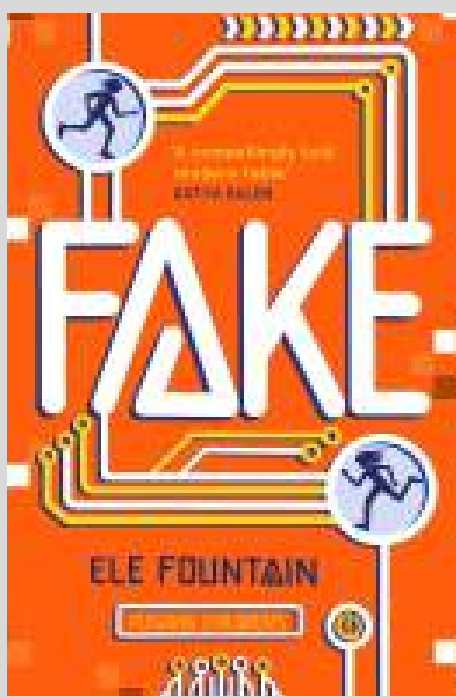




All middle school students are encouraged to read over the summer. Below you will find a list of recommended books to choose from. While the titles in this list are all age appropriate and have been selected specifically for middle school students from 10-13 years of age, these selections span a diverse 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.



Fake by Ele Fountain

Fiction: dystopian Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A thrillingly paced, timely novel about identity and our digital lives from the award-winning author of Refugee 87.

Imagine a world where your only friends are virtual, and big tech companies control access to food, healthcare and leisure. This is Jess's world.

But when she turns fourteen, Jess can go to school with other children for the first time. Most of them hate the 'real' world, but Jess begins to question whether the digital world is 'perfect' after all.

Back home, her sister Chloe's life-saving medication is getting ever more expensive. Determined to help, Jess risks everything by using skills forbidden in the cyber-world, only to stumble on something explosive. Something that will turn her whole world upside down.

It's up to Jess to figure out exactly what is real, and what is fake – Chloe's survival depends on it."



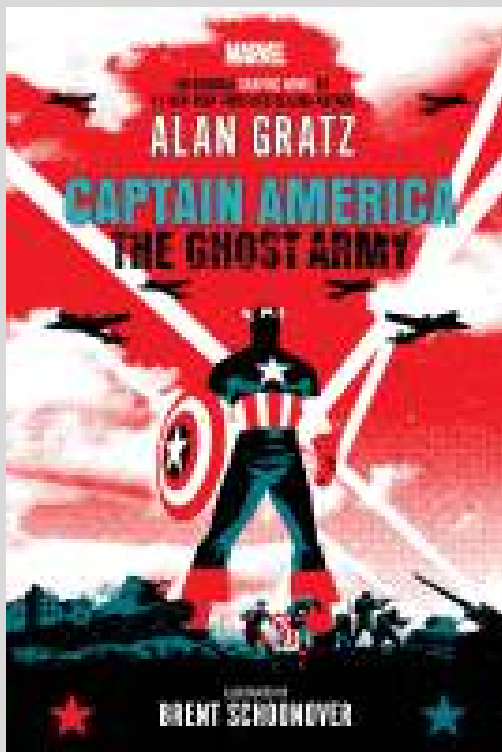
The Girl in White by Lindsay Currie

Fiction: horror and suspense Interest level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "For fans of Small Spaces and the Goosebumps series by R.L Stine comes a chilling story about a twelve-year old girl who must face down the most notorious ghost in her haunted East coast town to stop a centuries-old curse that threatens to destroy everything.

Mallory hasn't quite adapted to life in her new town of Eastport yet. Maybe it's because everyone is obsessed with keeping the town's reputation as the most cursed town in the US. And thanks to the nightmares she's had since arriving, Mallory hardly sleeps. Combined with the unsettling sensation of being watched, she's quickly becoming convinced there's more to her town. Something darker.

When Mallory has a terrifying encounter with the same old woman from her dreams, she knows she has to do something—but what? With Eastport gearing up to celebrate the anniversary of their first recorded legend Mallory is forced to investigate the one legend she's always secretly been afraid of . . . Sweet Molly."



Captain America: The Ghost Army by Alan Gratz

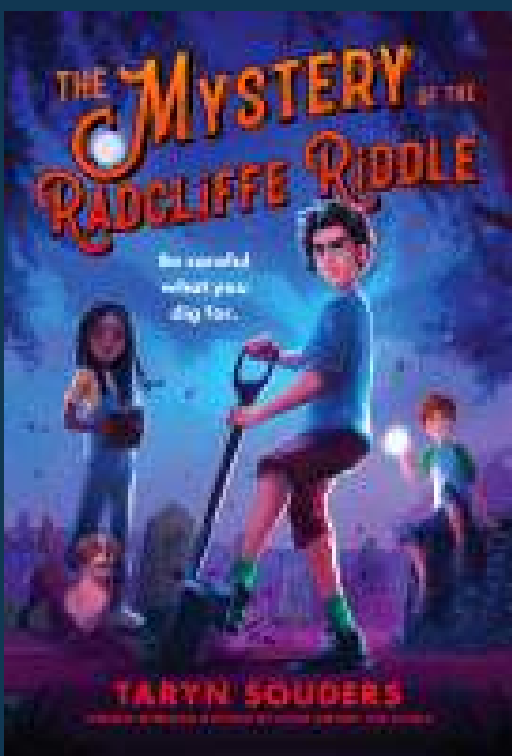
Graphic Novel Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From #1 New York Times bestselling author Alan Gratz (*Refugee*, *Ground Zero*) comes an all-new, original Captain America graphic novel!

In this thrilling historical adventure set during World War II, Steve Rogers (AKA Captain America) and his young sidekick, Bucky Barnes, encounter threat like none they've ever seen -- a Ghost Army. The dead of this war and wars past are coming back to life, impervious to bullets, flames, or anything else the Allies can throw at them. The armies rise from the ground in the night and seem to disappear without a trace.

How can Cap and Buck fight something that's already dead? And just what does the mysterious Baron Mordo—sitting in his castle atop nearby Wundagore Mountain—have to do with this?

Award-winning, #1 New York Times bestselling author Alan Gratz merges the worlds of historical fiction and super hero comics in this one-of-a-kind graphic novel that is sure to be met with major enthusiasm from fans of all ages."

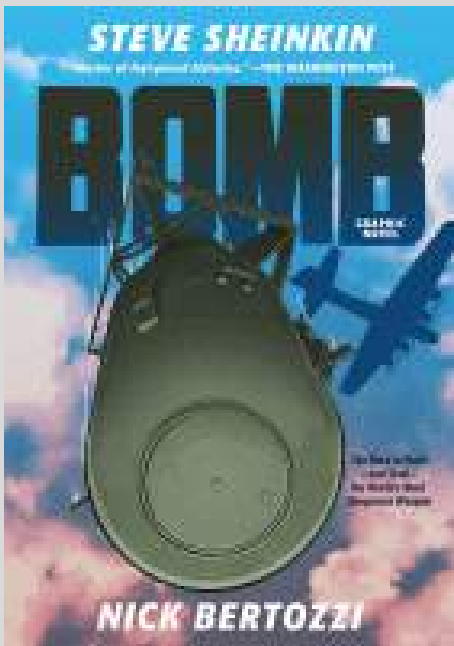


Mystery of the Radcliffe Riddle by Taryn Souders

Fiction: mystery Interest level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From the Edgar-nominated author of *Coop Knows the Scoop* comes an exciting mystery perfect for fans of *From the Desk of Zoe Washington* and *Holes*.

When Grady and his dad learn that the town oddball, Eudora "Kooky" Klinch left something for them in her will, they can only imagine what it might be. When it turns out it's an old scrap of 300-year-old tapestry, they are bitterly disappointed. But the cloth comes with a note saying, "This is no ordinary piece of needlework. It's a treasure map. Riddles and Clues. To the victor go the riches." Grady's dad dismisses it, but Grady thinks this could be the chance of a lifetime. With the help of his friends Thad, Clemmie, and the town dog Ophelia, Grady is determined to crack the clues and find the treasure. But when someone tries to break into Grady's house one night, and then the local antiques expert who examined the tapestry is found unconscious, Grady realizes that he's not the only one who knows about the treasure map. There's more at risk than he bargained for, and solving this mystery just got a lot more dangerous.



Bomb: The Graphic Novel: The Race to Build--and Steal-- the World's Most Dangerous Weapon

by Steve Sheinkin

Graphic nonfiction Interest Level: Middle grade

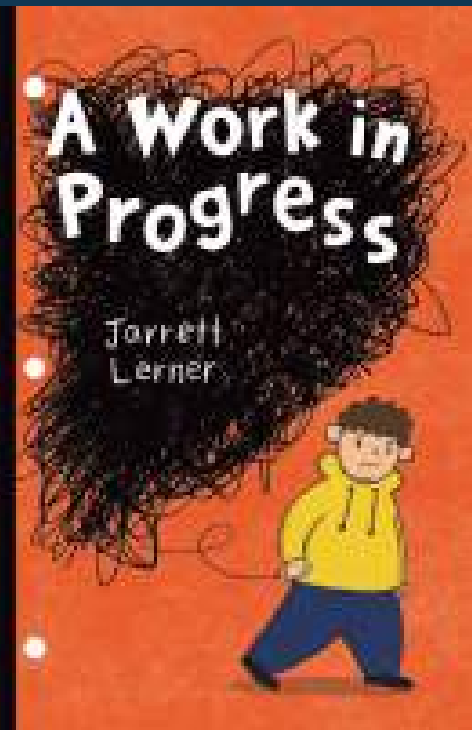
From the publisher: "A riveting graphic novel adaptation of the award-winning nonfiction book, Bomb—the fascinating and frightening true story of the creation behind the most destructive force that birthed the arms race and the Cold War.

In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery: When placed next to radioactive material, a Uranium atom split in two. That simple discovery launched a scientific race that spanned three continents.

In Great Britain and the United States, Soviet spies worked their way into the scientific community; in Norway, a commando force slipped behind enemy lines to attack German heavy-water manufacturing; and deep in the desert, one brilliant group of scientists, led by "father of the atomic bomb" J. Robert Oppenheimer, was hidden away at a remote site at Los Alamos. This is the story of the plotting, the risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.

New York Times bestselling author Steve Sheinkin's award-winning nonfiction book is now available reimagined in the graphic novel format. Full color illustrations from Nick Bertozzi are detailed and enriched with the nonfiction expertise Nick brings to the story as a beloved artist, comic book writer, and commercial illustrator who has written a couple of his own historical graphic novels, including Shackleton and Lewis & Clark.

Accessible, gripping, and educational, this new edition of Bomb is perfect for young readers and adults alike."



A Work in Progress by Jarrett Lerner

Fiction: realistic Interest level: Middle grade

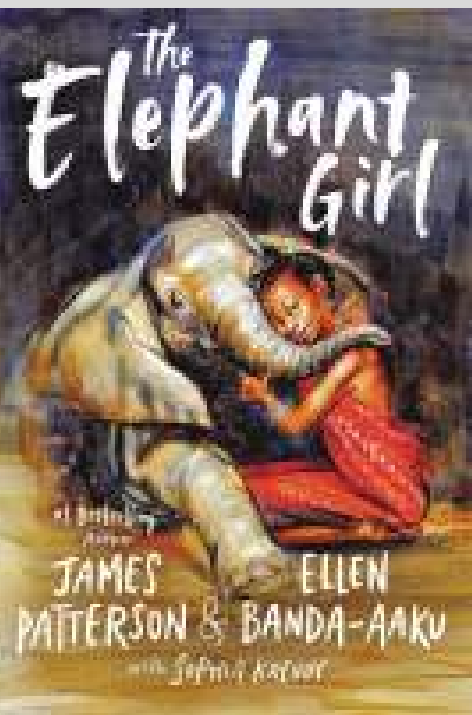
From the publisher: "A young boy struggles with body image in this poignant and “perceptive” (Publishers Weekly, starred review) middle grade journey to self-acceptance told through prose, verse, and illustration.

Will is the only round kid in a school full of thin ones. So he hides...in baggy jeans and oversized hoodies, in the back row during class, and anywhere but the cafeteria during lunch. But shame isn’t the only feeling that dominates Will’s life. He’s also got a crush on a girl named Jules who he knows he doesn’t have a chance with, because of his size—but he can’t help wondering what if?

Will’s best shot at attracting Jules’s attention is by slaying the Will Monster inside him by changing his eating habits and getting more exercise. But the results are either frustratingly slow or infuriatingly unsuccessful, and Will’s shame begins to morph into self-loathing.

As he resorts to increasingly drastic measures to transform his appearance, Will meets skateboarder Markus, who helps him see his body and all it contains as an ever-evolving work in progress."

SUNSHINE
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YOUNG
READERS
AWARD,
GRADES 6-8,
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The Elephant Girl by James Patterson and Ellen Banda-Aaku

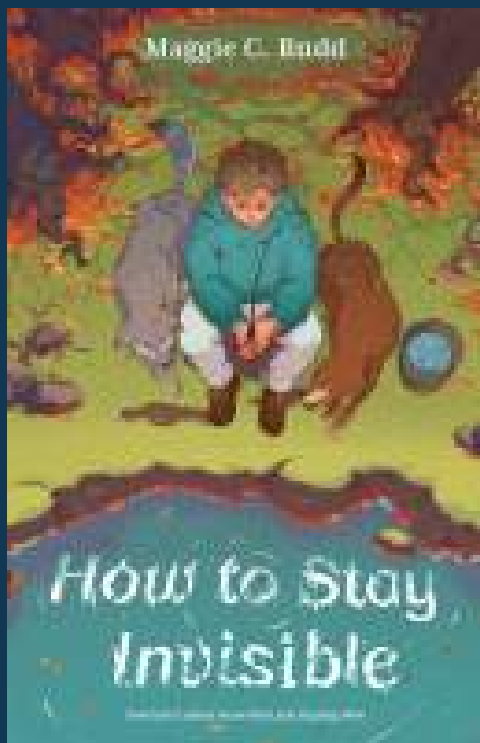
From the publisher: "#1 bestselling author James Patterson and award-winning author Ellen Banda-Aaku deliver an unforgettable story of a girl, an elephant, and their life-changing friendship—perfect for fans of The One and Only Ivan, Pax, and Because of Winn-Dixie.

Clever, sensitive Jama likes elephants better than people. While her classmates gossip—especially about the new boy, Leku—twelve-year-old Jama takes refuge at the watering hole outside her village. There she befriends a baby elephant she names Mbegu, Swahili for seed.

When Mbegu’s mother, frightened by poachers, stampedes, Jama and Mbegu are blamed for two deaths—one elephant and one human. Now Leku, whose mysterious and imposing father is head ranger at the conservancy, may be their only lifeline.

Inspired by true events, The Elephant Girl is a moving exploration of the bonds between creatures and the power of belonging."

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How to Stay Invisible by Maggie C. Rudd

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*My Side of the Mountain meets How to Steal a Dog in this high-stakes and heartfelt middle-grade story of a young boy and his dog surviving on their own in the woods.*"

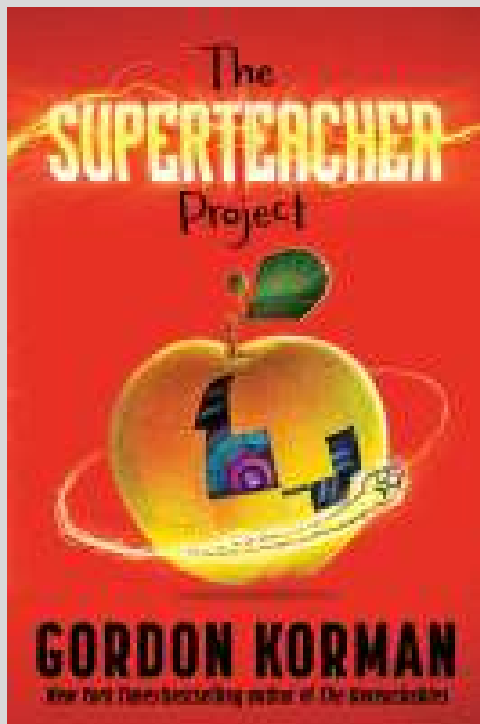
Being alone is something Raymond is used to.

Twelve-year-old Raymond Hurley has never had a place to call home. His free-wheeling parents move their family from town to town, and he's living in a trailer in a brand-new state when one day, they just up and abandon him. All alone with nothing but a duffle bag full of clothes and his reliable pup, Rosie, he is forced to live in the woods behind his middle school.

With a fishing pole in hand and survival guide checked out from the library, Raymond scrapes by and doesn't tell anyone his secret. This isn't the first time he's had to rely on himself. However, when winter days get colder and finding food becomes nearly impossible, Raymond makes new friends, including a curious coyote, in unexpected places. Soon, he learns that his fate will depend not just on his wilderness skills, but on the people and animals he chooses to trust.

In *How to Stay Invisible*, Maggie C. Rudd takes readers on a journey of survival that speaks to friendship, adventure, and the everyday wonders of nature. In middle school, blending in is easy but sometimes the braver thing is being seen."

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The Superteacher Project by Gordon Korman

Fiction: humor Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*From Gordon Korman, the bestselling author of Restart and The Unteachables, comes a hilarious new story about a mysterious new teacher who turns out to be an AI robot from a secret experimental program.*"

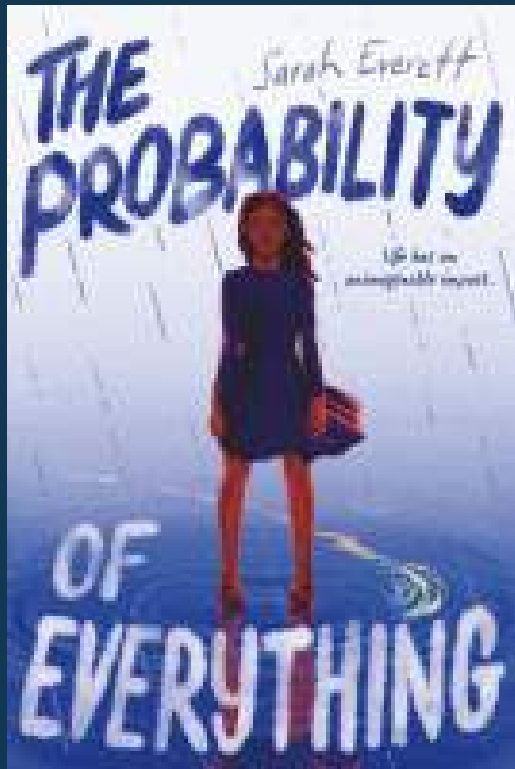
Oliver Zahn, spitball champion and self-declared rule-wrecker of Brightling Middle School, is not a fan of his new homeroom teacher, Mr. Aidact. The guy is sort of stiff, never cracks a smile, and refers to them as "pupils." The worst part is he catches Oliver before he can pull any of his signature pranks! It's time for Oliver and his best friend, Nathan, to show the new teacher who's boss.

But as the weeks go by, they start to realize that Mr. Aidact is not what they expected. He has an uncanny ability to remember song lyrics or trivia. When the girls' field hockey team needs a new coach, he suddenly turns out to be an expert. He never complains when other teachers unload work on him—even when it's lunchroom duty and overseeing detention. Against all odds, Mr. Aidact starts to become the most popular teacher at Brightling.

Still, Oliver and Nathan know that something is fishy. They're determined to get to the bottom of the mystery: What's the deal with Mr. Aidact?

"

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The Probability of Everything by Sarah Everett

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*NPR Books We Love 2023 | Publishers Weekly Best of 2023 | Winner of the Governor General's Literary Awards for Young People's Literature*"

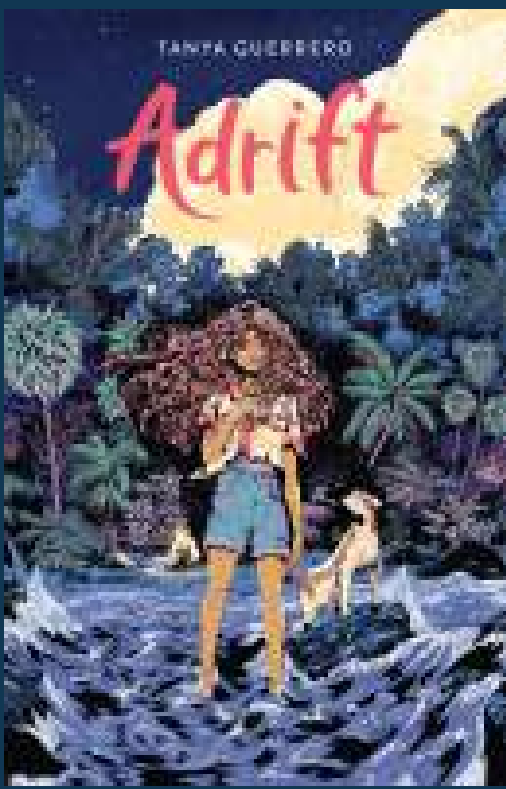
A heart-wrenching middle grade debut about Kemi, an aspiring scientist who loves statistics and facts, as she navigates grief and loss at a moment when life as she knows it changes forever.

Eleven-year-old Kemi Carter loves scientific facts, specifically probability. It's how she understands the world and her place in it. Kemi knows her odds of being born were 1 in 5.5 trillion and that the odds of her having the best family ever were even lower. Yet somehow, Kemi lucked out.

But everything Kemi thought she knew changes when she sees an asteroid hover in the sky, casting a purple haze over her world. Amplus-68 has an 84.7% chance of colliding with earth in four days, and with that collision, Kemi's life as she knows it will end.

But over the course of the four days, even facts don't feel true to Kemi anymore. The new town she moved to that was supposed to be "better for her family" isn't very welcoming. And Amplus-68 is taking over her life, but others are still going to school and eating at their favorite diner like nothing has changed. Is Kemi the only one who feels like the world is ending?

With the days numbered, Kemi decides to put together a time capsule that will capture her family's truth: how creative her mother is, how inquisitive her little sister can be, and how much Kemi's whole world revolves around her father. But no time capsule can change the truth behind all of it, that Kemi must face the most inevitable and hardest part of life: saying goodbye.



Adrift by Tanya Guerrero

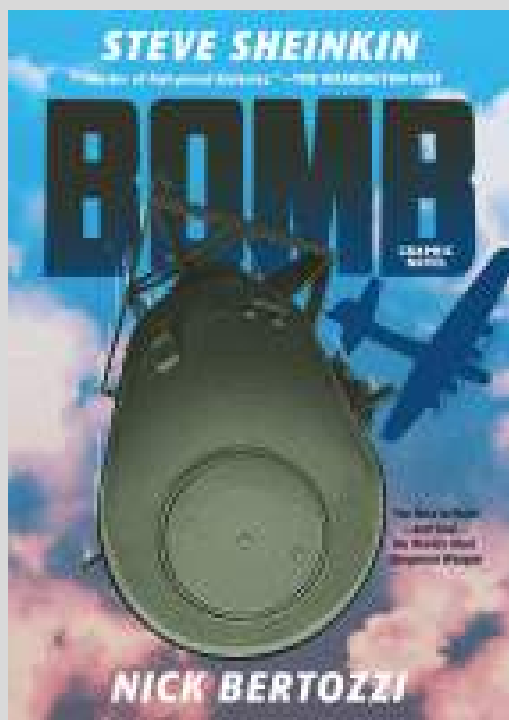
Fiction: action/adventure Interest Level: Upper middle grade (7 and up)

From the publisher: "From Tanya Guerrero, the author of *All You Knead Is Love* and *How to Make Friends with the Sea*, comes *Adrift*, an upper middle grade contemporary story of survival and grief about two biracial Filipino cousins whose resilience is tested when one of them is lost at sea.

Cousins Coral and Isa are so close that they're practically siblings; their mothers are sisters, and the two girls grew up on the same small island. When Coral and her parents leave on a months-long sea voyage amid the islands of Indonesia, Isa is devastated that they'll be kept apart, and the two vow to write to each other no matter what.

Then the unthinkable happens, and Coral's boat capsizes at sea, where her parents vanish. Washed up on a deserted island, alone and wracked by grief, she must find the strength within to survive, and find her way back home. Meanwhile, Isa is still on Pebble Island, the only one holding out hope that her beloved cousin is still alive.

Told in alternating points of view, this is a powerful story of loss and hope, love and family—and the unexpected resilience of the human spirit."



Bomb: The Race to Build- and Steal- the World's Most Dangerous Weapon by Steve Sheinkin

Fiction: graphic nonfiction Interest Level: Middle grade

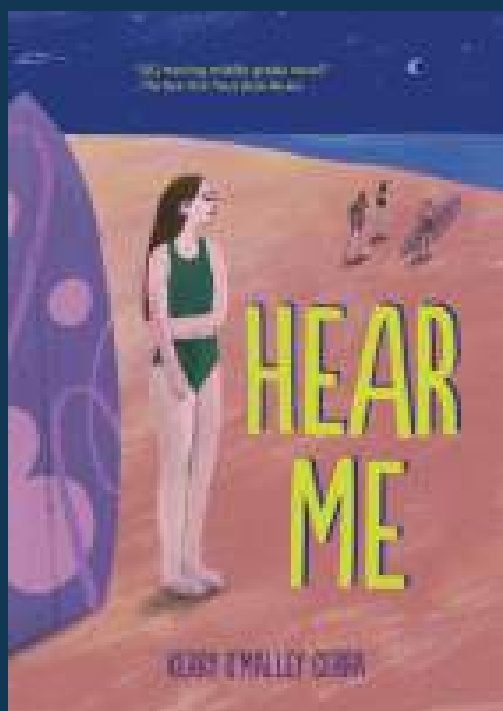
From the publisher: "A riveting graphic novel adaptation of the award-winning nonfiction book, *Bomb*—the fascinating and frightening true story of the creation behind the most destructive force that birthed the arms race and the Cold War.

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In Great Britain and the United States, Soviet spies worked their way into the scientific community; in Norway, a commando force slipped behind enemy lines to attack German heavy-water manufacturing; and deep in the desert, one brilliant group of scientists, led by "father of the atomic bomb" J. Robert Oppenheimer, was hidden away at a remote site at Los Alamos. This is the story of the plotting, the risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.

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Accessible, gripping, and educational, this new edition of *Bomb* is perfect for young readers and adults alike."



Hear Me by Kerry O'Malley Cerra

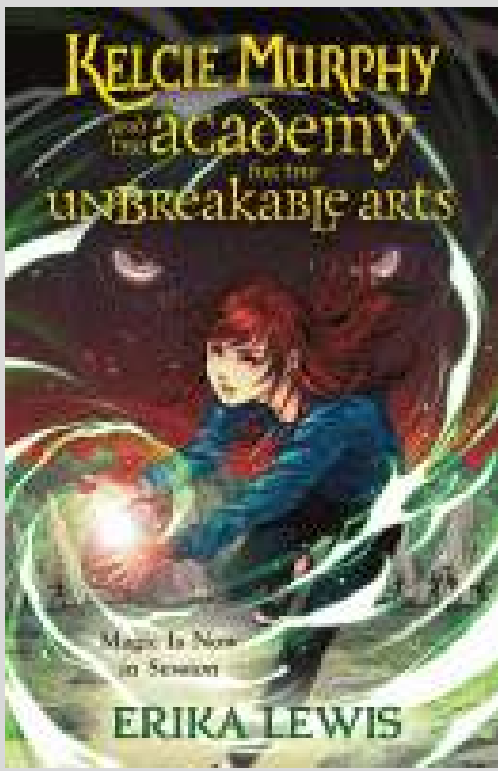
Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A year after being diagnosed with hearing loss, twelve-year-old Rayne is doing her best to live a "normal" life and act like nothing has changed.

But her hearing keeps failing her. Even with hearing aids, she has trouble following conversations and hanging out with her friends the way she used to. Her grades are slipping, surfing is now a wipeout, and she can't understand the lyrics of her favorite singer's new songs. Rayne's parents are pushing for her to get cochlear implants, which could restore her hearing—though she would hear sounds differently than she did before her hearing loss.Rayne isn't convinced the surgery for CIs is worth the risks and challenges. In fact, she's terrified of it. She begs her parents to consider other options, but they're not budging.

With the surgery looming, Rayne sets off on a search for alternatives. Along the way, she discovers that "normal" can have many meanings—and that even though her ears may be broken, she is not."

2023
TEACHER
FAVORITES
WINNER
(6TH-8TH
GRADE),
CHILDREN'S
BOOK
COUNCIL



Kelcie Murphy and the Academy for the Unbreakable Arts by Erika Lewis

Fiction: fantasy Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*Brimming with Celtic mythology, action, and danger, Erika Lewis's Kelcie Murphy and The Academy for the Unbreakable Arts introduces readers to a new kind of magical school and a warrior who must choose with which side of an epic battle her destiny will lie.*

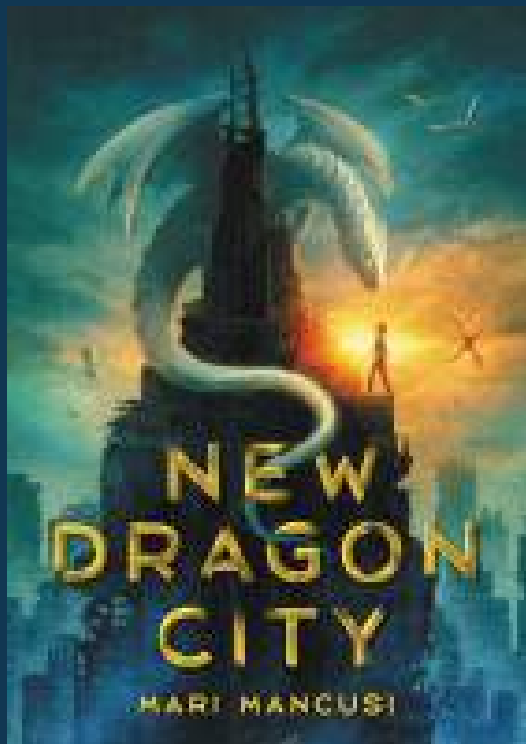
The Otherworld is at war. The Academy for the Unbreakable Arts trains warriors. And Kelcie Murphy—a foster child raised in the human world—is dying to attend.

A place at AUA means meeting Scáthach, the legendary trainer of Celtic heroes. It means learning to fight with a sword. It means harnessing her hidden powers and—most importantly—finding out who her parents are, and why they abandoned her in Boston Harbor eight years ago.

When Kelcie tests into the school, she learns that she's a Saiga, one of the most ancient beings in the Otherworld. Secretive, shunned, and possessed of imposing elemental powers, the Saiga are also kin to the Otherworld's most infamous traitor.

But Kelcie is a survivor, and she'll do whatever it takes to find her parents and her place in their world. Even if that means making a few enemies."

SUNSHINE
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YOUNG
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AWARD,
GRADES 6-8,
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New Dragon City by Mari Mancusi

Fiction: fantasy Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*Set off on a high-stakes, action-packed adventure in this story about friendship, survival, and fighting for ones you love, perfect for fans of Wings of Fire and How to Train Your Dragon.*

No one predicted the dragon apocalypse. The dragons came suddenly and decimated the world as we knew it, including New York City. Now, three years later, Noah, his hardcore survivalist father, and a ragtag group of survivors are barely scraping by in this new reality. Kids scavenge not only for materials in abandoned homes but also for leftover books at the library. Adults spend their time establishing a make-shift society and defending their shelter... with any means available. At least for the few months the dragons are hibernating, until it's no longer safe aboveground.

Noah has seen the damage these creatures can do firsthand. When it comes to dragons: It's kill or be killed. But a chance encounter between Noah and a young dragon causes him to question everything he thought he knew. With rumors spreading that there's a group of survivors living in harmony with dragons instead of hiding underground, Noah teams up with his fire-breathing ally to find out if peace between humans and dragons is really possible. But the division runs deeper than scales versus skin because trying to follow his heart might just cost Noah his family too. If Noah and his father can't see eye to eye, can he really get humans and dragons to?"

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Over and Out by Jenni L. Walsh

Fiction: historical Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*Perfect for fans of Alan Gratz and Jennifer A. Nielsen, a gripping and accessible story of a young girl from Cold War East Berlin who is forced to spy for the secret police... but is determined to escape to freedom.*

Sophie has spent her entire life behind the Berlin Wall, guarded by land mines, towers, and attack dogs. A science lover, Sophie dreams of becoming an inventor... but that's unlikely in East Berlin, where the Stasi, the secret police, are always watching.

Though she tries to avoid their notice, when her beloved neighbor is arrested, Sophie is called to her principal's office. There, a young Stasi officer asks Sophie if she'll spy on her neighbor after she is released. Sophie doesn't want to agree, but in reality has no choice: The Stasi threaten to bring her mother, who has a disability from post-polio syndrome, to an institution if Sophie does not comply.

Sophie is backed into a corner, until she finds out, for the first time, that she has family on the other side of the Wall, in the West. This could be what she needs to attempt an escape with her mother to freedom -- if she can invent her way out.

Jenni L. Walsh, author of I Am Defiance, tells a page-turning story of a young girl taking charge of her own destiny, and helping others do the same, in the face of oppression."



The Ruby Code by Jessica Khoury

Fiction: science fiction Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From Jessica Khoury comes a high-action sci-fi adventure about a video game AI come to life. Warcross meets Ready Player One in this thriller set in a high-tech near future.

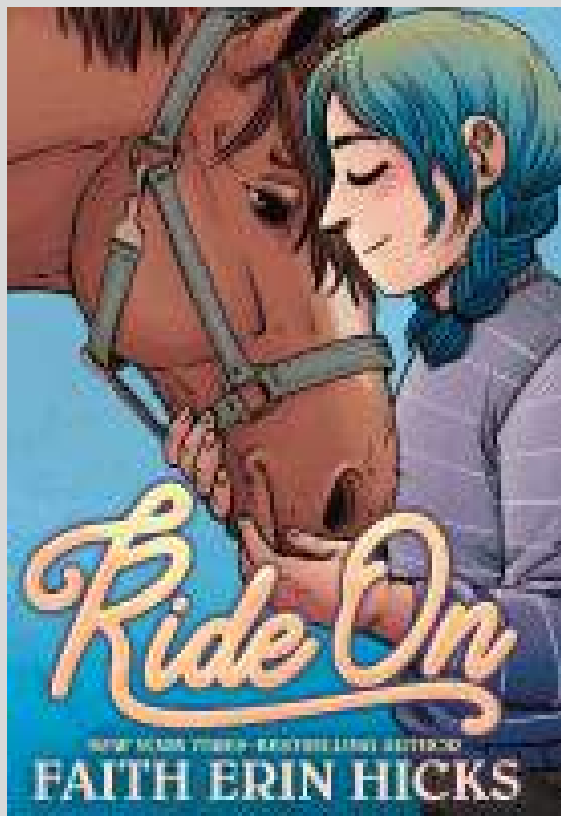
Bullied at school and home, Ash finds respite from his unhappy life in virtual reality games. One night, he spends his meager savings to help a stranger, who thanks him with a copy of an old fantasy game called The Glass Realm.

While exploring the game, Ash meets a seemingly humble shopkeeper named Ruby. But from the start, Ruby seems different than the other townsfolk—especially when she and Ash stumble across an in-game quest designed not for the player, but for Ruby to solve. When Ruby begins developing powerful abilities that can rewrite the very code of the game, they realize she is far more than a pre-programmed side character.

Following the quest left for her in The Glass Realm, the pair discover that Ruby is actually a sentient AI who’s been hidden inside the game. Originally built as a weapon, her developer stole her from his employers and hid her away, hoping to keep her safe.

That safety vanishes when Ash and Ruby are targeted by the powerful shadow organization who funded Ruby’s development, and who would use her to spark a world war to rack up huge profits. Caught in a deadly game that blurs the lines between real and virtual, Ash and Ruby must flee for their lives. If they lose this game—they might just doom the world.”

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Ride On by Faith Erin Hicks

Fiction: graphic novel Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "In Ride On, this middle grade graphic novel from Faith Erin Hicks, twelve-year-old Victoria is burned out from the high-pressure world of riding competitions. Can she get back to basics and rekindle her love of horses? Perfect for fans of Best Friends and Stargazing!

Victoria has always loved horses. But riding in competitions is high stakes, high stress, and shockingly expensive. And even though Victoria’s best friend Taylor loves competing, Victoria has lost her taste for it.

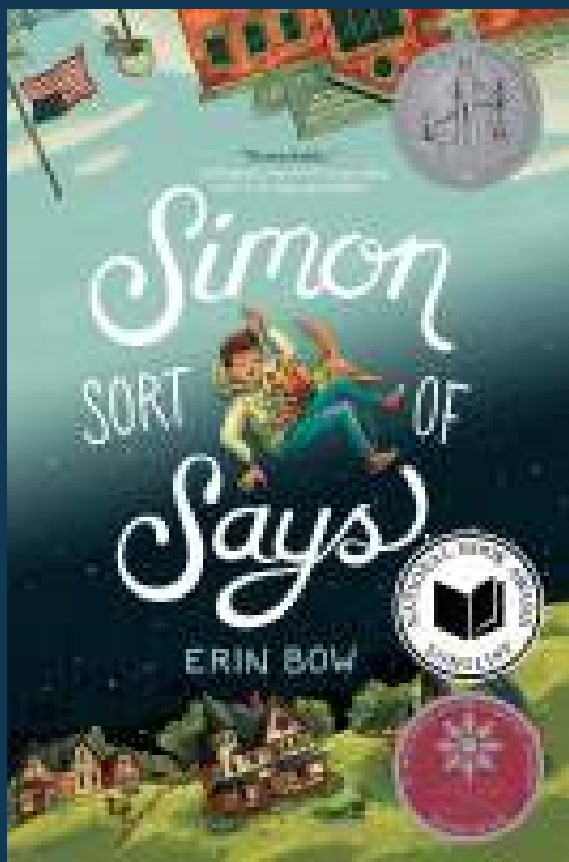
After a heartbreaking fight with Taylor, Victoria needs a new start—at a new stables. A place where she doesn’t have to worry about anything other than riding. No competition, no drama, no friends.

Just horses.

Edgewood Stables seems ideal. There are plenty of horses to ride, and Victoria is perfectly happy giving the other riders the cold shoulder.

But can she truly be happy with no friends?”

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Simon Sort of Says by Erin Bow

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "NEWBERY HONOR AWARD • LONGLISTED FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD • SCHNEIDER FAMILY BOOK AWARD HONOR • FINALIST FOR THE AUDIE AWARD FOR BEST MIDDLE GRADE AUDIOBOOK OF THE YEAR

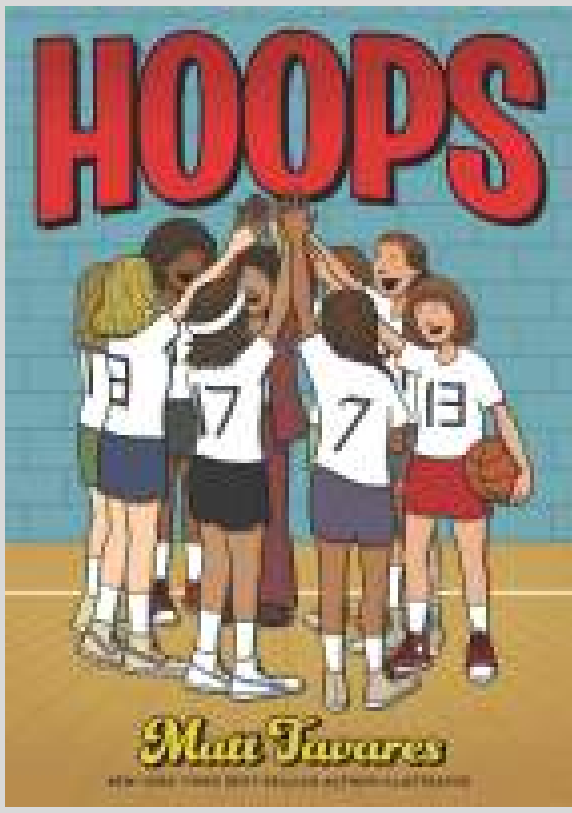
“Funny, poignant and—most important—hopeful.” —New York Times

Simon O’Keeffe’s biggest claim to fame should be the time his dad accidentally gave a squirrel a holy sacrament. Or maybe the alpaca disaster that went viral on YouTube. But the story the whole world wants to tell about Simon is the one he’d do anything to forget: the one starring Simon as a famous survivor of gun violence at school.

Two years after the infamous event, twelve-year-old Simon and his family move to the National Quiet Zone—the only place in America where the internet is banned. Instead of talking about Simon, the astronomers who flock to the area are busy listening for signs of life in space. And when Simon makes a friend who’s determined to give the scientists what they’re looking for, he’ll finally have the chance to spin a new story for the world to tell.

Simon Sort of Says, the Newbery Honor-winning novel by Erin Bow, is a breathtaking testament to the lasting echoes of trauma, the redemptive power of humor, and the courage it takes to move forward without forgetting the past.”

LONGLISTED
FOR THE
NATIONAL
BOOK
AWARD

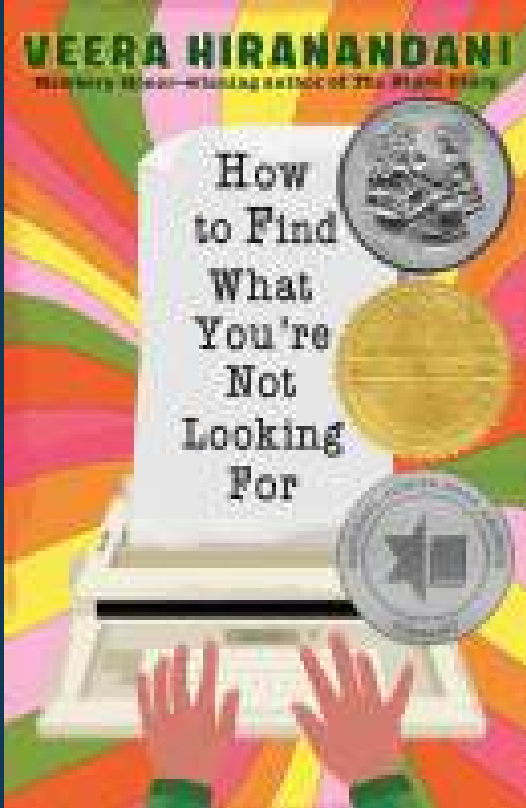


Hoops by Matt Tavares

Fiction: graphic novel Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "A work of fiction inspired by a true story, Matt Tavares's debut graphic novel dramatizes the historic struggle for gender equality in high school sports."

It is 1975 in Indiana, and the Wilkins Regional High School girls' basketball team is in their rookie season. Despite being undefeated, they practice at night in the elementary school and play to empty bleachers. Unlike the boys' team, the Lady Bears have no buses to deliver them to away games and no uniforms, much less a laundry service. They make their own uniforms out of T-shirts and electrical tape. And with help from a committed female coach, they push through to improbable victory after improbable victory. Illustrated in full color, this story about the ongoing battle of women striving for equality in sports rings with honesty, bravery, and heart."

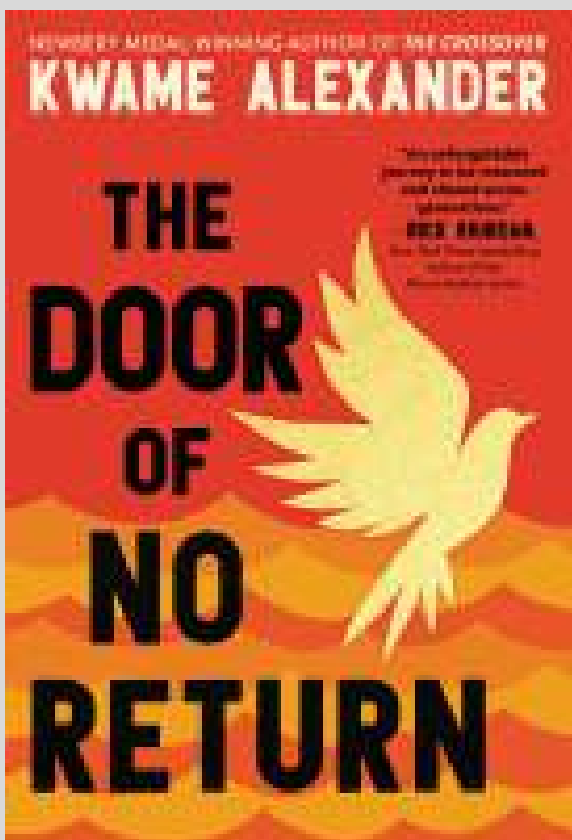


How to Find What You're Not Looking For by Veera Hiranandani

Fiction: historical Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "New historical fiction from a Newbery Honor-winning author about how middle schooler Ariel Goldberg's life changes when her big sister elopes following the 1967 Loving v. Virginia decision, and she's forced to grapple with both her family's prejudice and the antisemitism she experiences, as she defines her own beliefs."

Twelve-year-old Ariel Goldberg's life feels like the moment after the final guest leaves the party. Her family's Jewish bakery runs into financial trouble, and her older sister has eloped with a young man from India following the Supreme Court decision that strikes down laws banning interracial marriage. As change becomes Ariel's only constant, she's left to hone something that will be with her always--her own voice."

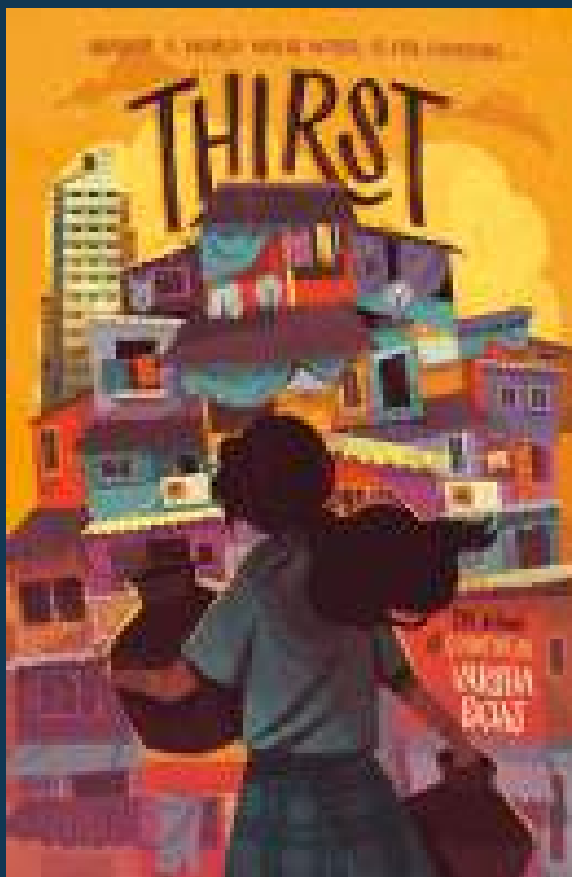


The Door of No Return by Kwame Alexander

Fiction: historical Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "From New York Times Bestselling author Kwame Alexander comes the first book in a searing, breathtaking trilogy that tells the story of a boy, a village, and the epic odyssey of an African family."

Eleven-year-old Kofi Offin lives in the West African Asante Kingdom in 1860. Besides his family and friends, Kofi loves swimming in the nearby river and endeavors to impress a local girl named Ama. When a local festival known as the Kings Festival takes place, young boys from the villages take part in wrestling contests. Kofi's older brother Kwasi is chosen to represent their village, but during the match, something goes terribly wrong. Soon Kofi finds his life drastically changed and his happy life a thing of the past."

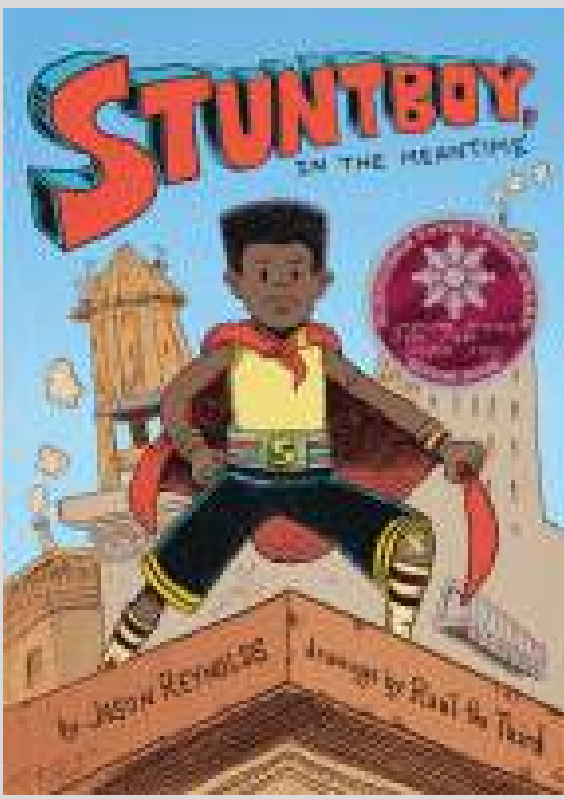


Thirst by Varsha Bajaj

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "This New York Times Bestseller features a heroic girl who fights for her belief that water should be for everyone."

Minni lives in the poorest part of Mumbai, where access to water is limited to a few hours a day and the communal taps have long lines. Lately, though, even that access is threatened by severe water shortages and thieves who are stealing this precious commodity—an act that Minni accidentally witnesses one night. Meanwhile, in the high-rise building where she just started to work, she discovers that water streams out of every faucet and there's even a rooftop swimming pool. Then one day, Minni encounters the water mafia boss and faces her biggest dilemma yet—should she expose him even if it means risking her job . . . and maybe her life? How did her future get so complicated?"



Stuntboy, In the Meantime by Jason Reynolds

Fiction: action/adventure Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "*A Schneider Family Award Honor Book for Middle Grade*

From Newbery Medal honoree and #1 New York Times bestselling author Jason Reynolds comes a hilarious, hopeful, and action-packed middle grade novel about the greatest young superhero you’ve never heard of, filled with illustrations by Raúl the Third!

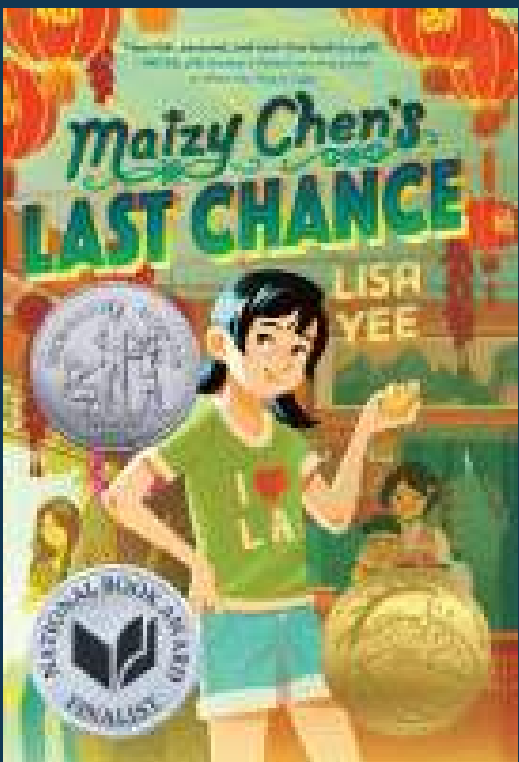
Portico Reeves’s superpower is making sure all the other superheroes—like his parents and two best friends—stay super. And safe. Super safe. And he does this all in secret. No one in his civilian life knows he’s actually...Stuntboy!

But his regular Portico identity is pretty cool, too. He lives in the biggest house on the block, maybe in the whole city, which basically makes it a castle. His mom calls where they live an apartment building. But a building with fifty doors just in the hallways is definitely a castle. And behind those fifty doors live a bunch of different people who Stuntboy saves all the time. In fact, he’s the only reason the cat, New Name Every Day, has nine lives.”

All this is swell except for Portico’s other secret, his not-so-super secret. His parents are fighting all the time. They’re trying to hide it by repeatedly telling Portico to go check on a neighbor “in the meantime.” But Portico knows “meantime” means his parents are heading into the Mean Time which means they’re about to get into it, and well, Portico’s superhero responsibility is to save them, too—as soon as he figures out how.

Only, all these secrets give Portico the worry wiggles, the frets, which his mom calls anxiety. Plus, like all superheroes, Portico has an arch-nemesis who is determined to prove that there is nothing super about Portico at all.

ASIAN/
PACIFIC
AMERICAN
AWARD FOR
YOUTH
LITERATURE



Maizy Chen’s Last Chance by Lisa Yee

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "NEWBERY HONOR AWARD WINNER • NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST • ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN AWARD FOR YOUTH LITERATURE

Twelve year-old Maizy discovers her family’s Chinese restaurant is full of secrets in this irresistible novel that celebrates food, fortune, and family.

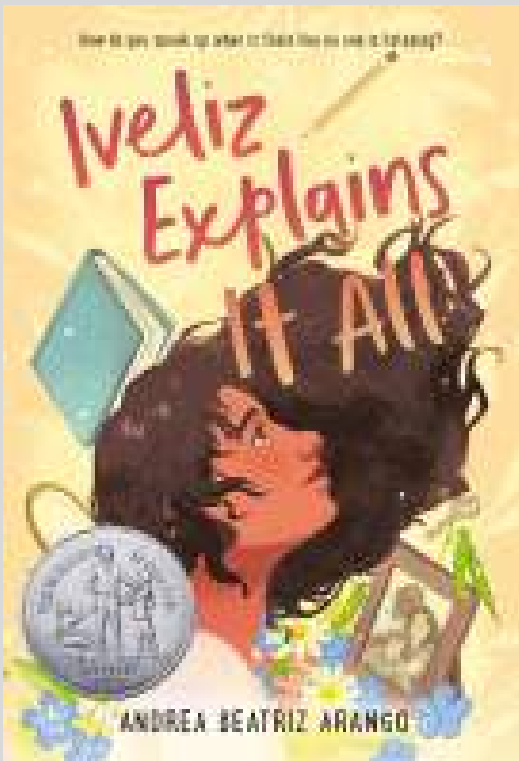
Welcome to the Golden Palace!

Maizy has never been to Last Chance, Minnesota . . . until now. Her mom’s plan is just to stay for a couple weeks, until her grandfather gets better. But plans change, and as Maizy spends more time in Last Chance and at the Golden Palace—the restaurant that’s been in her family for generations—she makes some discoveries.For instance:

- You can tell a LOT about someone by the way they order food.
- People can surprise you. Sometimes in good ways, sometimes in disappointing ways.
- And the Golden Palace has secrets...

But the more Maizy discovers, the more questions she has. Like, why are her mom and her grandmother always fighting? Who are the people in the photographs on the office wall? And when she discovers that a beloved family treasure has gone missing—and someone has left a racist note—Maizy decides it’s time to find the answers.

NEWBERY
HONOR
AWARD
WINNER



Iveliz Explains it All by Andrea Beatriz Arango

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

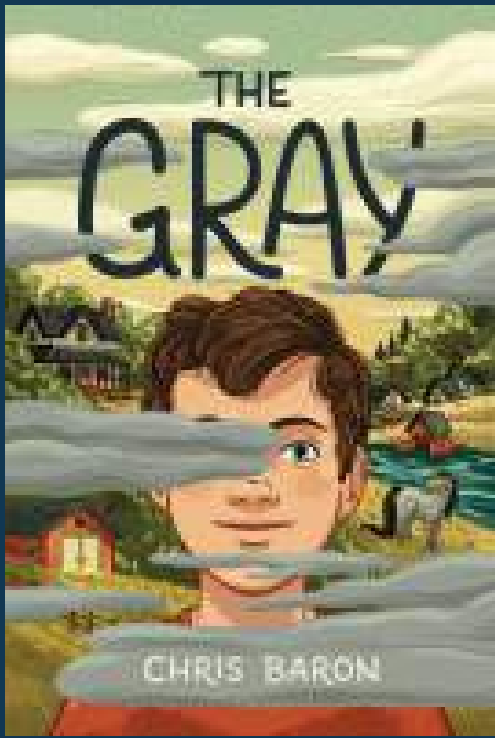
From the publisher: "NEWBERY HONOR AWARD WINNER • In this timely and moving novel in verse, a preteen girl navigates seventh grade while facing mental health challenges. A hopeful, poetic story about learning to advocate for the help and understanding you deserve.

How do you speak up when it feels like no one is listening?

Seventh grade is going to be Iveliz’s year. She’s going to make a new friend, help her abuela Mimi get settled after moving from Puerto Rico, and she is not going to get into any more trouble at school. . . .

Except is that what happens? Of course not. Because no matter how hard Iveliz tries, sometimes people say things that just make her so mad. And worse, Mimi keeps saying Iveliz’s medicine is unnecessary—even though it helps Iveliz feel less sad. But how do you explain your feelings to others when you’re not even sure what’s going on yourself?

Powerful and compassionate, Andrea Beatriz Arango’s debut navigates mental health, finding your voice, and discovering that those who really love you will stay by your side no matter what.



The Gray by Chris Baron

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "The Gray is a sensitively told middle grade story from Chris Baron about living with anxiety and finding ways to cope.

It’s been a tough year for Sasha—he’s been bullied at his middle school and his anxiety, which he calls the Gray, is growing. Sasha’s dad tells him to “toughen up”—and he does, but with unfortunate, hurtful results. His parents and therapist agree that a summer in the country with his aunt might be the best medicine, but it’s the last place he wants to be. He’ll be away from his best friend, video games, and stuck in the house that reminds him of his beloved uncle who died two years earlier.

His aunt is supportive, and there are lots of places to explore, and even some potential new friends. When Sasha is introduced at a local ranch to a horse coincidentally--incredibly--nicknamed the Gray, he feels he's found a kindred spirit.

But his own Gray is ever-present. When one of his new friends disappears, Sasha discovers that the country is wilder and more mysterious than he imagined. He tries to muster enough courage to help in the search . . . but will the Gray hold him back?

NATIONAL
BOOK
AWARD
LONGLIST



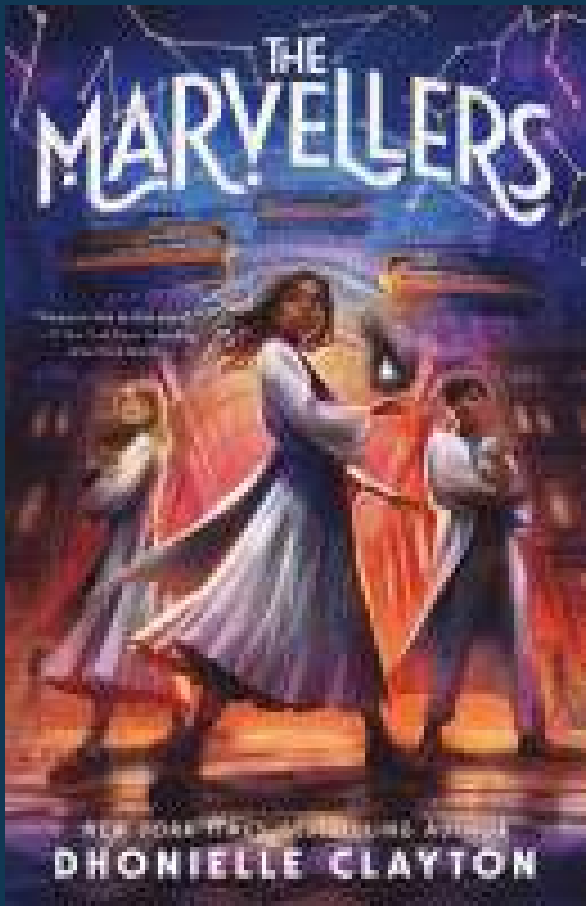
Swim Team by Johnnie Christmas

Fiction: graphic novel Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: “Combines wonderful characters and history to create a story that will make you want to dive right in!” JERRY CRAFT, author of the Newbery Medal–winning *New Kid*

A splashy, contemporary middle grade graphic novel from bestselling comics creator Johnnie Christmas! Bree can’t wait for her first day at her new middle school, Enith Brigitha, home to the Mighty Manatees—until she’s stuck with the only elective that fits her schedule, the dreaded Swim 101. The thought of swimming makes Bree more than a little queasy, yet she’s forced to dive headfirst into one of her greatest fears. Lucky for her, Etta, an elderly occupant of her apartment building and former swim team captain, is willing to help.

With Etta’s training and a lot of hard work, Bree suddenly finds her swim-crazed community counting on her to turn the school’s failing team around. But that’s easier said than done, especially when their rival, the prestigious Holyoke Prep, has everything they need to leave the Mighty Manatees in their wake. Can Bree defy the odds and guide her team to a state championship, or have the Manatees swum their last lap—for good?”



The Marvellers by Dhonielle Clayton

Fiction: fantasy Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: "Dhonielle Clayton makes her middle-grade debut with a fantasy adventure set in a global magic school in the sky—an instant *New York Times* and #1 Indie Bestseller!

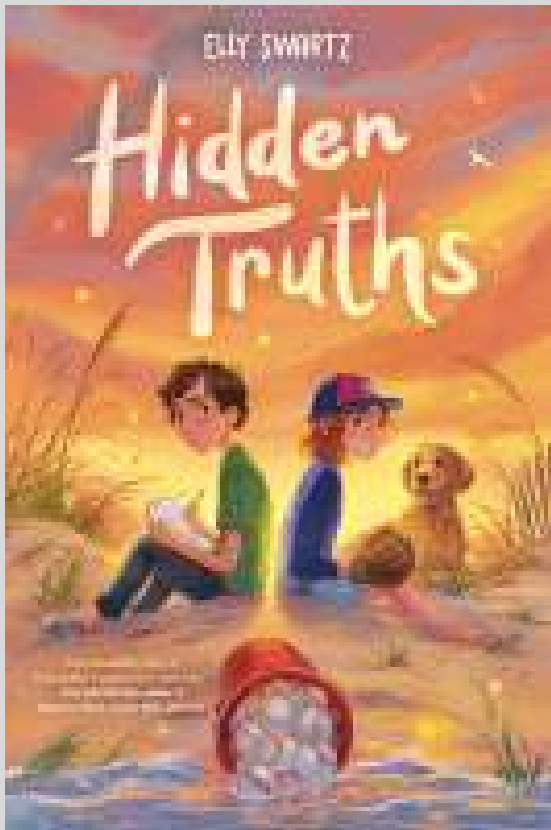
"The Marvellers deserves the highest compliment I can give a book: I want to live in this world." —Rick Riordan, #1 *New York Times* bestselling–author

Eleven-year-old Ella Durand is the first Conjuror to attend the Arcanum Training Institute, a magic school in the clouds where Marvellers from around the world practice their cultural arts, like brewing Indian spice elixirs and bartering with pesky Irish pixies.

Despite her excitement, Ella discovers that being the first isn’t easy—some Marvellers mistrust her magic, which they deem “bad and unnatural.” But eventually, she finds friends in elixirs teacher, Masterji Thakur, and fellow misfits Brigit, a girl who hates magic, and Jason, a boy with a fondness for magical creatures.

When a dangerous criminal known as the Ace of Anarchy escapes prison, supposedly with a Conjuror’s aid, tensions grow in the Marvellian world and Ella becomes the target of suspicion. Worse, Masterji Thakur mysteriously disappears while away on a research trip. With the help of her friends and her own growing powers, Ella must find a way to clear her family’s name and track down her mentor before it’s too late.

"A marvelous gift of a novel! With fantastical twists at every turn, Clayton has created a world that readers won't want to leave." —Angie Thomas, #1 New York Times-bestselling author of *The Hate U Give* and *Concrete Rose*



Hidden Truths by Elly Swartz

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

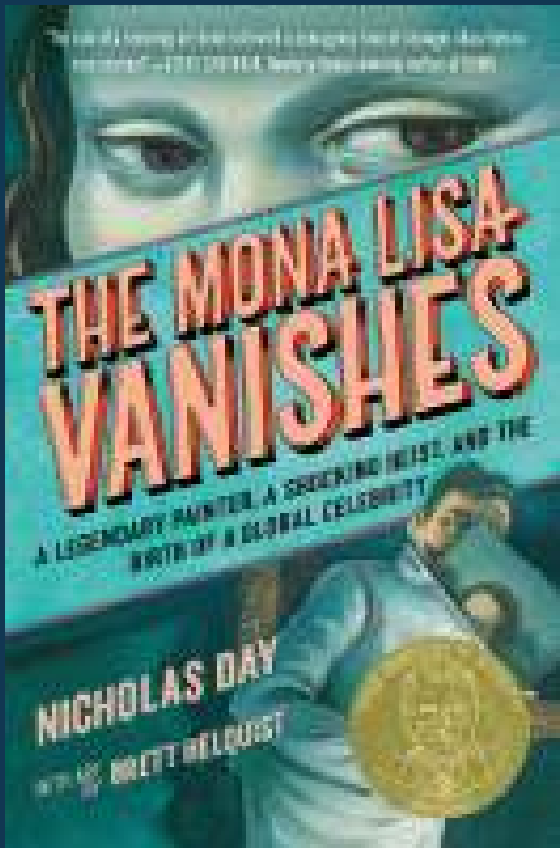
From the publisher: *"How far would you go to keep a promise? Told from alternating points of view, Hidden Truths is a story of changing friendships, the lies we tell, the secrets we keep, and the healing power of forgiveness.*

Dani and Eric have been best friends since Dani moved next door in second grade. They bond over donuts, comic books, and camping on the Cape.

Until one summer when everything changes.

Did Eric cause the accident that leaves Dani unable to do the one thing in the world she most cares about? The question plagues him, and he will do anything to get answers about the explosion that injured her. But Dani is hurting too much to want Eric to pursue the truth—she just wants to shut him out and move on. Besides, Eric has a history of dropping things he starts. Eric knows that and is determined that this will be the one time he follows through.

But what if his pursuit brings him into direct conflict with another friend? Where does Eric’s loyalty really lie?”



The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, A Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity by Nicholas Day

Fiction: narrative nonfiction Interest Level: Middle grade

Publisher Description: *"A “witty thriller” (The New York Times) for middle-grade readers about how the Mona Lisa was stolen from the Louvre, how the robbery made the portrait the most famous artwork in the world—and how the painting by Leonardo da Vinci should never have existed at all.*

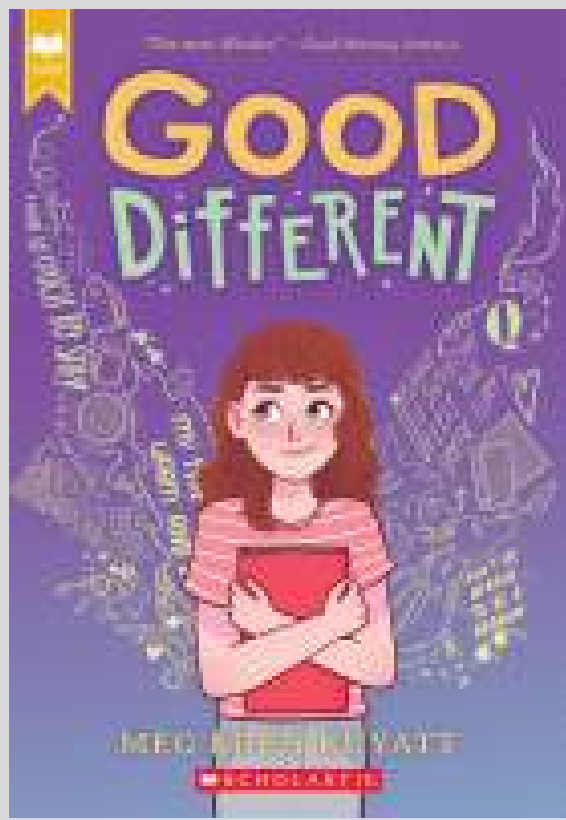
SIBERT MEDAL WINNER • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Publishers Weekly • School Library Journal • Booklist • Kirkus Reviews • NPR • The New York Public Library • The Chicago Public Library • The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

On a hot August day in Paris, just over a century ago, a desperate guard burst into the office of the director of the Louvre and shouted, La Joconde, c’est partie! The Mona Lisa, she’s gone!

No one knew who was behind the heist. Was it an international gang of thieves? Was it an art-hungry American millionaire? Was it the young Spanish painter Pablo Picasso, who was about to remake the very art of painting?

Travel back to an extraordinary period of revolutionary change: turn-of-the-century Paris. Walk its backstreets. Meet the infamous thieves—and detectives—of the era. And then slip back further in time and follow Leonardo da Vinci, painter of the Mona Lisa, through his dazzling, wondrously weird life. Discover the secret at the heart of the Mona Lisa—the most famous painting in the world should never have existed at all.

Here is a middle-grade nonfiction, with black-and-white illustrations by Brett Helquist throughout, written at the pace of a thriller, shot through with stories of crime and celebrity, genius and beauty.”



Good Different by Meg Eden Kuyatt

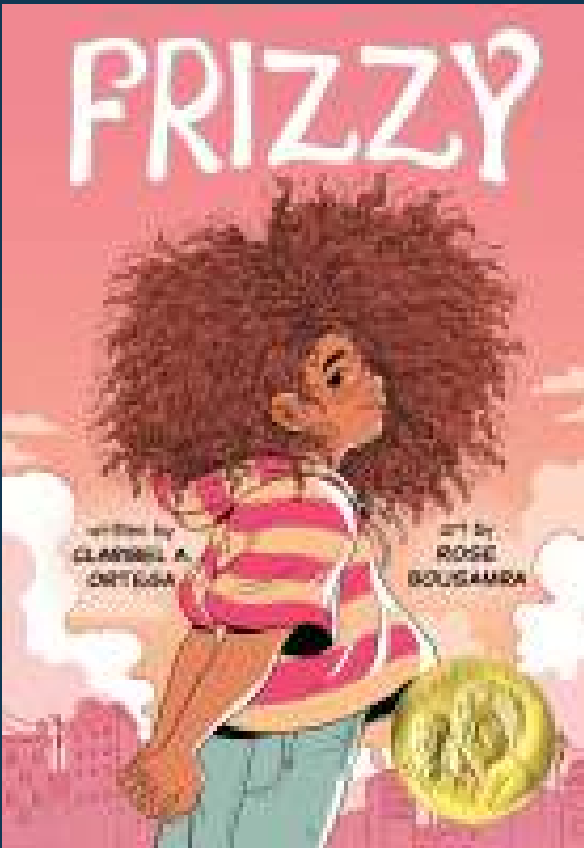
Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: “An extraordinary novel-in-verse for fans of Starfish and A Kind of Spark about a neurodivergent girl who comes to understand and celebrate her difference.

Selah knows her rules for being normal. She always, always sticks to them. This means keeping her feelings locked tightly inside, despite the way they build up inside her as each school day goes on, so that she has to run to the bathroom and hide in the stall until she can calm down. So that she has to tear off her normal-person mask the second she gets home from school, and listen to her favorite pop song on repeat, trying to recharge. Selah feels like a dragon stuck in a world of humans, but she knows how to hide it.

Until the day she explodes and hits a fellow student. Selah's friends pull away from her, her school threatens expulsion, and her comfortable, familiar world starts to crumble. But as Selah starts to figure out more about who she is, she comes to understand that different doesn't mean damaged. Can she get her school to understand that, too, before it's too late? This is a moving and unputdownable story about learning to celebrate the things that make us different. Good Different is the perfect next read for fans of Counting by 7s or Jasmine Warga.”

SCHNEIDER
FAMILY
BOOK
AWARD
HONOR
BOOK



Frizzy by Claribel A Ortega

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

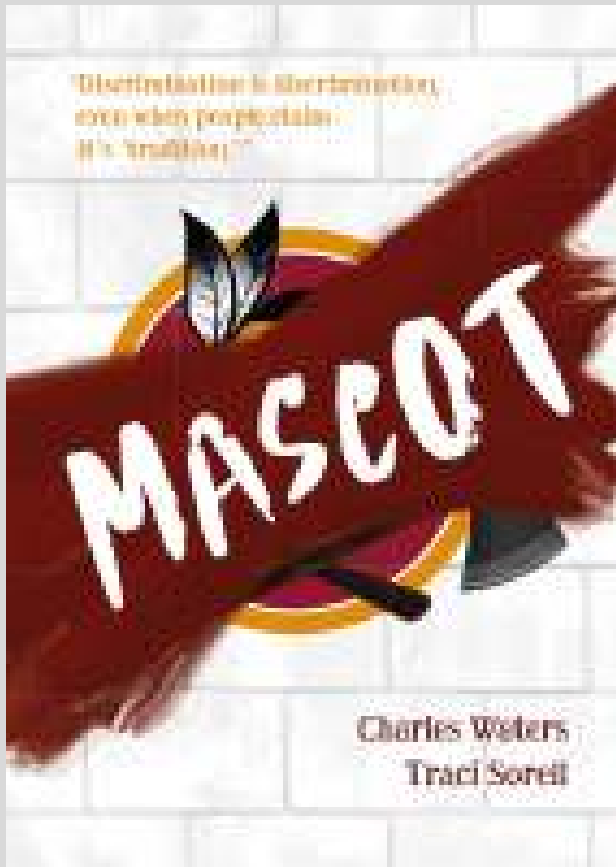
Publisher Description: “Winner of the 2023 Pura Belpré Award for Children's Text Winner of the 2023 Eisner for Best Publication for Kids October 2022 Indie Bestseller

New York Times-bestselling author Claribel A. Ortega and star debut artist Rose Bousamra's Frizzy is about Marlene, a young Dominican girl whose greatest enemy is the hair salon! Through her struggles and triumphs, this heartwarming and gorgeous middle-grade graphic novel shows the radical power of accepting yourself as you are, frizzy curls and all.

Marlene loves three things: books, her cool Tía Ruby and hanging out with her best friend Camila. But according to her mother, Paola, the only thing she needs to focus on is school and "growing up." That means straightening her hair every weekend so she could have "presentable" , "good hair" .

But Marlene hates being in the salon and doesn't understand why her curls are not considered pretty by those around her. With a few hiccups, a dash of embarrassment, and the much-needed help of Camila and Tia Ruby—she slowly starts a journey to learn to appreciate and proudly wear her curly hair.”

WINNER OF
THE 2023
PURA
BELPRÉ
AWARD FOR
CHILDREN'S
TEXT



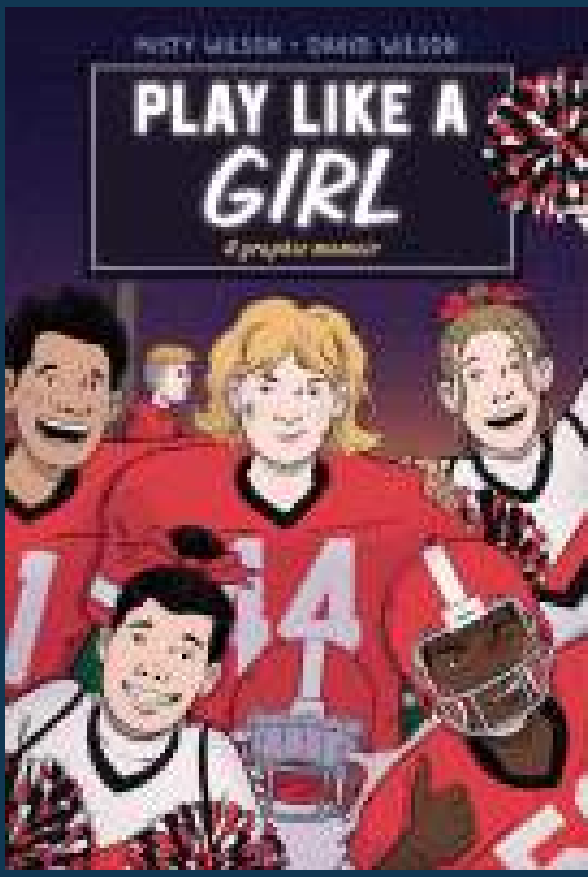
Mascot by Charles Waters

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: “What if a school's mascot is seen as racist, but not by everyone? In this compelling middle-grade novel in verse, two best-selling BIPOC authors tackle this hot-button issue.

In Rye, Virginia, just outside Washington, DC, people work hard, kids go to school, and football is big on Friday nights. An eighth-grade English teacher creates an assignment for her class to debate whether Rye’s mascot should stay or change. Now six middle schoolers—all with different backgrounds and beliefs—get involved in the contentious issue that already has the suburb turned upside down with everyone choosing sides and arguments getting ugly.

Told from several perspectives, readers see how each student comes to new understandings about identity, tradition, and what it means to stand up for real change.”



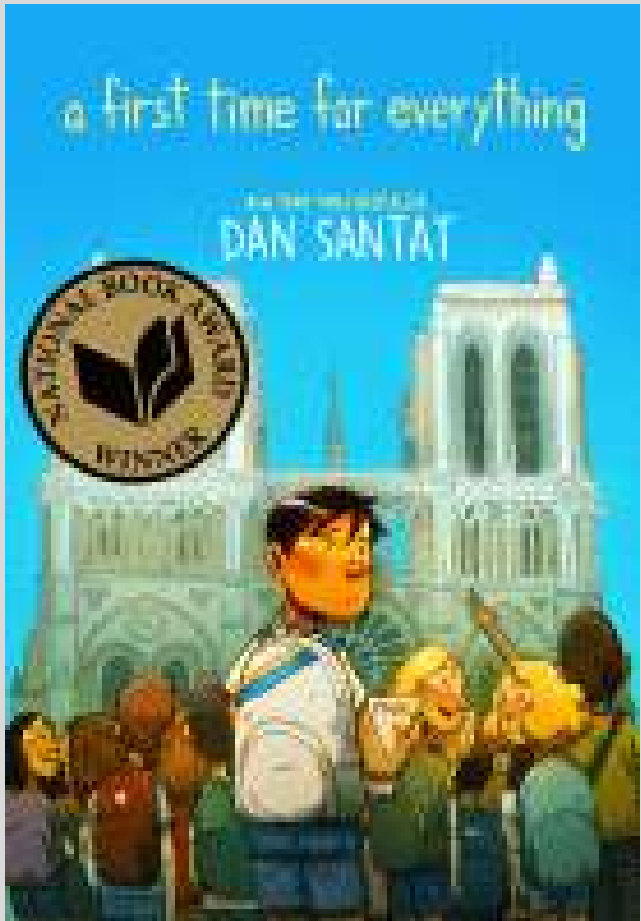
Play Like a Girl by Misty Wilson

Fiction: graphic novel Interest Level: Middle grade

Publisher Description: “Debut author Misty Wilson chronicles her seventh-grade experience as the only girl on her town’s football team in this empowering graphic memoir about teamwork, friendship, crushes, and touchdowns.

Misty never shies away from a challenge, on or off the field. So when the boys tell her she can’t play football, there’s only one thing to do: join their team and show them what she’s got. But the training is rougher than she thought—and so are the other guys, who aren’t thrilled about having a girl on their team. Middle school isn’t so easy, either. Misty wants to fit in with the popular kids, but they think a girl playing football is “weird.” Even her best friend doesn’t get it. Can Misty find a way to score points with her teammates, make new friends, and show everyone—including herself—what it means to play like a girl?”

2023
NATIONAL
BOOK
AWARD
WINNER



A First Time for Everything by Dan Santat

Fiction: graphic novel Interest Level: Middle grade

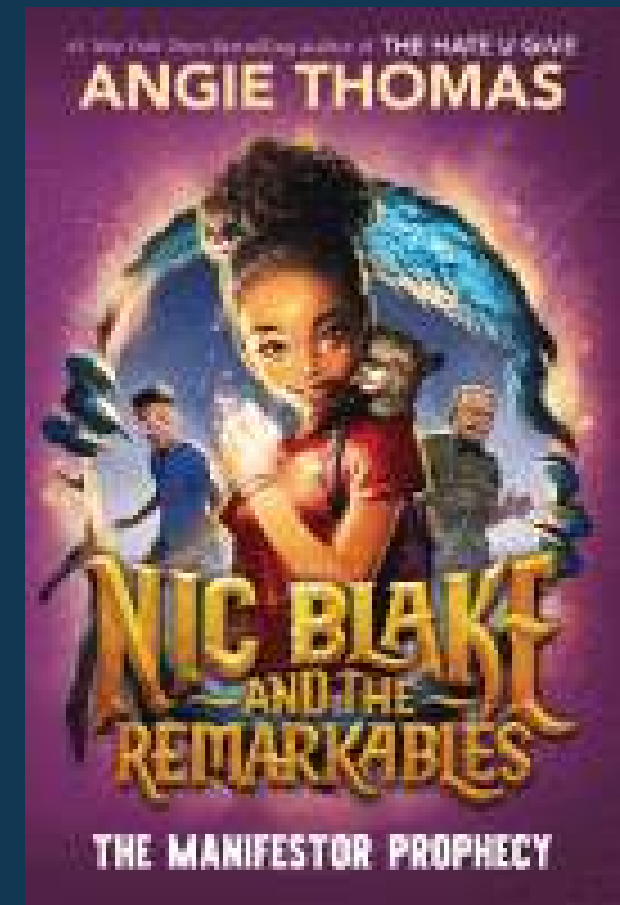
From the publisher: “*Winner of the 2023 National Book Award for Young People's Literature*

A middle grade graphic memoir based on bestselling author and Caldecott Medalist Dan Santat's awkward middle school years and the trip to Europe that changed his life.

Dan's always been a good kid. The kind of kid who listens to his teachers, helps his mom with grocery shopping, and stays out of trouble. But being a good kid doesn't stop him from being bullied and feeling like he's invisible, which is why Dan has low expectations when his parents send him on a class trip to Europe.

At first, he's right. He's stuck with the same girls from his middle school who love to make fun of him, and he doesn't know why his teacher insisted he come on this trip. But as he travels through France, Germany, Switzerland, and England, a series of first experiences begin to change him—first Fanta, first fondue, first time stealing a bike from German punk rockers... and first love.

Funny, heartwarming, and poignant, A First Time for Everything is a feel-good coming-of-age memoir based on New York Times bestselling author and Caldecott Medal winner Dan Santat's awkward middle school years. It celebrates a time that is universally challenging for many of us, but also life-changing as well.”

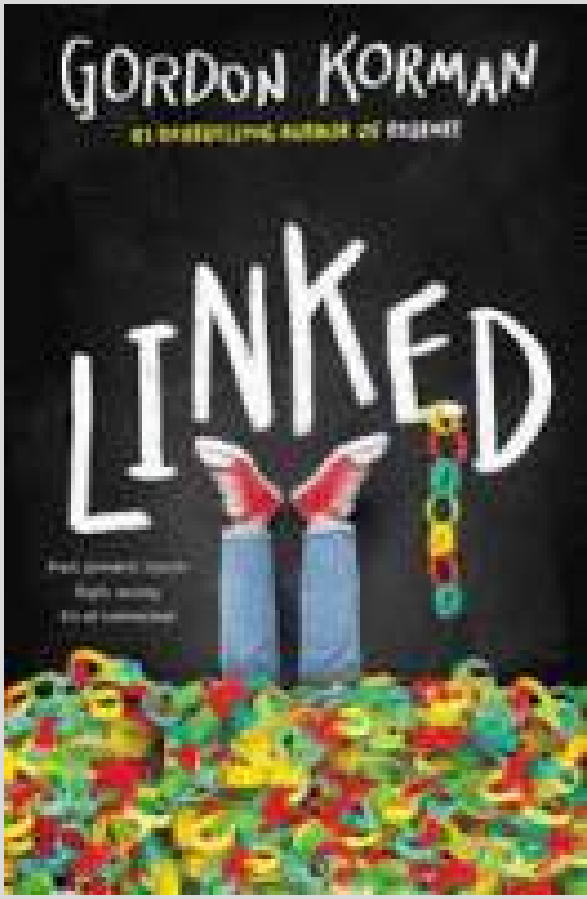


The Manifestor Prophecy by Angie Thomas

Fiction: fantasy Interest Level: Middle grade

Publisher Description: “Internationally bestselling superstar author Angie Thomas makes her middle grade debut with the launch of an inventive, hilarious, and suspenseful new contemporary fantasy trilogy inspired by African American history and folklore.

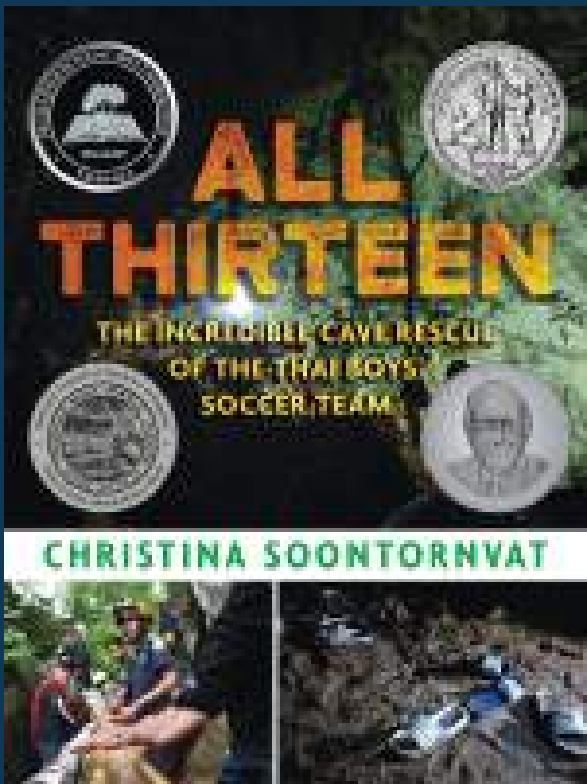
It’s not easy being a Remarkable in the Unremarkable world. Some things are cool—like getting a pet hellhound for your twelfth birthday. Others, not so much—like not being trusted to learn magic because you might use it to take revenge on an annoying neighbor. All Nic Blake wants is to be a powerful Manifestor like her dad. But before she has a chance to convince him to teach her the gift, a series of shocking revelations and terrifying events launch Nic and two friends on a hunt for a powerful magic tool she’s never heard of...to save her father from imprisonment for a crime she refuses to believe he committed.”



Linked by Gordon Korman

Fiction: realistic Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: “You can't deny something is wrong when it's right there in front of you. Link, Michael, and Dana live in a quiet town. But its woken up very quickly when someone sneaks into school and vandalizes it with a swastika. Nobody can believe it. How could such a symbol of hate end up in the middle of their school? Who would do such a thing? Because Michael was the first person to see it, hes the first suspect. Because Link is one of the most popular guys in school, everyones looking to him to figure it out. And because Danas the only Jewish girl in the whole town, everyones treating her more like an outsider than ever. The mystery deepens as more swastikas begin to appear. Some students decide to fight back and start a project to bring people together instead ofdividing them further. The closer Link, Michael, and Dana get to the truth, the more there is to face—not just the crimes of the present, but also the crimes of the past. With Linked, Gordon Korman, the author of the acclaimed novel Restart, poses a mystery for all readers where the who did it? isnt nearly as important as the why?”



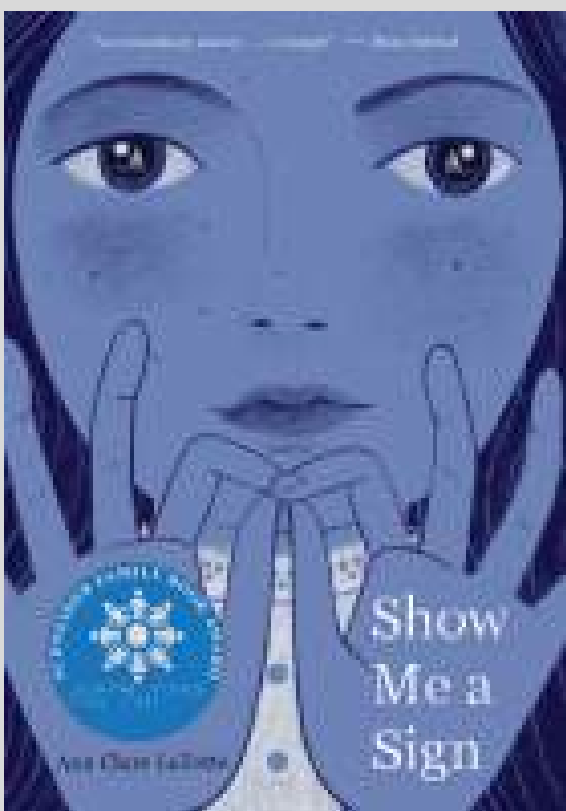
All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team by Christina Soontornvat

Fiction: narrative nonfiction Interest Level: Middle grade

Publisher Description: “Winner of the 2021 Kirkus Prize for Young People's Literature
A 2021 Newbery Honor Book
A 2021 Robert F. Sibert Honor Book
A 2021 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults Finalist
A 2021 Orbis Pictus Honor Book

A unique account of the amazing Thai cave rescue told in a heart-racing, you-are-there style that blends suspense, science, and cultural insight.

On June 23, 2018, twelve young players of the Wild Boars soccer team and their coach enter a cave in northern Thailand seeking an afternoon’s adventure. But when they turn to leave, rising floodwaters block their path out. The boys are trapped! Before long, news of the missing team spreads, launching a seventeen-day rescue operation involving thousands of rescuers from around the globe. As the world sits vigil, people begin to wonder: how long can a group of ordinary kids survive in complete darkness, with no food or clean water? Luckily, the Wild Boars are a very extraordinary "ordinary" group. Combining firsthand interviews of rescue workers with in-depth science and details of the region's culture and religion, author Christina Soontornvat—who was visiting family in Northern Thailand when the Wild Boars went missing—masterfully shows how both the complex engineering operation above ground and the mental struggles of the thirteen young people below proved critical in the life-or-death mission. Meticulously researched and generously illustrated with photographs, this page-turner includes an author’s note describing her experience meeting the team, detailed source notes, and a bibliography to fully immerse readers in the most ambitious cave rescue in history.”



Show Me a Sign by Ann Clare Lezotte

Fiction: historical Interest Level: Middle grade

From the publisher: “Deaf author Ann Clare LeZotte weaves a riveting story inspired by the true history of a thriving deaf community on Martha's Vineyard in the early 19th century. This piercing exploration of ableism, racism, and colonialism will inspire readers to examine core beliefs and question what is considered normal. 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.”

SCHNEIDER
FAMILY
BOOK
AWARD