher: "Ghost wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle school track team, but his past is slowing him down in this first electrifying novel of a brand-new series from Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award–winning author Jason Reynolds.Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?"



Small Spaces by Ketherin Arden

Fiction: adventure, mystery Interest Level: Middle grade

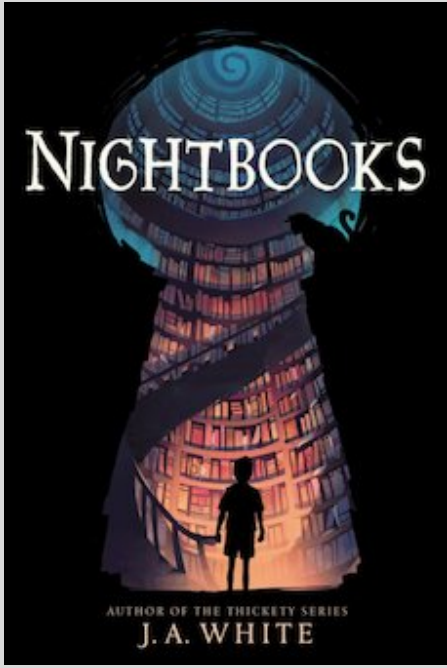
From the publisher: "After suffering a tragic loss, eleven-year-old Ollie who only finds solace in books discovers a chilling ghost story about a girl named Beth, the two brothers who loved her, and a peculiar deal made with "the smiling man"—a sinister specter who grants your most tightly held wish, but only for the ultimate price. Captivated by the tale, Ollie begins to wonder if the smiling man might be real when she stumbles upon the graves of the very people she's been reading about on a school trip to a nearby farm. Then, later, when her school bus breaks down on the ride home, the strange bus driver tells Ollie and her classmates: "Best get moving. At nightfall they'll come for the rest of you." Nightfall is, indeed, fast descending when Ollie's previously broken digital wristwatch begins a startling countdown and delivers a terrifying message: RUN. Only Ollie and two of her classmates heed these warnings. As the trio head out into the woods--bordered by a field of scarecrows that seem to be watching them--the bus driver has just one final piece of advice for Ollie and her friends: "Avoid large places. Keep to small." And with that, a deliciously creepy and hair-raising adventure begins."



Knockout by K.A. Holt

Fiction, Poetry: novels in verse, sports Interest Level: Middle grade

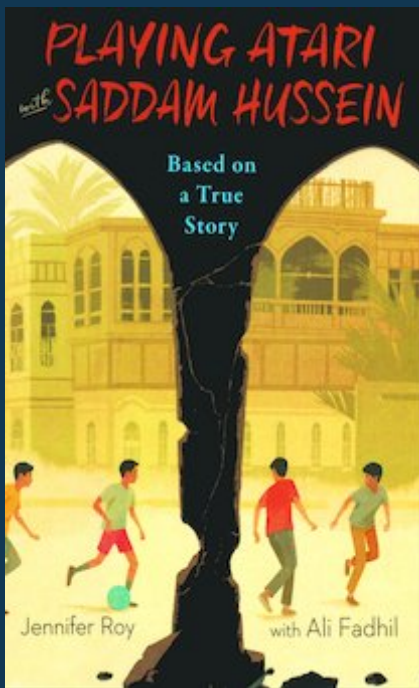
From the publisher: "Levi just wants to be treated like a typical kid. As a baby, he had a serious disease that caused him respiratory issues. He's fine now, but his mom and overprotective brother still think of him as damaged, and his schoolmates see him as the same class clown he's always been. He feels stuck. So when his dad—divorced from his mom—suggests he take up boxing, he falls in love with the sport. And when he finds out about a school with a killer boxing team and a free-study curriculum, it feels like he's found a ticket to a new Levi. But how can he tell his mom about boxing? And how can he convince his family to set him free?"



Nightbooks by J.A. White

Fiction: horror Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A boy is imprisoned by a witch and must tell her a new scary story each night to stay alive. This thrilling contemporary fantasy from J. A. White, the acclaimed author of the Thickety series, brings to life the magic and craft of storytelling.Alex's original hair-raising tales are the only thing keeping the witch Natacha happy, but soon he'll run out of pages to read from and be trapped forever. He's loved scary stories his whole life, and he knows most don't have a happily ever after. Now that Alex is trapped in a true terrifying tale, he's desperate for a different ending—and a way out of this twisted place.This modern spin on the Scheherazade story is perfect for fans of Coraline and A Tale Dark and Grimm. With interwoven tips on writing with suspense, adding in plot twists, hooks, interior logic, and dealing with writer's block, this is the ideal book for budding writers and all readers of delightfully just-dark-enough tales."



Playing Atari with Saddam Hussein: Based on a True Story by Jennifer Roy with Ali Fadhil

Fiction: historical, war stories Interest Level: Middle grade

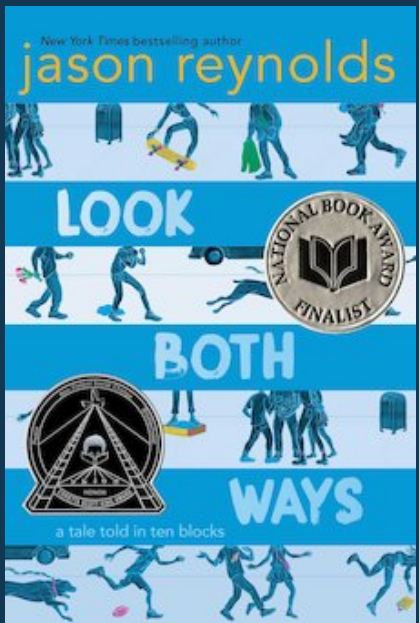
From the publisher: "At the start of 1991, eleven-year-old Ali Fadhil was consumed by his love for soccer, video games, and American television shows. Then, on January 17, Iraq's dictator Saddam Hussein went to war with thirty-four nations led by the United States. Over the next forty-three days, Ali and his family survived bombings, food shortages, and constant fear. Ali and his brothers played soccer on the abandoned streets of their Basra neighborhood, wondering when or if their medic father would return from the war front. Cinematic, accessible, and timely, this is the story of one ordinary kid's view of life during war."



Spirit Hunters by Ellen Oh

Graphic Nonfiction: mystery, horror Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "We Need Diverse Books founder Ellen Oh returns with Spirit Hunters, a high-stakes middle grade mystery series about Harper Raine, the new seventh grader in town who must face down the dangerous ghosts haunting her younger brother.A riveting ghost story and captivating adventure, this tale will have you guessing at every turn!Harper doesn't trust her new home from the moment she steps inside, and the rumors are that the Raine family's new house is haunted. Harper isn't sure she believes those rumors, until her younger brother, Michael, starts acting strangely.The whole atmosphere gives Harper a sense of déjà vu, but she can't remember why. She knows that the memories she's blocking will help make sense of her brother's behavior and the strange and threatening sensations she feels in this house, but will she be able to put the pieces together in time?"



Look Both Ways by Jennifer Roy with Ali Fadhil

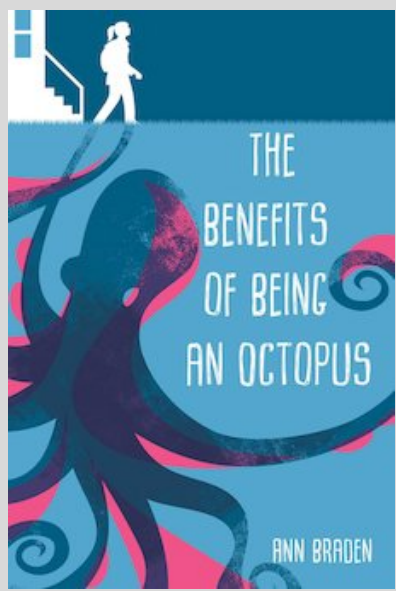
Short stories, fiction: humor Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From National Book Award finalist and #1 New York Times bestselling author Jason Reynolds comes a novel told in ten blocks, showing all the different directions kids' walks home can take."

This story was going to begin like all the best stories. With a school bus falling from the sky. But no one saw it happen. They were all too busy—

Talking about boogers.
Stealing pocket change.
Skateboarding.
Wiping out.
Braving up. E
xecuting complicated handshakes.
Planning an escape.
Making jokes.
Lotioning up.
Finding comfort.
But mostly, too busy walking home.

Jason Reynolds conjures ten tales (one per block) about what happens after the dismissal bell rings, and brilliantly weaves them into one wickedly funny, piercingly poignant look at the detours we face on the walk home, and in life."



The Benefits of Being an Octopus by Ann Braden

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "Some people can do their homework. Some people get to have crushes on boys. Some people have other things they've got to do. Seventh-grader Zoey has her hands full as she takes care of her much younger siblings after school every day while her mom works her shift at the pizza parlor. Not that her mom seems to appreciate it. At least there's Lenny, her mom's boyfriend—they all get to live in his nice, clean trailer. At school, Zoey tries to stay under the radar. Her only friend Fuchsia has her own issues, and since they're in an entirely different world than the rich kids, it's best if no one notices them. Zoey thinks how much easier everything would be if she were an octopus: eight arms to do eight things at once. Incredible camouflage ability and steady, unblinking vision. Powerful protective defenses. Unfortunately, she's not totally invisible, and one of her teachers forces her to join the debate club. Even though Zoey resists participating, debate ultimately leads her to see things in a new way: her mom's relationship with Lenny, Fuchsia's situation, and her own place in this town of people who think they're better than her. Can Zoey find the courage to speak up, even if it means risking the most stable home she's ever had? This moving debut novel explores the cultural divides around class and the gun debate through the eyes of one girl, living on the edges of society, trying to find her way forward."



The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise by Dan Gemeinhart

Fiction: adventure **Interest level:** middle grade

From the publisher: "Sometimes a story comes along that just plain makes you want to hug the world. The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise is Dan Gemeinhart's finest book yet -- and that's saying something. Your heart needs this joyful miracle of a book. --Katherine Applegate, acclaimed author of The One and Only Ivan and Wishtree A 2020 ILA Teachers' Choice A 2019 Parents' Choice Award Gold Medal Winner Winner of the 2019 CYBILS Award for Middle Grade Fiction An Amazon Top 20 Children's Book of 2019 A Junior Library Guild Selection Five years. That's how long Coyote and her dad, Rodeo, have lived on the road in an old school bus, criss-crossing the nation. It's also how long ago Coyote lost her mom and two sisters in a car crash. Coyote hasn't been home in all that time, but when she learns that the park in her old neighborhood is being demolished--the very same park where she, her mom, and her sisters buried a treasured memory box--she devises an elaborate plan to get her dad to drive 3,600 miles back to Washington state in four days...without him realizing it. Along the way, they'll pick up a strange crew of misfit travelers. Lester has a lady love to meet. Salvador and his mom are looking to start over. Val needs a safe place to be herself. And then there's Gladys... Over the course of thousands of miles, Coyote will learn that going home can sometimes be the hardest journey of all...but that with friends by her side, she just might be able to turn her "once upon a time" into a "happily ever after."



The Unteachables by Gordon Korman

Fiction: humor **Interest level:** middle grade

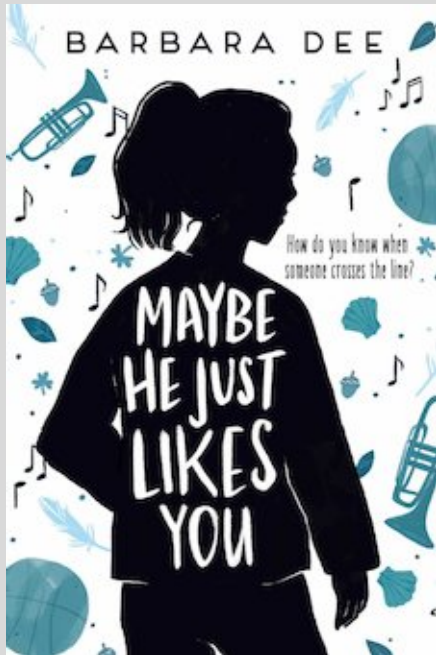
From the publisher: "A hilarious new middle grade novel from beloved and bestselling author Gordon Korman about what happens when the worst class of kids in school is paired with the worst teacher--perfect for fans of Ms. Bixby's Last Day. This middle grade novel is an excellent choice for tween readers in grades 5 to 6, especially during homeschooling. It's a fun way to keep your child entertained and engaged while not in the classroom. The Unteachables are a notorious class of misfits, delinquents, and academic train wrecks. Like Aldo, with anger management issues; Parker, who can't read; Kiana, who doesn't even belong in the class--or any class; and Elaine (rhymes with pain). The Unteachables have been removed from the student body and isolated in room 117. Their teacher is Mr. Zachary Kermit, the most burned-out teacher in all of Greenwich. He was once a rising star, but his career was shattered by a cheating scandal that still haunts him. After years of phoning it in, he is finally one year away from early retirement. But the superintendent has his own plans to torpedo that idea--and it involves assigning Mr. Kermit to the Unteachables. The Unteachables never thought they'd find a teacher who had a worse attitude than they did. And Mr. Kermit never thought he would actually care about teaching again. Over the course of a school year, though, room 117 will experience mayhem, destruction--and maybe even a shot at redemption."



The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani

Fiction: realistic, historical **Interest Level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "In the vein of *Inside Out* and *Back Again* and *The War That Saved My Life* comes a poignant, personal, and hopeful tale of India's partition, and of one girl's journey to find a new home in a divided country. It's 1947, and India, newly independent of British rule, has been separated into two countries: Pakistan and India. The divide has created much tension between Hindus and Muslims, and hundreds of thousands are killed crossing borders. Half-Muslim, half-Hindu twelve-year-old Nisha doesn't know where she belongs, or what her country is anymore. When Papa decides it's too dangerous to stay in what is now Pakistan, Nisha and her family become refugees and embark first by train but later on foot to reach her new home. The journey is long, difficult, and dangerous, and after losing her mother as a baby, Nisha can't imagine losing her homeland, too. But even if her country has been ripped apart, Nisha still believes in the possibility of putting herself back together. Told through Nisha's letters to her mother, *The Night Diary* is a heartfelt story of one girl's search for home, for her own identity...and for a hopeful future."



Maybe He Just Likes You by Barbara Dee

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** middle grade

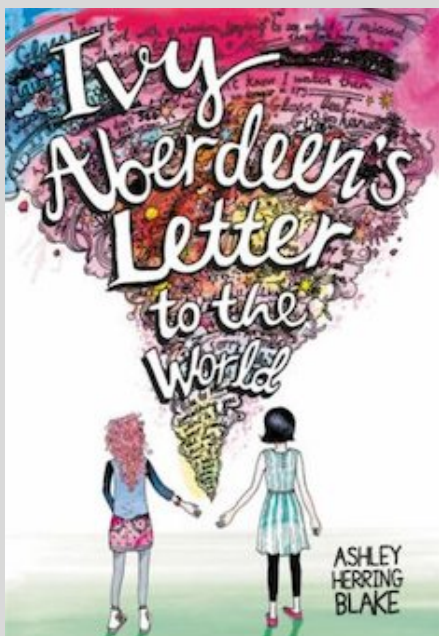
From the publisher: "Barbara Dee explores the subject of #MeToo for the middle grade audience in this heart-wrenching—and ultimately uplifting—novel about experiencing harassment and unwanted attention from classmates. For seventh-grader Mila, it starts with some boys giving her an unwanted hug on the school blacktop. A few days later, at recess, one of the boys (and fellow trumpet player) Callum tells Mila it's his birthday, and asks her for a "birthday hug." He's just being friendly, isn't he? And how can she say no? But Callum's hug lasts a few seconds too long, and feels...weird. According to her friend, Zara, Mila is being immature and overreacting. Doesn't she know what flirting looks like? But the boys don't leave Mila alone. On the bus. In the halls. During band practice—the one place Mila could always escape. It doesn't feel like flirting—so what is it? Thanks to a chance meeting, Mila begins to find solace in a new place: karate class. Slowly, with the help of a fellow classmate, Mila learns how to stand her ground and how to respect others—and herself. From the author of *Everything I Know About You*, *Halfway Normal*, and *Star-Crossed* comes this timely story of a middle school girl standing up and finding her voice."



Slider by Pete Hautman

Fiction: realistic, humor **Interest Level:** middle grade

From the publisher: "Competitive eating vies with family expectations in a funny, heartfelt novel for middle-grade readers by National Book Award winner Pete Hautman. David can eat an entire sixteen-inch pepperoni pizza in four minutes and thirty-six seconds. Not bad. But he knows he can do better. In fact, he'll have to do better: he's going to compete in the Super Pigorino Bowl, the world's greatest pizza-eating contest, and he has to win it, because he borrowed his mom's credit card and accidentally spent \$2,000 on it. So he really needs that prize money. Like, yesterday. As if training to be a competitive eater weren't enough, he's also got to keep an eye on his little brother, Mal (who, if the family believed in labels, would be labeled autistic, but they don't, so they just label him Mal). And don't even get started on the new weirdness going on between his two best friends, Cyn and HeyMan. Master talent Pete Hautman has cooked up a rich narrative shot through with equal parts humor and tenderness, and the result is a middle-grade novel too delicious to put down."



Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World by Ashley Herring Blake

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** middle grade

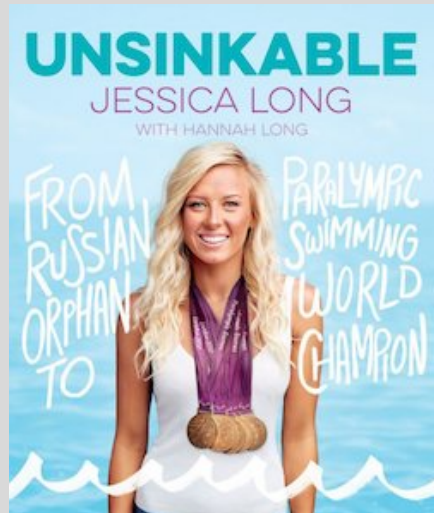
From the publisher: "In the wake of a destructive tornado, one girl develops feelings for another in this stunning, tender novel about emerging identity, perfect for fans of *The Thing About Jellyfish*. When a tornado rips through town, twelve-year-old Ivy Aberdeen's house is destroyed and her family of five is displaced. Ivy feels invisible and ignored in the aftermath of the storm--and what's worse, her notebook filled with secret drawings of girls holding hands has gone missing. Mysteriously, Ivy's drawings begin to reappear in her locker with notes from someone telling her to open up about her identity. Ivy thinks--and hopes--that this someone might be her classmate, another girl for whom Ivy has begun to develop a crush. Will Ivy find the strength and courage to follow her true feelings? *Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World* exquisitely enriches the rare category of female middle-grade characters who like girls--and children's literature at large."



In the Shadow of the Sun by Anne Sibley O'Brien

Fiction: adventure **Interest Level:** middle grade

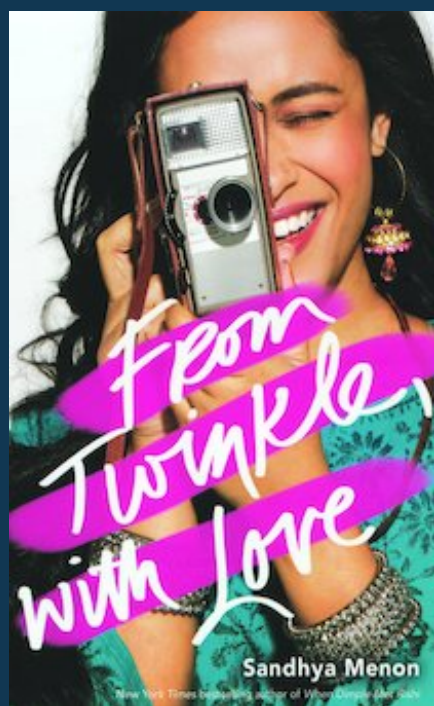
From the publisher: "North Korea is known as the most repressive country on Earth, with a dictatorial leader, a starving population, and harsh punishment for rebellion. Not the best place for a family vacation. Yet that's exactly where Mia Andrews finds herself, on a tour with her aid-worker father and fractious older brother, Simon. Mia was adopted from South Korea as a baby, and the trip raises tough questions about where she really belongs. Then her dad is arrested for spying, just as forbidden photographs of North Korean slave-labor camps fall into Mia's hands. The only way to save Dad: get the pictures out of the country. Thus Mia and Simon set off on a harrowing journey to the border, without food, money, or shelter, in a land where anyone who sees them might turn them in, and getting caught could mean prison -- or worse. An exciting adventure that offers a rare glimpse into a compelling, complicated nation, *In the Shadow of the Sun* is an unforgettable novel of courage and survival."



Unsinkable by Jessica Long

Nonfiction: memoirs and biographies **Interest Level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "The top Paralympic swimmer in the world, Jessica Long delivers an inspirational photographic memoir. Born in Siberia with fibular hemimelia, Jessica Long was adopted from a Russian orphanage at thirteen months old and has since become the second most decorated U.S. Paralympic athlete of all time. Now, Jessica shares all the moments in her life--big and small, heartbreaking and uplifting--that led to her domination in the Paralympic swimming world. This photographic memoir, filled with photographs, sidebars, quotes, and more, will thrill her fans and inspire those who are hearing her story for the first time."

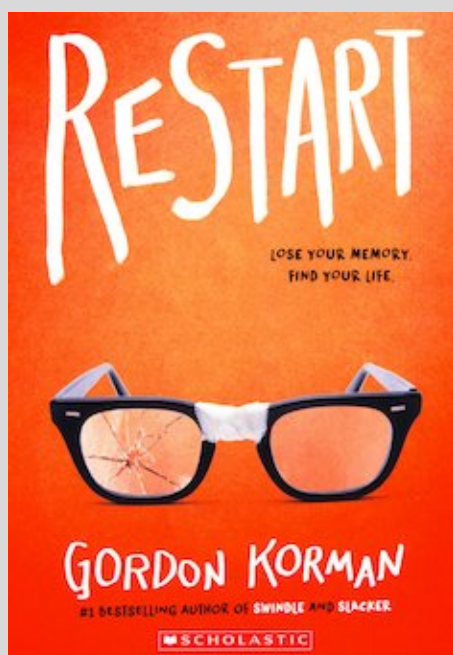


From Twinkle, with Love by Sandhya Menon

Fiction: realistic , love stories **Interest Level:** Upper Middle grade+ (grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "Aspiring filmmaker and wallflower Twinkle Mehra has stories she wants to tell and universes she wants to explore, if only the world would listen. So when fellow film geek Sahil Roy approaches her to direct a movie for the upcoming Summer Festival, Twinkle is all over it. The chance to publicly showcase her voice as a director? Dream come true. The fact that it gets her closer to her longtime crush, Neil Roy—a.k.a. Sahil's twin brother? Dream come true x 2. When mystery man "N" begins emailing her, Twinkle is sure it's Neil, finally ready to begin their happily-ever-after. The only slightly inconvenient problem is that, in the course of movie-making, she's fallen madly in love with the irresistibly adorkable Sahil. Twinkle soon realizes that resistance is futile: The romance she's got is not the one she's scripted. But will it be enough? Told through the letters Twinkle writes to her favorite female filmmakers, *From Twinkle, with Love* navigates big truths about friendship, family, and the unexpected places love can find you."

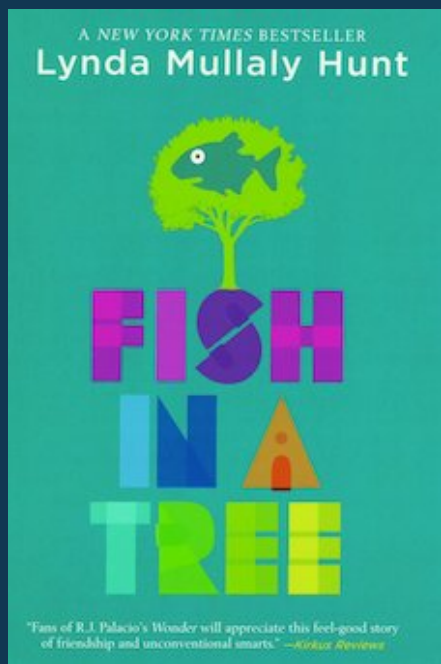
Young Adult Crossover



Restart by Gordon Korman

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

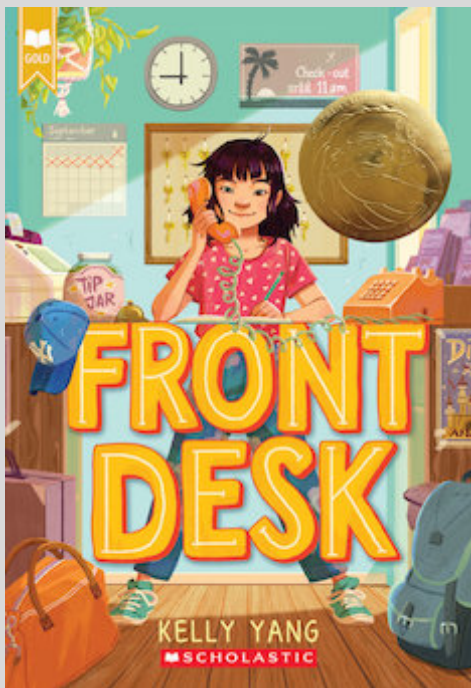
From the publisher: "Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember anything. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name. He knows he's Chase. But who is Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl in particular is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets. Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is--it's a question of who he was . . . and who he's going to be. From the #1 bestselling author of *Swindle* and *Slacker*, *Restart* is the spectacular story of a kid with a messy past who has to figure out what it means to get a clean start."



Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

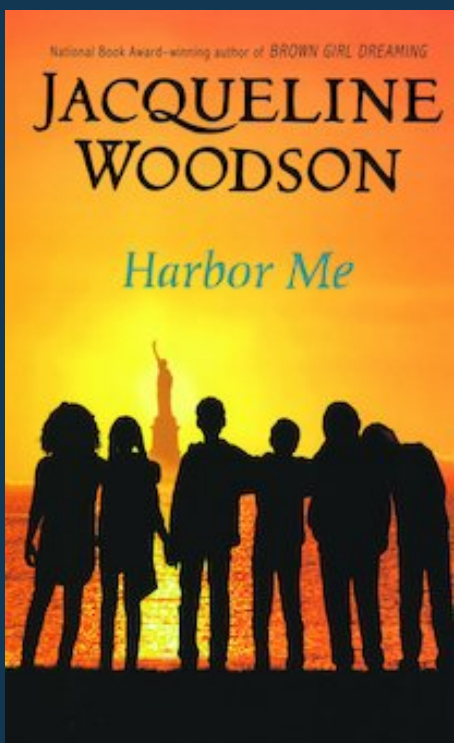
From the publisher: "Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike. The author of the beloved *One for the Murphys* gives readers an emotionally-charged, uplifting novel that will speak to anyone who's ever thought there was something wrong with them because they didn't fit in."



Front Desk by Kelly Yang

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

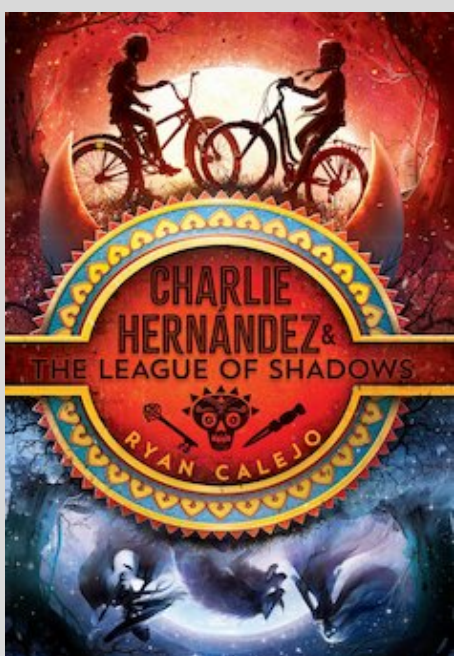
From the publisher: "Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?"



Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson

Fiction: realistic **Interest Level:** Middle grade

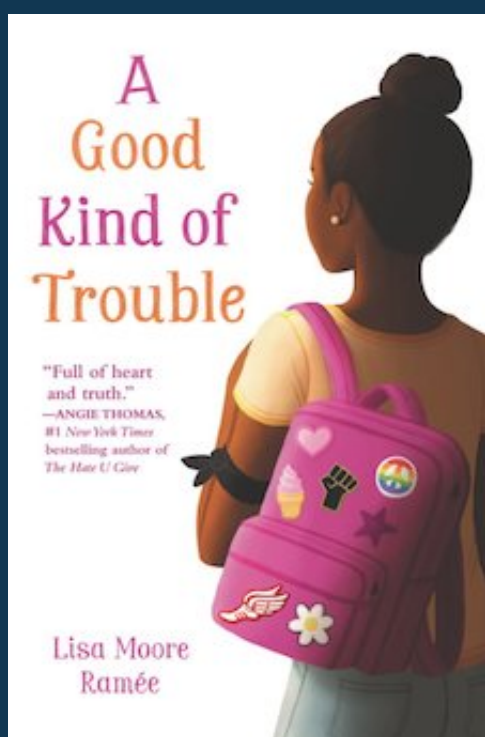
From the publisher: "Jacqueline Woodson's first middle-grade novel since National Book Award winner *Brown Girl Dreaming* celebrates the healing that can occur when a group of students share their stories. It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them--everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver and more ready for the rest of their lives."



Charlie Hernandez and the League of Shadows by Ryan Calejo

Fiction: fantasy **Interest Level:** Middle grade

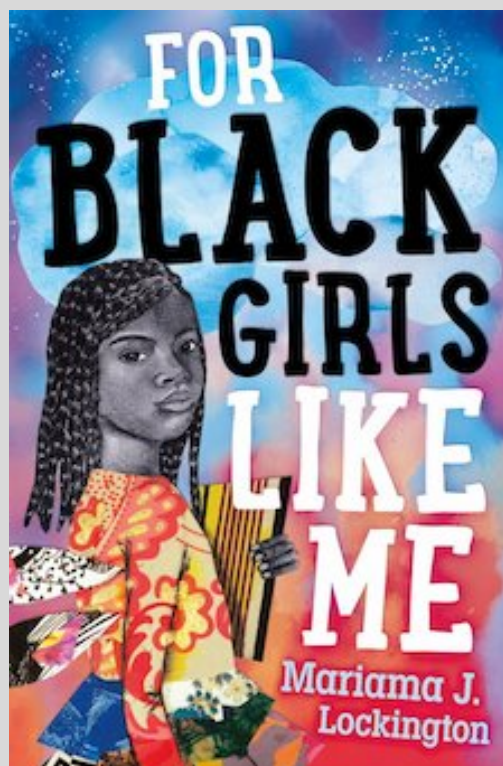
From the publisher: "The Lightning Thief meets the Story Thieves series in this middle grade fantasy inspired by Hispanic folklore, legends, and myths from the Iberian Peninsula and Central and South America. Charlie Hernández has always been proud of his Latin American heritage. He loves the culture, the art, and especially the myths. Thanks to his abuela's stories, Charlie possesses an almost encyclopedic knowledge of the monsters and ghouls who have spent the last five hundred years haunting the imaginations of children all across the Iberian Peninsula, as well as Central and South America. And even though his grandmother sometimes hinted that the tales might be more than mere myth, Charlie's always been a pragmatist. Even barely out of diapers, he knew the stories were just make-believe—nothing more than intricately woven fables meant to keep little kids from misbehaving. But when Charlie begins to experience freaky bodily manifestations—ones all too similar to those described by his grandma in his favorite legend—he is suddenly swept up in a world where the mythical beings he's spent his entire life hearing about seem to be walking straight out of the pages of Hispanic folklore and into his life. And even stranger, they seem to know more about him than he knows about himself. Soon, Charlie finds himself in the middle of an ancient battle between La Liga, a secret society of legendary mythological beings sworn to protect the Land of the Living, and La Mano Negra (a.k.a. the Black Hand), a cabal of evil spirits determined to rule mankind. With only the help of his lifelong crush, Violet Rey, and his grandmother's stories to guide him, Charlie must navigate a world where monsters and brujas rule and things he couldn't possibly imagine go bump in the night. That is, if he has any hope of discovering what's happening to him and saving his missing parents (oh, and maybe even the world). No pressure, muchacho."



A Good Kind of Trouble by Lisa Moore Ramee

Nonfiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From debut author Lisa Moore Ramée comes this funny and big-hearted debut middle grade novel about friendship, family, and standing up for what's right, perfect for fans of Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* and the novels of Renée Watson and Jason Reynolds. Twelve-year-old Shayla is allergic to trouble. All she wants to do is to follow the rules. (Oh, and she'd also like to make it through seventh grade with her best friendships intact, learn to run track, and have a cute boy see past her giant forehead.) But in junior high, it's like all the rules have changed. Now she's suddenly questioning who her best friends are and some people at school are saying she's not black enough. Wait, what? Shay's sister, Hana, is involved in Black Lives Matter, but Shay doesn't think that's for her. After experiencing a powerful protest, though, Shay decides some rules are worth breaking. She starts wearing an armband to school in support of the Black Lives movement. Soon everyone is taking sides. And she is given an ultimatum. Shay is scared to do the wrong thing (and even more scared to do the right thing), but if she doesn't face her fear, she'll be forever tripping over the next hurdle. Now that's trouble, for real."



For Black Girls Like Me by Mariama J. Lockington

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

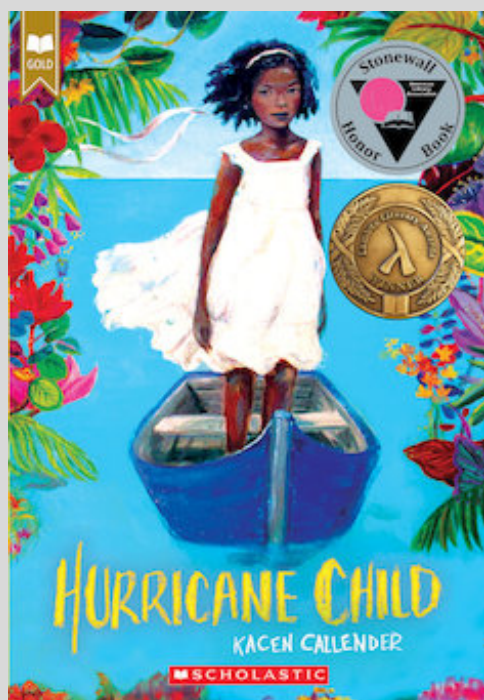
From the publisher: "In this lyrical coming-of-age story about family, sisterhood, music, race, and identity, Mariama J. Lockington draws on some of the emotional truths from her own experiences growing up with an adoptive white family. I am a girl but most days I feel like a question mark. Makeda June Kirkland is eleven years old, adopted, and black. Her parents and big sister are white, and even though she loves her family very much, Makeda often feels left out. When Makeda's family moves from Maryland to New Mexico, she leaves behind her best friend, Lena-- the only other adopted black girl she knows-- for a new life. In New Mexico, everything is different. At home, Makeda's sister is too cool to hang out with her anymore and at school, she can't seem to find one real friend. Through it all, Makeda can't help but wonder: What would it feel like to grow up with a family that looks like me? Through singing, dreaming, and writing secret messages back and forth with Lena, Makeda might just carve a small place for herself in the world. *For Black Girls Like Me* is for anyone who has ever asked themselves: How do you figure out where you are going if you don't know where you came from?"



They Call Me Guero: A Border Kid's Poems by David Bowles

Fiction, Poetry: realistic , novels in verse Interest Level: Middle grade

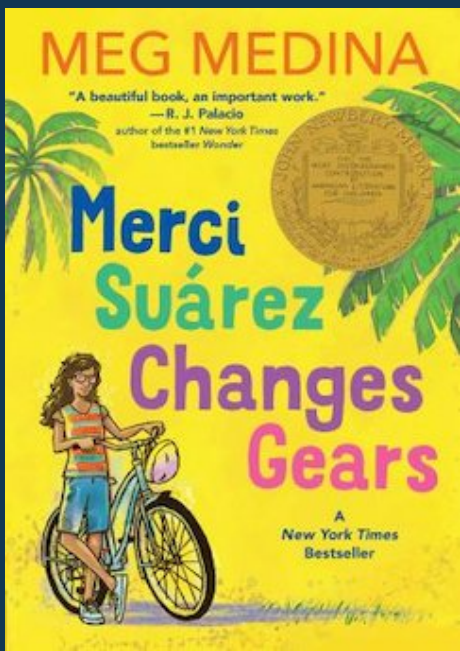
From the publisher: "Twelve-year-old Guero is Mexican American, at home with Spanish or English and on both sides of the river. He's starting 7th grade with a woke English teacher who knows how to make poetry cool. In Spanish, "Guero" is a nickname for guys with pale skin, Latino or Anglo. But make no mistake: our red-headed, freckled hero is puro mexicano, like Canelo Ivarez, the Mexican boxer. Guero is also a nerd--reader, gamer, musician--who runs with a squad of misfits like him, Los Bobbys. Sure, they get in trouble like anybody else, and like other middle-school boys, they discover girls. Watch out for Joanna She's tough as nails. But trusting in his family's traditions, his accordion and his bookworm squad, he faces seventh grade with book smarts and a big heart. Life is tough for a border kid, but G ero has figured out how to cope. He writes poetry. In Spanish, ""Guero"" is a nickname for guys with pale skin, Latino or Anglo. But make no mistake: our red-headed, freckled hero is puro mexicano, like Canelo Ivarez, the Mexican boxer. Guero is also a nerd--reader, gamer, musician--who runs with a squad of misfits like him, Los Bobbys. Sure, they get in trouble like anybody else, and like other middle-school boys, they discover girls. Watch out for Joanna She's tough as nails. But trusting in his family's traditions, his accordion and his bookworm squad, he faces seventh grade with book smarts and a big heart. Life is tough for a border kid, but Guero has figured out how to cope. He writes poetry. "



Hurricane Child by Kheryn Callender

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

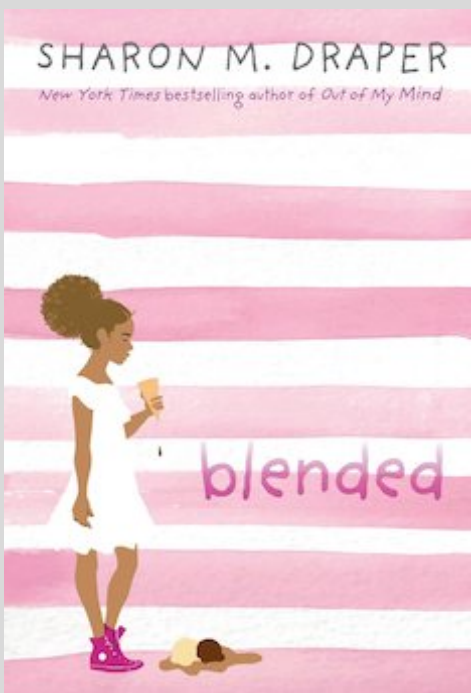
From the publisher: "Caroline Murphy is a Hurricane Child. Being born during a hurricane is unlucky, and 12-year-old Caroline has had her share of bad luck lately. She's hated and bullied by everyone in her small school on St. Thomas of the US Virgin Islands, a spirit only she can see won't stop following her, and -- worst of all -- Caroline's mother left home one day and never came back. But when a new student named Kalinda arrives, Caroline's luck begins to turn around. Kalinda, a solemn girl from Barbados with a special smile for everyone, becomes Caroline's first and only friend -- and the person for whom Caroline has begun to develop a crush. Now, Caroline must find the strength to confront her feelings for Kalinda, brave the spirit stalking her through the islands, and face the reason her mother abandoned her. Together, Caroline and Kalinda must set out in a hurricane to find Caroline's missing mother -- before Caroline loses her forever."



Merci Suárez Changes Gears by Meg Medina

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: middle grade

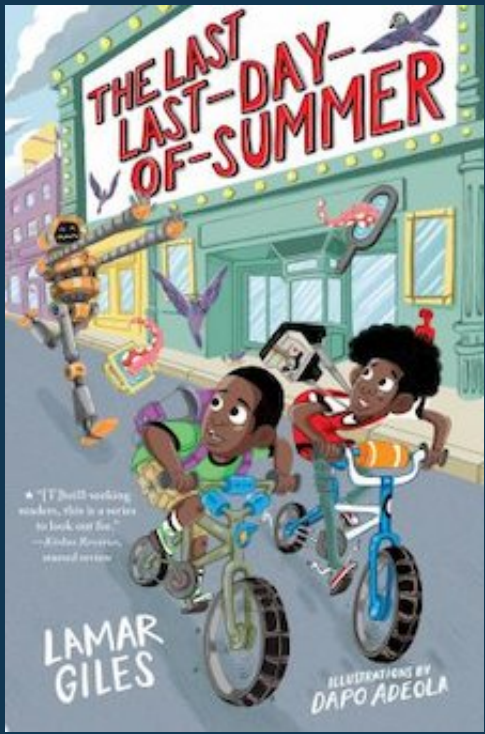
From the publisher: "Merci Suárez knew that sixth grade would be different, but she had no idea just how different. For starters, as strong and thoughtful as Merci is, she has never been completely like the other kids at her private school in Florida, because she and her older brother, Roli, are scholarship students. They don't have a big house or a fancy boat, and they have to do extra community service to make up for their free tuition. So when bossy Edna Santos sets her sights on the new boy who happens to be Merci's school-assigned Sunshine Buddy, Merci becomes the target of Edna's jealousy. Things aren't going well at home, either: Merci's grandfather and most trusted ally, Lolo, has been acting strangely lately — forgetting important things, falling from his bike, and getting angry over nothing. And Merci is left to her own worries, because no one in her family will tell her what's going on. Winner of the 2019 Newbery Medal, this coming-of-age tale by New York Times best-selling author Meg Medina gets to the heart of the confusion and constant change that defines middle school — and the steadfast connection that defines family."



Blended by Sharon Draper

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

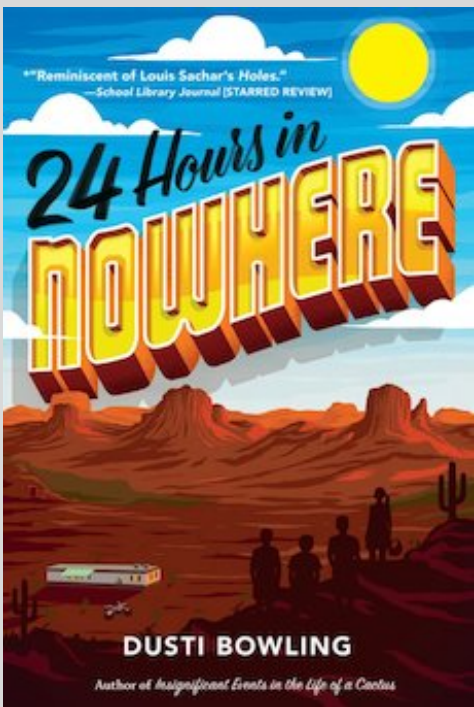
From the publisher: "Eleven-year-old Isabella's parents are divorced, so she has to switch lives every week: One week she's Isabella with her dad, his girlfriend Anastasia, and her son Darren living in a fancy house where they are one of the only black families in the neighborhood. The next week she's Izzy with her mom and her boyfriend John-Mark in a small, not-so-fancy house that she loves. Because of this, Isabella has always felt pulled between two worlds. And now that her parents are divorced, it seems their fights are even worse, and they're always about HER. Isabella feels even more stuck in the middle, split and divided between them than ever. And she's is beginning to realize that being split between Mom and Dad is more than switching houses, switching nicknames, switching backpacks: it's also about switching identities. Her dad is black, her mom is white, and strangers are always commenting: "You're so exotic!" "You look so unusual." "But what are you really?" She knows what they're really saying: "You don't look like your parents." "You're different." "What race are you really?" And when her parents, who both get engaged at the same time, get in their biggest fight ever, Isabella doesn't just feel divided, she feels ripped in two. What does it mean to be half white or half black? To belong to half mom and half dad? And if you're only seen as half of this and half of that, how can you ever feel whole? It seems like nothing can bring Isabella's family together again—until the worst happens. Isabella and Darren are stopped by the police. A cell phone is mistaken for a gun. And shots are fired."



The Last Day of Summer by Lamar Giles

Fiction: adventure Interest Level: Middle grade

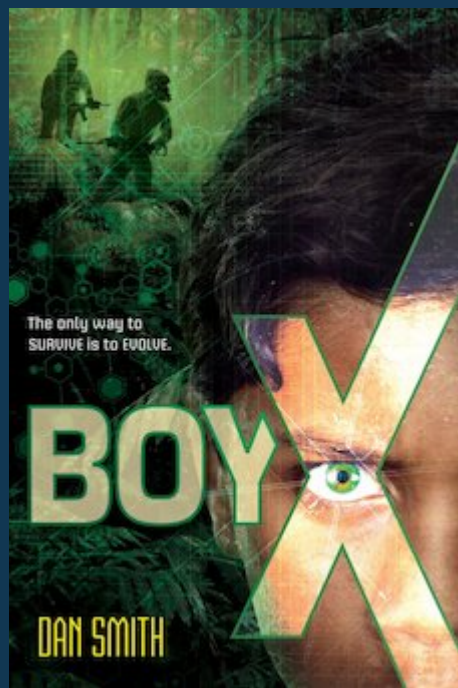
From the publisher: "The Hardy Boys meets The Phantom Tollbooth , in the new century! When two adventurous cousins accidentally extend the last day of summer by freezing time, they find the secrets hidden between the unmoving seconds, minutes, and hours are not the endless fun they expected. Otto and Sheed are the local sleuths in their zany Virginia town, masters of unraveling mischief using their unmatched powers of deduction. And as the summer winds down and the first day of school looms, the boys are craving just a little bit more time for fun, even as they bicker over what kind of fun they want to have. That is, until a mysterious man appears with a camera that literally freezes time. Now, with the help of some very strange people and even stranger creatures, Otto and Sheed will have to put aside their differences to save their town--and each other--before time stops for good."



24 Hours in Nowhere by Dusti Bowling

Fiction: humor, adventure Interest Level: Middle grade

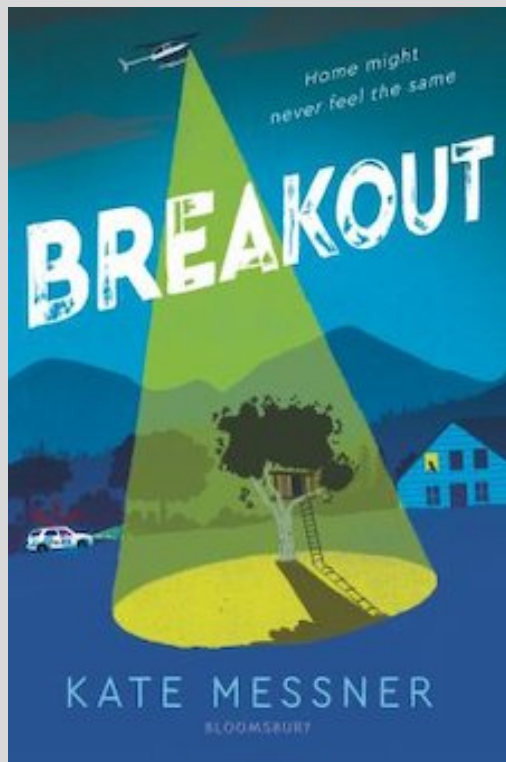
From the publisher: "Welcome to Nowhere, Arizona, the least livable town in the United States. For Gus, a bright 13-year-old with dreams of getting out and going to college, life there is made even worse by Bo Taylor, Nowhere's biggest, baddest bully. When Bo tries to force Gus to eat a dangerously spiny cactus, Rossi Scott, one of the best racers in Nowhere, comes to his rescue--but in return she has to give Bo her prized dirt bike. Determined to buy it back, Gus agrees to go searching for gold in Dead Frenchman Mine, joined by his old friend Jessie, Rossi, and even Bo's sidekick, Matthew. As they race against the clock hunting for treasure, narrowly surviving everything from cave-ins to mountain lions, they bond over shared stories of how hard life in Nowhere is--and they realize this adventure just may be their way out."



Boy X by Dan Smith

Fiction: adventure, science fiction **Interest Level:** middle grade

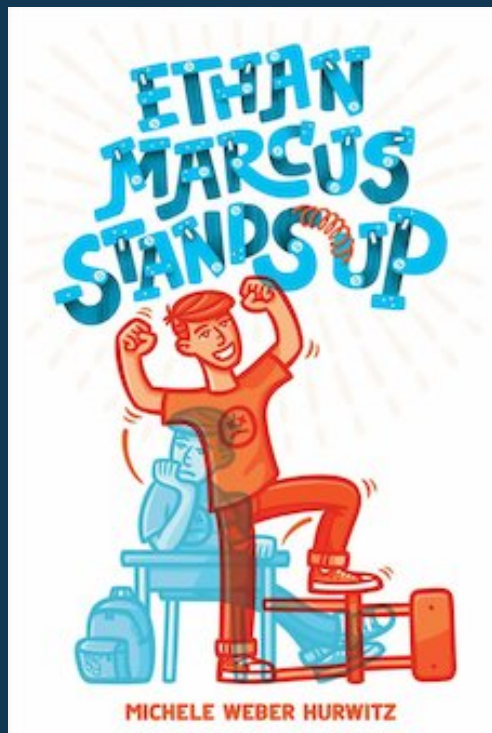
From the publisher: "His mother is a scientist.His dad was a soldier.Ash is something new altogether.Kidnapped, Ash McCarthy wakes up on a remote tropical island. Why is he there? What is this medical facility around him? Most importantly, what's happening inside of him?Ash needs answers. He has twenty-four hours to get them.To escape, Ash must risk his life. But what's more dangerous: the jungle, his captors, or the mysterious chemical injected into his veins?"



Breakout by Kate Messner

Fiction: mystery **Interest Level:** middle grade

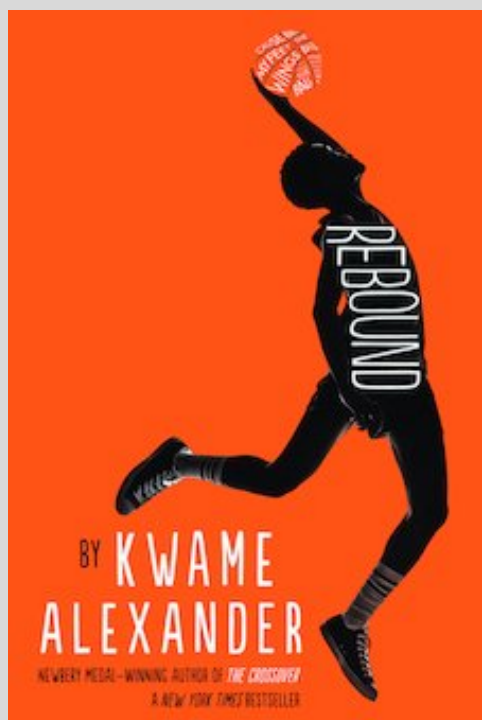
From the publisher: "Told in letters, poems, text messages, news stories, and comics--a series of documents Nora collects for the Wolf Creek Community Time Capsule Project --Breakout is a thrilling story that will leave readers thinking about who's really welcome in the places we call home. Nora Tucker is looking forward to summer vacation in Wolf Creek--two months of swimming, popsicles, and brushing up on her journalism skills for the school paper. But when two inmates break out of the town's maximum security prison, everything changes. Doors are locked, helicopters fly over the woods, and police patrol the school grounds. Worst of all, everyone is on edge, and fear brings out the worst in some people Nora has known her whole life. Even if the inmates are caught, she worries that home might never feel the same."



Ethan Marcus Stands Up by Michele Weber Hurwitz

Fiction: humor **Interest level:** Middle grade

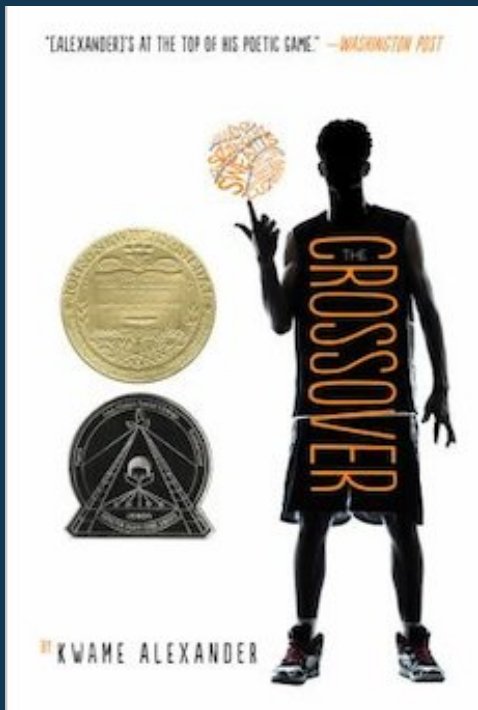
From the publisher: "Multiple points of view lead to multiple theories about what really happened after one kid turns a punishment into a protest in this hilarious novel from Michele Weber Hurwitz.Perennial good kid Ethan Marcus has just done the unthinkable: refuse to stay seated during class. He's not causing a riot; he's not wandering around; he's just sick of sitting. But the rules aren't designed for Ethan, and so he is sent to the principal's office.When Ethan's sentence results in a Reflection Day—McNutt Middle School's answer to detention—his faculty advisor suggests that Ethan channel the energy that caused his “transgression” by entering the school's Invention Day Competition. Ethan is not exactly Mark Zuckerberg, so he doubts his ability to make anything competition-worthy. That's the department of his slightly older sister Erin. But as Ethan and his buddy Brian get into the assignment, they realize they might actually have something.Enter Romanov, the resident tech whiz, who refuses to give them tips. But Erin is furious at her formally slacker—now traitor—brother. Meanwhile, Erin's friend Zoe is steering clear of Erin's drama after realizing that she may be crushing on Ethan. Then there's Brian who has bigger things to worry about, and finally loner kid Wesley, who may know more than others realize...Told in the perspectives of multiple students, discover what really happened on the day that one kid decided to take a stand against sitting down."



Rebound by Kwame Alexander

Fiction, poetry: novels in verse, sports **Interest Level:** Middle grade

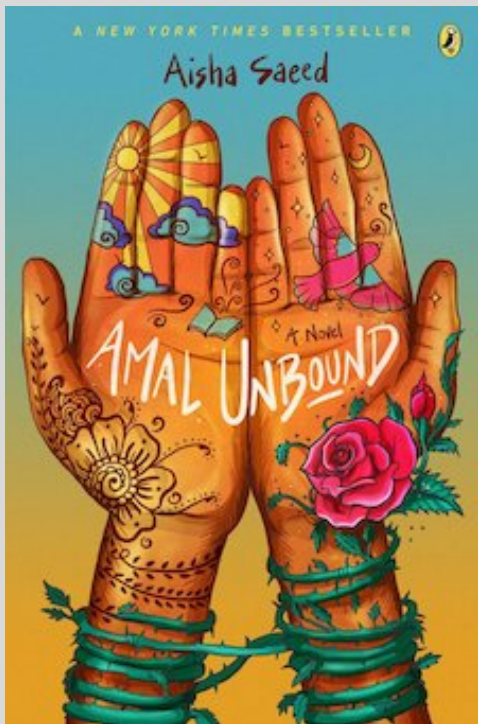
From the publisher: "From the New York Times bestselling author Kwame Alexander comes Rebound , a dynamic novel in verse and companion to his Newbery Award-winner, The Crossover, illustrated with striking graphic novel panels. Before Josh and Jordan Bell were streaking up and down the court, their father was learning his own moves. In this prequel to Newbery Medal winner The Crossover, Chuck Bell takes center stage, as readers get a glimpse of his childhood and how he became the jazz music worshiping, basketball star his sons look up to. A novel in verse with all the impact and rhythm readers have come to expect from Kwame Alexander, Rebound will go back in time to visit the childhood of Chuck "Da Man" Bell during one pivotal summer when young Charlie is sent to stay with his grandparents where he discovers basketball and learns more about his family's past."



The Crossover by Kwame Alexander

Fiction, Poetry: sports, novels in verse Interest level: Middle grade

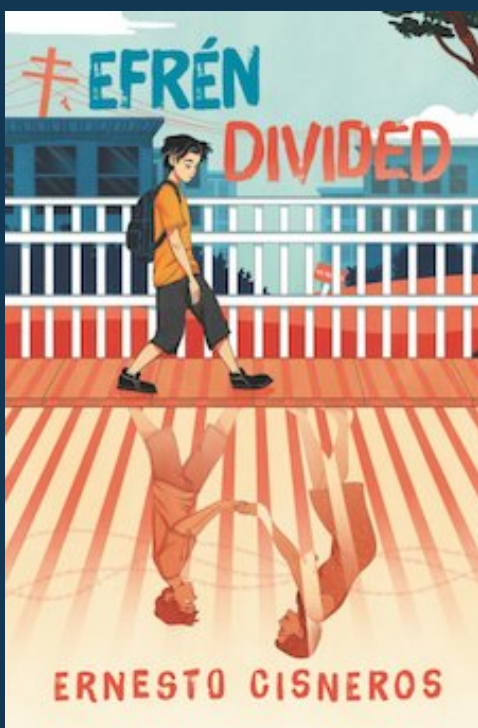
From the publisher: " 'With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. 'Cuz tonight I'm delivering,' raps twelve-year-old Josh Bell. Thanks to their dad, he and his twin brother, Jordan, are kings on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood--he's got mad beats, too, which help him find his rhythm when it's all on the line. As their winning season unfolds, things begin to change. When Jordan meets a girl, the twins' bond unravels. Told in dynamic verse, this fast and furious middle grade novel that started it all absolutely bounces with rhythm and bursts with heart."



Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

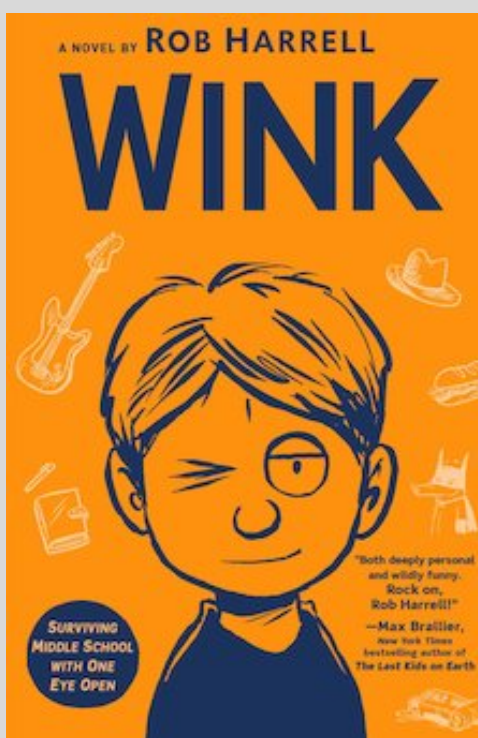
From the publisher: "Amal has big dreams, until a nightmarish encounter . . . Twelve-year-old Amal's dream of becoming a teacher one day is dashed in an instant when she accidentally insults a member of her Pakistani village's ruling family. As punishment for her behavior, she is forced to leave her heartbroken family behind and go work at their estate. Amal is distraught but has faced setbacks before. So she summons her courage and begins navigating the complex rules of life as a servant, with all its attendant jealousies and pecking-order woes. Most troubling, though, is Amal's increasing awareness of the deadly measures the Khan family will go to in order to stay in control. It's clear that their hold over her village will never loosen as long as everyone is too afraid to challenge them--so if Amal is to have any chance of ensuring her loved ones' safety and winning back her freedom, she must find a way to work with the other servants to make it happen."



Efrén Divided by Ernesto Cisneros

Fiction: realistic Interest level: Middle grade

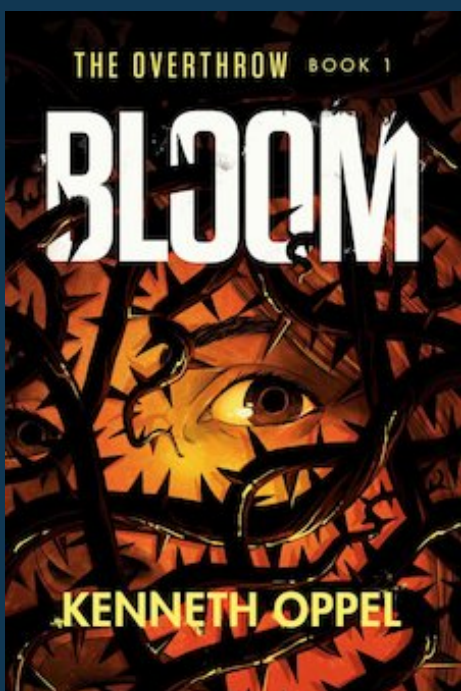
From the publisher: "Efrén Nava's Amá is his Superwoman--or Soperwoman, named after the delicious Mexican sopos his mother often prepares. Both Amá and Apá work hard all day to provide for the family, making sure Efrén and his younger siblings Max and Mía feel safe and loved. But Efrén worries about his parents; although he's American-born, his parents are undocumented. His worst nightmare comes true one day when Amá doesn't return from work and is deported across the border to Tijuana, México. Now more than ever, Efrén must channel his inner Soperboy to help take care of and try to reunite his family."



Wink by Rob Harrell

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

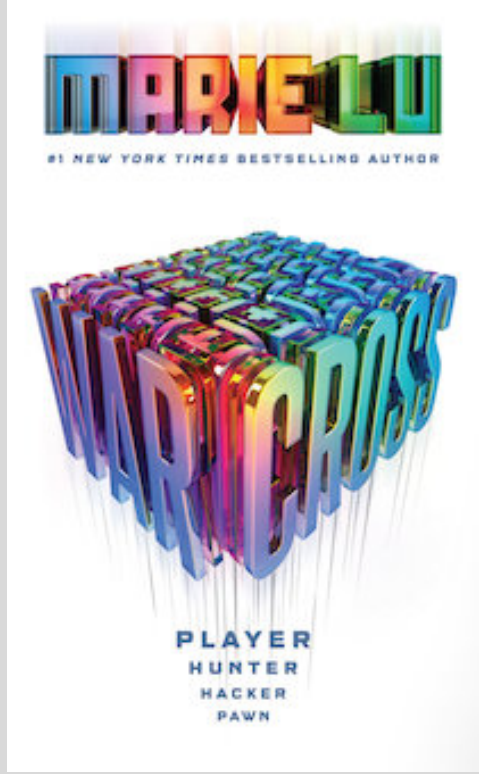
From the publisher: "A hilarious and heartwrenching story about surviving middle school--and an unthinkable diagnosis--while embracing life's weirdness. Ross Maloy just wants to be a normal seventh grader. He doesn't want to lose his hair, or wear a weird hat, or deal with the disappearing friends who don't know what to say to "the cancer kid." But with his recent diagnosis of a rare eye cancer, blending in is off the table. Based on Rob Harrell's real life experience, and packed with comic panels and spot art, this incredibly personal and poignant novel is an unforgettable, heartbreaking, hilarious, and uplifting story of survival and finding the music, magic, and laughter in life's weirdness."



Bloom by Kenneth Oppel

Fiction: Adventure, science fiction Interest level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "The invasion begins--but not as you'd expect. It begins with rain. Rain that carries seeds. Seeds that sprout--overnight, everywhere. These new plants take over crop fields, twine up houses, and burrow below streets. They bloom--and release toxic pollens. They bloom--and form Venus flytrap-like pods that swallow animals and people. They bloom--everywhere, unstoppable. Or are they? Three kids on a remote island seem immune to the toxic plants. Anaya, Petra, Seth. They each have strange allergies--and yet not to these plants. What's their secret? Can they somehow be the key to beating back this invasion? They'd better figure it out fast, because it's starting to rain again...."



Warcross by Marie Lu

Fiction: science fiction **Interest level:** High school/young adult crossover (grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "From the publisher: "From #1 New York Times bestselling author Marie Lu--when a game called Warcross takes the world by storm, one girl hacks her way into its dangerous depths. For the millions who log in every day, Warcross isn't just a game--it's a way of life. The obsession started ten years ago and its fan base now spans the globe, some eager to escape from reality and others hoping to make a profit. Struggling to make ends meet, teenage hacker Emika Chen works as a bounty hunter, tracking down Warcross players who bet on the game illegally. But the bounty-hunting world is a competitive one, and survival has not been easy. To make some quick cash, Emika takes a risk and hacks into the opening game of the international Warcross Championships--only to accidentally glitch herself into the action and become an overnight sensation. Convinced she's going to be arrested, Emika is shocked when instead she gets a call from the game's creator, the elusive young billionaire Hideo Tanaka, with an irresistible offer. He needs a spy on the inside of this year's tournament in order to uncover a security problem . . . and he wants Emika for the job. With no time to lose, Emika's whisked off to Tokyo and thrust into a world of fame and fortune that she's only dreamed of. But soon her investigation uncovers a sinister plot, with major consequences for the entire Warcross empire. In this sci-fi thriller, #1 New York Times bestselling author Marie Lu conjures an immersive, exhilarating world where choosing who to trust may be the biggest gamble of all."

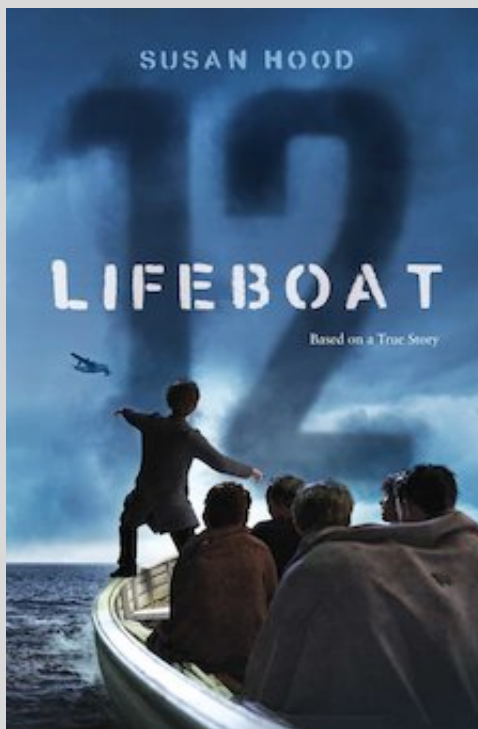
Young Adult Crossover



Hello, Universe by Erin Entrada Kelly

Fiction: realistic **Interest level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "In one day, four lives weave together in unexpected ways. Virgil Salinas is shy and kindhearted and feels out of place in his crazy-about-sports family. Valencia Somerset, who is deaf, is smart, brave, and secretly lonely, and she loves everything about nature. Kaori Tanaka is a self-proclaimed psychic, whose little sister, Gen, is always following her around. And Chet Bullens wishes the weird kids would just stop being so different so he can concentrate on basketball.They aren't friends, at least not until Chet pulls a prank that traps Virgil and his pet guinea pig at the bottom of a well. This disaster leads Kaori, Gen, and Valencia on an epic quest to find missing Virgil. Through luck, smarts, bravery, and a little help from the universe, a rescue is performed, a bully is put in his place, and friendship blooms."



Lifeboat 12 by Susan Hood

Fiction: historical **Interest level:** Middle grade

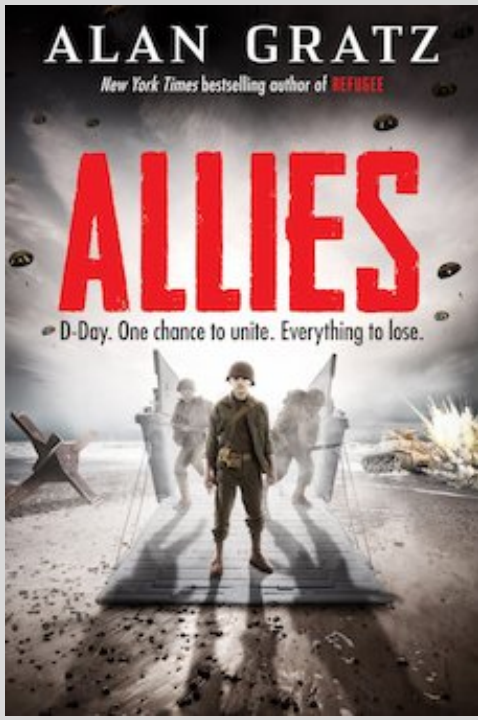
From the publisher: "With Nazis bombing London every night, it's time for thirteen-year-old Ken to escape. He suspects his stepmother is glad to see him go, but his dad says he's one of the lucky ones—one of ninety boys and girls to ship out aboard the SS City of Benares to safety in Canada.Life aboard the luxury ship is grand—nine-course meals, new friends, and a life far from the bombs, rations, and his stepmum's glare. And after five days at sea, the ship's officers announce that they're out of danger.They're wrong.Late that night, an explosion hurls Ken from his bunk. They've been hit. Torpedoed! The Benares is sinking fast. Terrified, Ken scrambles aboard Lifeboat 12 with five other boys. Will they get away? Will they survive?Award-winning author Susan Hood brings this little-known World War II story to life in a riveting novel of courage, hope, and compassion. Based on true events and real people, Lifeboat 12 is about believing in one another, knowing that only by banding together will we have any chance to survive."



Refugee by Alan Gratz

Fiction: adventure, historical **Interest level:** Middle grade

From the publisher: "JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world . . .ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America . . .MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe . . .All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers -- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end.This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home."



Allies by Alan Gratz

Fiction: historical Interest level: Middle grade

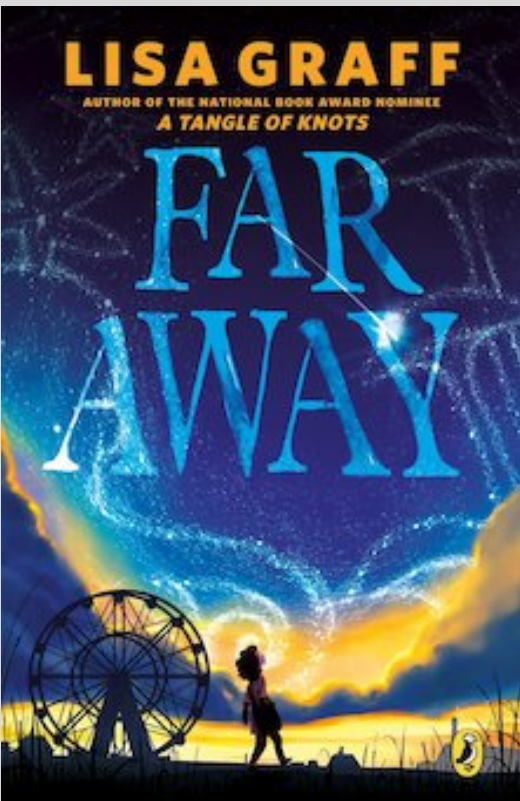
From the publisher: "Alan Gratz, bestselling author of Refugee, weaves a stunning array of voices and stories into an epic tale of teamwork in the face of tyranny -- and how just one day can change the world. June 6, 1944: The Nazis are terrorizing Europe, on their evil quest to conquer the world. The only way to stop them? The biggest, most top-secret operation ever, with the Allied nations coming together to storm German-occupied France.Welcome to D-Day.Deer, a young U.S. soldier, is on a boat racing toward the French coast. And Deer -- along with his brothers-in-arms -- is terrified. He feels the weight of World War II on his shoulders.But Deer is not alone. Behind enemy lines in France, a girl named Samira works as a spy, trying to sabotage the German army. Meanwhile, paratrooper James leaps from his plane to join a daring midnight raid. And in the thick of battle, Henry, a medic, searches for lives to save.In a breathtaking race against time, they all must fight to complete their high-stakes missions. But with betrayals and deadly risks at every turn, can the Allies do what it takes to win?"



Gone by Michael Grant

Fiction: suspense, dystopian/science fiction Interest level: Upper middle grades+ (*Grades 7 and up)

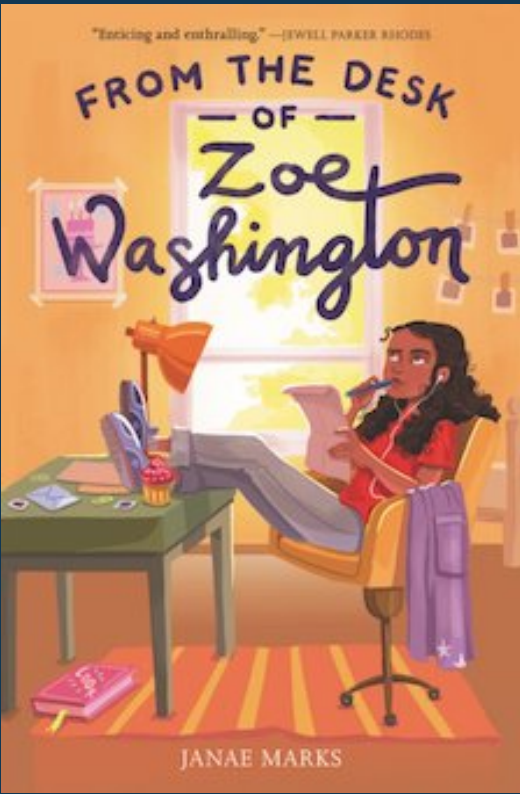
From the publisher: "The first in New York Times bestselling author Michael Grant's breathtaking dystopian sci-fi saga, Gone is a page-turning thriller that invokes the classic The Lord of the Flies along with the horror of Stephen King.In the blink of an eye, everyone disappears. Gone. Except for the young. There are teens, but not one single adult. Just as suddenly, there are no phones, no internet, no television. No way to get help. And no way to figure out what's happened. Hunger threatens. Bullies rule. A sinister creature lurks. Animals are mutating. And the teens themselves are changing, developing new talents—unimaginable, dangerous, deadly powers—that grow stronger by the day. It's a terrifying new world. Sides are being chosen, a fight is shaping up. Townies against rich kids. Bullies against the weak. Powerful against powerless. And time is running out: on your birthday, you disappear just like everyone else. . . .Michael Grant's Gone has been praised for its compelling storytelling, multidimensional characters, and multiple points of view."



Far Away by Lisa Graff

Fiction: realistic Interest level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A book about life, loss, and the secrets families keep, reminiscent of Sharon Creech's Walk Two Moons, by National Book Award nominee Lisa Graff. CJ's Aunt Nic is a psychic medium who tours the country speaking to spirits from Far Away, passing on messages from the dearly departed. And CJ knows firsthand how comforting those messages can be -- Aunt Nic's Gift is the only way CJ can talk to her mom, who died just hours after she was born. So when CJ learns that she won't be able to speak to her mother anymore, even with Aunt Nic's help, she's determined to find a work-around. She sets off on road trip with her new friend Jax to locate the one object that she believes will tether her mother's spirit back to Earth . . . but what she finds along the way challenges every truth she's ever known. Ultimately, CJ has to sort out the reality from the lies. National Book Award nominee Lisa Graff has written a poignant, heartfelt novel that explores the lengths we go to protect those we love -- and the power secrets have to change our worlds."



From the Desk of Zoe Washington by Janae Marks

Fiction: mystery Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From debut author Janae Marks comes a captivating mystery full of heart, as one courageous girl questions assumptions, searches for the truth, and does what she believes is right--even in the face of great opposition. A perfect book for fans of Front Desk and All Rise for the Honorable Perry T. Cook Zoe Washington isn't sure what to write. What does a girl say to the father she's never met, hadn't heard from until his letter arrived on her twelfth birthday, and who's been in prison for a terrible crime? A crime he says he never committed. Could Marcus really be innocent? Zoe is determined to uncover the truth. Even if it means hiding his letters and her investigation from the rest of her family. Everyone else thinks Zoe's worrying about doing a good job at her bakery internship and proving to her parents that she's worthy of auditioning for Food Network's Kids Bake Challenge . But with bakery confections on one part of her mind, and Marcus's conviction weighing heavily on the other, this is one recipe Zoe doesn't know how to balance. The only thing she knows to be true: Everyone lies."



Show Me a Sign by Ann Claire Lezotte

Fiction: **historical** **Interest level:** **Middle grade**

From the publisher: "Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected on her beloved island of Martha's Vineyard. Her great-great-grandfather was an early English settler and the first deaf islander. Now, over a hundred years later, many people there -- including Mary -- are deaf, and nearly everyone can communicate in sign language. Mary has never felt isolated. She is proud of her lineage. But recent events have delivered winds of change. Mary's brother died, leaving her family shattered. Tensions over land disputes are mounting between English settlers and the Wampanoag people. And a cunning young scientist has arrived, hoping to discover the origin of the island's prevalent deafness. His maniacal drive to find answers soon renders Mary a "live specimen" in a cruel experiment. Her struggle to save herself is at the core of this penetrating and poignant novel that probes our perceptions of ability and disability. It will make you forever question your own ideas about what is normal."

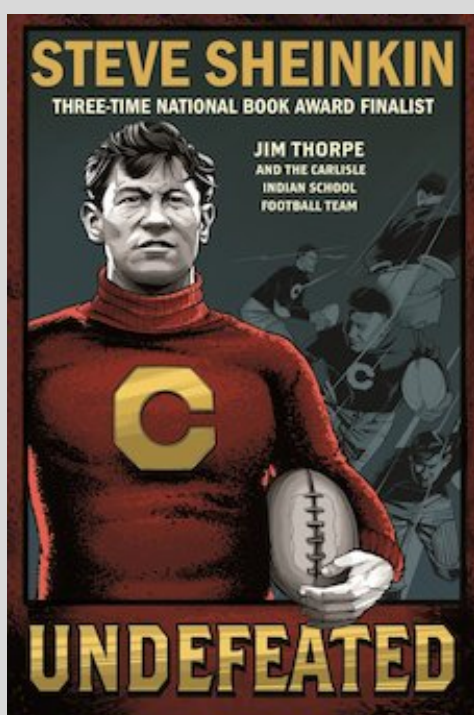


Dry by Neal Shusterman

Fiction: **dystopian/speculative** **Interest level:** **High school/young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)**

From the publisher: "When the California drought escalates to catastrophic proportions, one teen is forced to make life and death decisions for her family in this harrowing story of survival from New York Times bestselling author Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman. The drought—or the Tap-Out, as everyone calls it—has been going on for a while now. Everyone’s lives have become an endless list of don’ts: don’t water the lawn, don’t fill up your pool, don’t take long showers. Until the taps run dry. Suddenly, Alyssa’s quiet suburban street spirals into a warzone of desperation; neighbors and families turned against each other on the hunt for water. And when her parents don’t return and her life—and the life of her brother—is threatened, Alyssa has to make impossible choices if she’s going to survive."

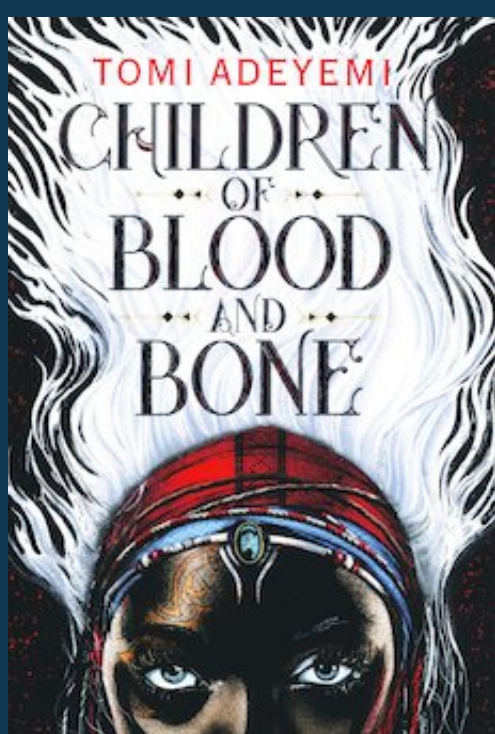
Young Adult Crossover



Undeclared by Steve Sheinkin

Nonfiction: **sports history, biographies** **Interest level:** **Upper middle grade (Grades 7 and up)**

From the publisher: "A great American sport and Native American history come together in this true story for middle grade readers about how Jim Thorpe and Pop Warner created the legendary Carlisle Indians football team, from New York Times bestselling author and Newbery Award recipient Steve Sheinkin. "Sheinkin has made a career of finding extraordinary stories in American history." -- The New York Times Book Review A Boston Globe -Horn Book Nonfiction Honor Book A New York Times Notable Children's Book A Washington Post Best Book Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team is an astonishing underdog sports story--and more. It's an unflinching look at the U.S. government's violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. Expertly told by three-time National Book Award finalist Steve Sheinkin, it's the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat. Jim Thorpe: Super athlete, Olympic gold medalist, Native American Pop Warner: Indomitable coach, football mastermind, Ivy League grad Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American football history. Called "the team that invented football," they took on the best opponents of their day, defeating much more privileged schools such as Harvard and the Army in a series of breathtakingly close calls, genius plays, and bone-crushing hard work."



Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

Fiction: **fantasy** **Interest level:** **High school/young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)**

From the publisher: "With five starred reviews, Tomi Adeyemi's West African-inspired fantasy debut, and instant #1 New York Times Bestseller, conjures a world of magic and danger, perfect for fans of Leigh Bardugo and Sabaa Tahir. They killed my mother. They took our magic. They tried to bury us. Now we rise. Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope. Now Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good. Danger lurks in Orisha, where snow leoponaires prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers and her growing feelings for an enemy."

Young Adult Crossover



Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor

Fiction: fantasy Interest level: Upper middle grades (*Grades 7 and up)

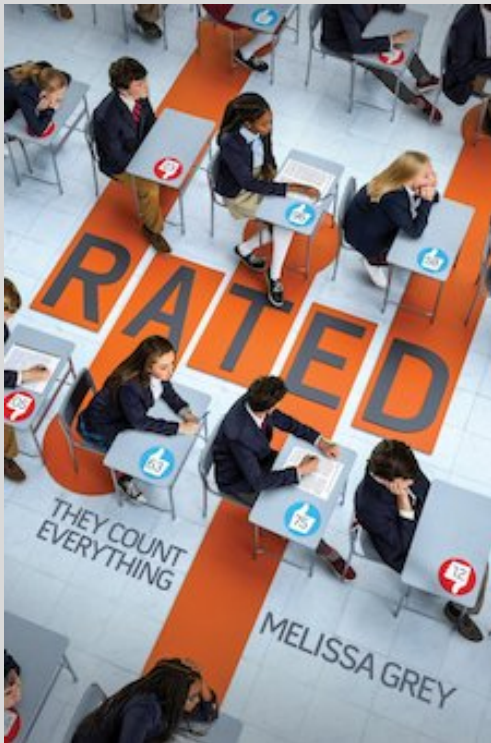
From the publisher: "Affectionately dubbed 'the Nigerian Harry Potter,' Akata Witch weaves together a heart-pounding tale of magic, mystery, and finding one's place in the world. Perfect for fans of Children of Blood and Bone! Sunny Nwazue lives in Nigeria, but she was born in New York City. Her features are West African, but she's albino. She's a terrific athlete, but can't go out into the sun to play soccer. There seems to be no place where she fits in. And then she discovers something amazing—she is a "free agent" with latent magical power. And she has a lot of catching up to do. Soon she's part of a quartet of magic students, studying the visible and invisible, learning to change reality. But as she's finding her footing, Sunny and her friends are asked by the magical authorities to help track down a career criminal who knows magic, too. Will their training be enough to help them combat a threat whose powers greatly outnumber theirs? World Fantasy Award-winning author Nnedi Okorafor blends magic and adventure to create a lush world. Her writing has been called “stunning” by The New York Times and her fans include Neil Gaiman, Rick Riordan, John Green, Ursula K. Le Guin, and many more!"



Boys Don't Knit (In Public) by T.S. Easton

Fiction: humor, realistic Interest level: Upper middle grades- high school (*Grades 7 and up)

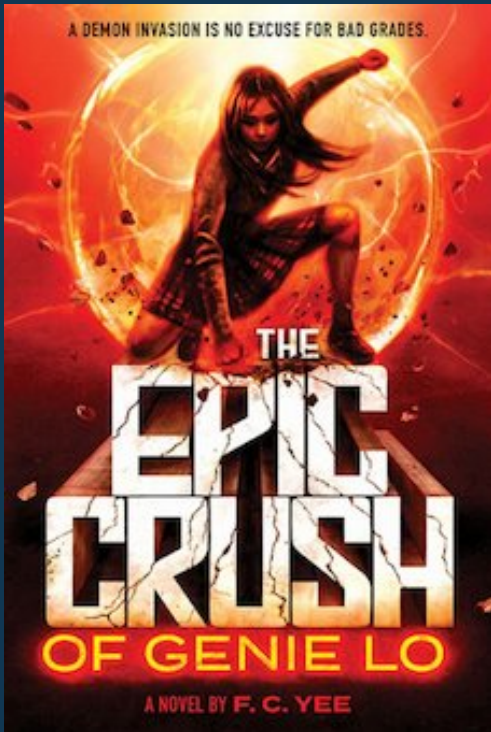
From the publisher: "After an incident regarding a crossing guard and a bottle of Martini & Rossi (and his friends), 17-year-old worrier Ben Fletcher must develop his sense of social alignment, take up a hobby, and do some community service to avoid any further probation. He takes a knitting class (it was that or his father's mechanic class) with the impression that it's taught by the hot teacher all the boys like. Turns out, it's not. Perfect. Regardless, he sticks with it and comes to discover he's a natural knitter, maybe even great. It also helps ease his anxiety and worrying. The only challenge now is to keep it hidden from his friends, his crush, and his soccer-obsessed father. What a tangled web Ben has weaved . . . or knitted. Boys Don't Knit (In Public) by T. S. Easton is a fun, funny young adult novel about a teen boy."



Rated by Melissa Grey

Fiction: sports Interest level: Upper middle grades- High school, young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)

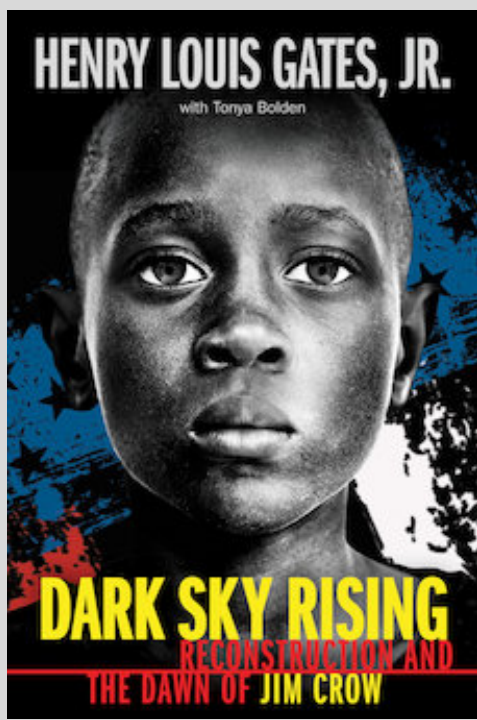
From the publisher: "The ratings are real. One number, 0 to 100, determines your place in society. Earn a high rating, and the world is yours for the taking. But fall to zero, and you may as well cease to exist. Societies thrive on order, and the Rating System is the ultimate symbol of organized social mobility. The higher it soars, the more valued you are. The lower it plummets, the harder you must work to improve yourself. For the students at the prestigious Maplethorpe Academy, every single thing they do is reflected in their ratings, updated daily and available for all to see. But when an act of vandalism sullies the front doors of the school, it sets off a chain reaction that will shake the lives of six special students -- and the world beyond."



The Epic Crush of Genie Lo by F.C. Yee

Fiction: adventure, humor Interest Level: High school/young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "The struggle to get into a top-tier college consumes sixteen-year-old Genie's every waking thought. But when she discovers she's a celestial spirit who's powerful enough to bash through the gates of heaven with her fists, her perfectionist existence is shattered. Enter Quentin, a transfer student from China whose tone-deaf assertiveness beguiles Genie to the brink of madness. Quentin nurtures Genie's outrageous transformation - sometimes gently, sometimes aggressively - as her sleepy suburb in the Bay Area comes under siege from hell-spawn. This epic YA debut draws from Chinese folklore, features a larger-than-life heroine, and perfectly balances the realities of Genie's grounded high school life with the absurd supernatural world she finds herself commanding."



Dark Sky Rising: Reconstruction and the Dawn of Jim Crow by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Nonfiction: United States History Interest level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "This is a story about America during and after Reconstruction, one of history's most pivotal and misunderstood chapters. In a stirring account of emancipation, the struggle for citizenship and national reunion, and the advent of racial segregation, the renowned Harvard scholar delivers a book that is illuminating and timely. Real-life accounts drive the narrative, spanning the half century between the Civil War and Birth of a Nation. Here, you will come face-to-face with the people and events of Reconstruction's noble democratic experiment, its tragic undermining, and the drawing of a new "color line" in the long Jim Crow era that followed. In introducing young readers to them, and to the resiliency of the African American people at times of progress and betrayal, Professor Gates shares a history that remains vitally relevant today."



Blanca y Roja by Anna-Marie McLemore

Fiction: fantasy Interest level: Upper middle grades-high school/ young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "The biggest lie of all is the story you think you already know. The del Cisne girls have never just been sisters; they're also rivals, Blanca as obedient and graceful as Roja is vicious and manipulative. They know that, because of a generations-old spell, their family is bound to a bevy of swans deep in the woods. They know that, one day, the swans will pull them into a dangerous game that will leave one of them a girl, and trap the other in the body of a swan. But when two local boys become drawn into the game, the swans' spell intertwines with the strange and unpredictable magic lacing the woods, and all four of their fates depend on facing truths that could either save or destroy them. Blanca & Roja is the captivating story of sisters, friendship, love, hatred, and the price we pay to protect our hearts."

Young Adult Crossover



Almost American Girl by Robin Ha

Graphic novel: biographies and memoirs Interest level: Upper middle grades (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "A powerful and moving teen graphic novel memoir about immigration, belonging, and how arts can save a life--perfect for fans of American Born Chinese and Hey, Kiddo. [...] For as long as she can remember, it's been Robin and her mom against the world. Growing up as the only child of a single mother in Seoul, Korea, wasn't always easy, but it has bonded them fiercely together. So when a vacation to visit friends in Huntsville, Alabama, unexpectedly becomes a permanent relocation--following her mother's announcement that she's getting married--Robin is devastated. Overnight, her life changes. She is dropped into a new school where she doesn't understand the language and struggles to keep up. She is completely cut off from her friends in Seoul and has no access to her beloved comics. At home, she doesn't fit in with her new stepfamily, and worst of all, she is furious with the one person she is closest to--her mother. Then one day Robin's mother enrolls her in a local comic drawing class, which opens the window to a future Robin could never have imagined."



Scythe by Neal Shusterman

Fiction: Dystopian/science fiction Interest level: High school, young adult crossover (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control. Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own. Scythe is the first novel of a thrilling new series by National Book Award–winning author Neal Shusterman in which Citra and Rowan learn that a perfect world comes only with a heavy price."

Young Adult Crossover



Legend by Marie Lu

Fiction: Science fiction Interest level: Upper grades (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war with its neighbors. Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. But his motives may not be as malicious as they seem. From very different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths - until the day June's brother, Metias, is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. Caught in the ultimate game of cat and mouse, Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge Metias's death. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets. Full of nonstop action, suspense, and romance, this novel is sure to move readers as much as it thrills."

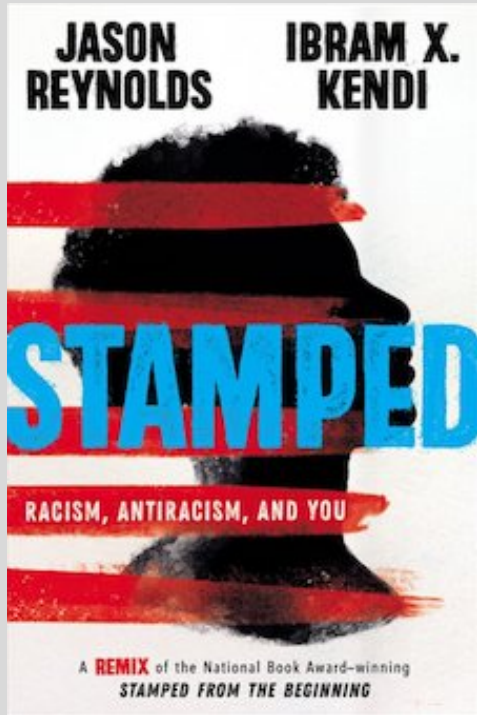


Slay by Brittney Morris

Fiction: Realistic Interest level: High school, young adult crossover (Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "Ready Player One meets The Hate U Give in this dynamite debut novel that follows a fierce teen game developer as she battles a real-life troll intent on ruining the Black Panther-inspired video game she created and the safe community it represents for Black gamers. By day, seventeen-year-old Kiera Johnson is an honors student, a math tutor, and one of the only Black kids at Jefferson Academy. But at home, she joins hundreds of thousands of Black gamers who duel worldwide as Nubian personas in the secret multiplayer online role-playing card game, SLAY. No one knows Kiera is the game developer, not her friends, her family, not even her boyfriend, Malcolm, who believes video games are partially responsible for the "downfall of the Black man." But when a teen in Kansas City is murdered over a dispute in the SLAY world, news of the game reaches mainstream media, and SLAY is labeled a racist, exclusionist, violent hub for thugs and criminals. Even worse, an anonymous troll infiltrates the game, threatening to sue Kiera for "anti-white discrimination." Driven to save the only world in which she can be herself, Kiera must preserve her secret identity and harness what it means to be unapologetically Black in a world intimidated by Blackness. But can she protect her game without losing herself in the process?"

Young Adult Crossover



Stamped: Racism, Anti-racism, and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi

Fiction: Nonfiction Interest level: High school, young adult crossover (*Grades 8 and up)

From the publisher: "A timely, crucial, and empowering exploration of racism--and antiracism--in America.

This is NOT a history book.
This is a book about the here and now.
A book to help us better understand why we are where we are.
A book about race.

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. Through a gripping, fast-paced, and energizing narrative written by beloved award-winner Jason Reynolds, this book shines a light on the many insidious forms of racist ideas--and on ways readers can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their daily lives."

Young Adult Crossover



Time Bomb by Joelle Charbonneau

Fiction: suspense Interest level: Upper Grades (*Grades 7 and up)

From the publisher: "Seven students trapped in their school after a bomb goes off must fight to survive while also discovering who among them is the bomber in this provocative new thriller from the author of the New York Times bestselling Testing Trilogy. Perfect for fans of This Is Where It Ends. A congressman's daughter who has to be perfect. A star quarterback with a secret. A guy who's tired of being ignored. A clarinet player who's done trying to fit in. An orphaned rebel who wants to teach someone a lesson. A guy who wants people to see him, not his religion. They couldn't be more different, but before the morning's over, they'll all be trapped in a school that's been rocked by a bombing. When they hear that someone inside is the bomber, they'll also be looking to one another for answers. Told from multiple perspectives, Time Bomb will keep readers guessing about who the bomber could be--and what motivated such drastic action."