

JUST ONE MORE PAGE!

Recommendation List

Compiled by the WSRA Children's Literature Committee for the 2019 Convention
from titles published between September 2017-December 2018

www.wsra.org/children-s-literature

Committee members dedicate themselves to reading widely to evaluate the newest books published each year, in order to recommend the most interesting and valuable books for educators and children to read.

Submitted and nominated titles are evaluated based on appeal for students and value for classroom use while also representing high-quality literature with a focus on diversity, authenticity, real-world awareness, thought-provoking response, engaging storytelling, and artistry of writing craft.

Interest Level K-3

Ada Lace, on the Case (Book #1) by Emily Calandrelli, illustrated by Renee Kurilla (Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2017)

Ada Lace--third-grade scientist and inventor extraordinaire--has discovered something awful: her neighbor's beloved Yorkie has been dognapped! With the assistance of a quirky neighbor named Nina (who is convinced an alien took the doggie) and her ever-growing collection of gadgets, Ada sets out to find the wrongdoer. As their investigation becomes more and more mysterious, Ada and Nina grow closer, proving that opposites do, in fact, attract.

Drawn from Nature by Helen Ahpornisiri (Big Picture Press, 2018)

Helen Ahpornisiri's intricate artwork transforms leaves, petals, and seeds into bounding hares, swooping swallows, and blossoming trees. Using nothing but pressed plants, this journey through the seasons captures the wonder and magic of the natural world between the pages of a book. This standout title with beautiful nonfiction text will take readers through an extraordinary year in the wild.

Fox and Chick: The Party and Other Stories by Sergio Ruzzier (Chronicle Books, 2018)

This new series about Fox and Chick, two unlikely friends, will delight young readers with its gentle humour, classic Fox & Chick illustrations, and sweet stories. A 2019 Geisel Award Honor book.

Grilled Cheese and Dragons (Princess Pulverizer #1) by Nancy E. Krulik (Penguin Workshop, 2018)

Meet the princess who'd rather wear a suit of armor than a crown! Princess Serena (or as she prefers, Princess Pulverizer) doesn't want to be a princess--she wants to be knight! But her father, King Alexander of Empiria, thinks she still has a lot to learn when it comes to exhibiting valiant behavior. So he presents a challenge- the princess must first go on a Quest of Kindness and perform good deeds to prove that she truly deserves to go to knight school. With help from a friendly dragon named Dribble and a perpetually terrified knight-in-training named Lucas, can she complete her quest and discover what it really takes to be a hero?

I Lost My Tooth! (Unlimited Squirrels #1) by Mo Willems (Disney-Hyperion, 2018)

In *I Lost My Tooth!*, Zoom Squirrel has lost a front tooth! The Squirrels leap into action when they discover the missing tooth is a baby tooth! Do you know more about teeth than the Squirrels do? You will by the end of this book!

Meet Yasmin (series) by Saadia Faruqi (Picture Window Books, 2018)

Meet Yasmin! Yasmin is a spirited second-grader who's always on the lookout for those "aha" moments to help her solve life's little problems. Taking inspiration from her surroundings and her big imagination, she boldly faces any situation, assuming her imagination doesn't get too big, of course!

My Friends Make Me Happy! by Jan Thomas (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Can you guess what makes Sheep really happy? Here's a clue . . . it starts with the letter F. It is NOT fish or fans. And it is especially not turnips! That doesn't even start with the letter F! Featuring Jan Thomas's wonderfully wacky humor, rowdy repetitions, and hilarious characters, this book is sure to have young readers laughing out loud!

My Toothbrush is Missing by Jan Thomas (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Dog's toothbrush is missing. Has anybody seen it? Maybe . . . But what does a toothbrush look like? Donkey wonders. Featuring Jan Thomas's wonderfully wacky humor, rowdy repetitions, and hilarious characters, this book is sure to have young readers laughing out loud!

Peter & Ernesto: A Tale of Two Sloths by Graham Annable (FirstSecond Books, 2018)

Peter and Ernesto are sloths. Peter and Ernesto are friends. But Peter and Ernesto are nothing alike. Peter loves their tree and never wants to leave, while Ernesto loves the sky and wants to see it from every place on Earth. When Ernesto leaves to have a grand adventure, Peter stays behind and frets. The two friends grow even closer in separation, as Peter the homebody expands his horizons and Ernesto the wanderer learns the value of home.

Rosie Revere and the Raucous Riveters (The Questioners #1) by Andrea Beaty, illustrated by David Roberts (Amulet Books, 2018)

Rosie Revere is no stranger to flops and fails, kerfuffles and catastrophes. After all, engineering is all about perseverance! But this time, Rosie has a really important project to tackle--one that feels much bigger than herself. Rosie's beloved Aunt Rose and her friends, the Raucous Riveters--a group of fun-loving gals who built airplanes during World War II--need help inventing something new. And Rosie is just the engineer for the job! After one flop . . . then another . . . and another . . . Rosie starts to lose hope. But thanks to some help from her fellow Questioners Iggy Peck and Ada Twist, Rosie gets the job done. And, along with the Riveters, she rediscovers the meaning of home.

Song of the Wild by Nicole Davies, illustrated by Petr Horáček (Candlewick Press, 2017)

Polar bears playing on the ice, tigers hunting in the jungle, and nightingales singing in the heart of the woods -- animals are everywhere. In a remarkable collection of poems, children's author Nicola Davies shares keen observations on wildlife around the world.

The Itchy Book (Elephant & Piggie Like Reading) by LeUyen Pham (Disney-Hyperion, 2018)

Triceratops has an itch. . . so does Pterodactyl. . . and Brontosaurus. . . and T-Rex! But DINOSAURS DO NOT SCRATCH. There is a rule written in stone. What is an itchy dinosaur to do?!

The Truth About Bears (series) by Maxwell Eaton (Roaring Brook Press, 2018)

Did you know that polar bears smell seals through the ice and snow in order to find and eat them? Did you know that when a bear is born, it weighs less than a picture book? Did you know that bears sleep all winter and don't go to the bathroom while they hibernate? Discover these facts and many more in this nonfiction picture-book series that injects humor and bright, vivid animals into popular subjects like bears and hippos.

Under the Bed Fred by Linda Bailey (Tundra Books, 2017)

There's a monster under Leo's bed making a ruckus every night. When Leo needs to go to the bathroom, he leaps from the bed to the door-careful not to put his feet on the floor within the monster's reach. But one night Leo gets tired of being scared and boldly calls out to the monster to see if they can't just work something out. Surprisingly, the monster listens, and Leo finds out that even enormous monsters have fears! Leo and his monster, Fred, team up to face their fears, each with his own unique strengths.

Interest Level 3-6

***A Lady Has the Floor* by Kate Hannigan (Highlights, 2018)**

Activist Belva Lockwood never stopped asking herself the question Are women not worth the same as men? She had big dreams and didn't let anyone stand in her way--not her father, her law school, or even the U.S. Supreme Court. She fought for equality for women in the classroom, in the courtroom, and in politics. In her quest for fairness and parity, Lockwood ran for President of the United States, becoming the first woman on the ballot. In this riveting nonfiction picture book biography, award-winning author Kate Hannigan and celebrated artist Alison Jay illuminate the life of Lockwood, a woman who was never afraid to take the floor and speak her mind.

***Ahimsa* by Supriya Kelkar (Tu Books, 2017)**

In 1942, when Mahatma Gandhi asks Indians to give one family member to the freedom movement, ten-year-old Anjali is devastated to think of her father risking his life for the freedom struggle. But it turns out he isn't the one joining. Anjali's mother is. And with this change comes many more adjustments designed to improve their country and use Ahimsa's non-violent resistance to stand up to the British government. First the family must trade in their fine foreign-made clothes for homespun cotton, so Anjali has to give up her prettiest belongings. Then her mother decides to reach out to the Dalit community, the untouchables of society. Anjali is forced to get over her past prejudices as her family becomes increasingly involved in the movement. When Anjali's mother is jailed, Anjali must step out of her comfort zone to take over her mother's work, ensuring that her little part of the independence movement is completed.

***Aru Shah and the End of Time* by Roshani Chokshi (Rick Riordan Presents, 2018)**

Best-selling author Rick Riordan introduces this adventure by Roshani Chokshi about twelve-year-old Aru Shah, who has a tendency to stretch the truth in order to fit in at school. While her classmates are jetting off to family vacations in exotic locales, she'll be spending her autumn break at home, in the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture, waiting for her mom to return from her latest archeological trip. Is it any wonder that Aru makes up stories about being royalty, traveling to Paris, and having a chauffeur? One day, three schoolmates show up at Aru's doorstep to catch her in a lie. They don't believe her claim that the museum's Lamp of Bharata is cursed, and they dare Aru to prove it. Just a quick light, Aru thinks. Then she can get herself out of this mess and never ever fib again. But lighting the lamp has dire consequences. She unwittingly frees the Sleeper, an ancient demon whose duty it is to awaken the God of Destruction. Her classmates and beloved mother are frozen in time, and it's up to Aru to save them. The only way to stop the demon is to find the reincarnations of the five legendary Pandava brothers, protagonists of the Hindu epic poem, the Mahabharata, and journey through the Kingdom of Death. But how is one girl in Spider-Man pajamas supposed to do all that?

***Ban This Book* by Alan Gratz (Tom Doherty Associates, 2017)**

In *Ban This Book* by Alan Gratz, a fourth grader fights back when *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E. L. Konigsburg is challenged by a well-meaning parent and taken off the shelves of her school library. Amy Anne is shy and soft-spoken, but don't mess with her when it comes to her favorite book in the whole world. Amy Anne and her lieutenants wage a battle for the books that will make you laugh and pump your fists as they start a secret banned books locker library, make up ridiculous reasons to ban every single book in the library to make a point, and take a stand against censorship.

***Bat and the Waiting Game* by Elana K. Arnold (Walden Pond Press, 2018)**

In the tradition of Clementine and Ramona Quimby, meet Bat. Author Elana K. Arnold returns with another irresistible story of friendship in this widely acclaimed series starring an unforgettable boy on the autism spectrum. For Bixby Alexander Tam (nicknamed Bat), life is pretty great. He's the caretaker of the best baby skunk in the world--even Janie, his older sister, is warming up to Thor. When Janie gets a part in the school play and can't watch Bat after school, it means some pretty big changes. Someone else has to take care of the skunk kit in the afternoons, Janie is having sleepovers with her new friends, and Bat wants everything to go back to normal. He just has to make it to the night of Janie's performance.

Beatrice Zinker Upside Down Thinker: Incognito by Shelley Johannes (DisneyHyperion, 2018)

Beatrice does her best thinking upside down. Hanging from trees by her knees, doing handstands . . . for Beatrice Zinker, upside down works every time. She was definitely upside down when she and her best friend, Lenny, agreed to wear matching ninja suits on the first day of third grade. But when Beatrice shows up at school dressed in black, Lenny arrives with a cool new outfit and a cool new friend. Even worse, she seems to have forgotten all about the top-secret operation they planned! Can Beatrice use her topsy-turvy way of thinking to save the mission, mend their friendship, and flip things sunny-side up?

Can I Touch Your Hair? Poems of Race, Mistakes, and Friendship by Irene Latham & Charles Waters, illustrated by Sean Qualls & Selina Alko (Carolrhoda Books, 2018)

How can Irene and Charles work together on their fifth grade poetry project? They don't know each other, and they're not sure they want to. Irene Latham, who is white, and Charles Waters, who is black, use this fictional setup to delve into different experiences of race in a relatable way, exploring such topics as hair, hobbies, and family dinners. Accompanied by artwork from acclaimed illustrators Sean Qualls and Selina Alko (of *The Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage*), this remarkable collaboration invites readers of all ages to join the dialogue by putting their own words to their experiences.

Dactyl Hill Squad by Daniel José Older (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2018)

It's 1863 and dinosaurs roam the streets of New York as the Civil War rages between raptor-mounted armies down South. Magdalys Roca and her friends from the Colored Orphan Asylum are on a field trip when the Draft Riots break out, and a number of their fellow orphans are kidnapped by an evil magistrate, Richard Riker. Magdalys and her friends flee to Brooklyn and settle in the Dactyl Hill neighborhood, where black and brown New Yorkers have set up an independent community--a safe haven from the threats of Manhattan. Together with the Vigilance Committee, they train to fly on dactylback, discover new friends and amazing dinosaurs, and plot to take down Riker. Can Magdalys and the squad rescue the rest of their friends before it's too late?

Desmond Cole, Ghost Patrol: The Haunted House Next Door by Andres Miedoso, illustrated by Victor Rivas (Little Simon, 2017)

Meet Desmond Cole! A fearless eight-year-old who runs his own ghost patrol, looking for ghosts, monsters, and mischief makers everywhere. Oh, and he just so happens to be my new best friend...and thank goodness! Because I'm afraid of everything. Welcome to Kersville, a town with a spooky history and a collection of ghosts and spirits who are major mischief-makers. Most kids spend their days without ever seeing or dealing with a ghost, but some kids get stuck with a haunt. When that happens, they call Desmond Cole Ghost Patrol. Desmond is the hall monitor of ghosts and monsters. There's no job too spooky, icky, or risky for Desmond.

Dragons in a Bag by Zetta Elliott (Random House Books for Young Readers, 2018)

When Jaxon is sent to spend the day with a mean old lady his mother calls Ma, he finds out she's not his grandmother--but she is a witch! She needs his help delivering baby dragons to a magical world where they'll be safe. There are two rules when it comes to the dragons- don't let them out of the bag, and don't feed them anything sweet. Before he knows it, Jax and his friends Vikram and Kavita have broken both rules! Will Jax get the baby dragons delivered safe and sound? Or will they be lost in Brooklyn forever?

Ellie, Engineer by Jackson Pearce (Bloomsbury, 2018)

Ellie is an engineer. With a tool belt strapped over her favorite skirt (who says you can't wear a dress and have two kinds of screwdrivers handy, just in case?), she invents and builds amazing creations in her backyard workshop. Together with her best friend Kit, Ellie can make anything. As Kit's birthday nears, Ellie doesn't know what gift to make until the girls overhear Kit's mom talking about her present--the dog Kit always wanted! Ellie plans to make an amazing doghouse, but her plans grow so elaborate that she has to enlist help from the neighbor boys and crafty girls, even though the two groups don't get along. Will Ellie be able to pull off her biggest project yet, all while keeping a secret from Kit?

Endling: The Last by Katherine Applegate (Harper, 2018)

Byx is the youngest member of her daime pack. Believed to possess remarkable abilities, her mythical doglike species has been hunted to near extinction in the war-torn kingdom of Nedarra. After her pack is hunted down and killed, Byx fears she may be the last of her species. The Endling. So Byx sets out to find safe haven, and to see if the legends of other hidden dairnes are true. Along the way, she meets new allies--both animals and humans alike--who each have their own motivations for joining her quest. And although they begin as strangers, they become their own kind of family--one that will ultimately uncover a secret that may threaten every creature in their world.

Enginerds by Jarrett Lerner (Aladdin, 2017)

The battle between boys and bots is on in this funny, fast-paced novel. Ken is an EngiNerd: one of a super-smart group of friends--all nerds--who have been close since kindergarten. They may be brainiacs, but they're just like everyone else: they fight with one another, watch too much TV, eat Chinese food, and hate walking their dogs. Well, maybe not just like everyone because Ken's best friend Dan has been building robots. He then secretly sent one to each of the EngiNerds, never letting them know he's the mastermind. At first Ken is awed and delighted: what kid hasn't dreamed of having a robot all their own? Someone who can be their friend, clean their room, walk the dog, answer homework questions...how amazing is that? But be careful what you wish for: Dan's robot, Greeeg, may look innocent, but his ravenous consumption of food--comestibles--turns him into a butt-blasting bot. And once the other robots 'come alive' it's up to the motley crew of EngiNerds to not only save the day, but save the planet!

Front Desk by Kelly Yang (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2018)

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? The 2019 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Children's Book Winner.

Good Dog by Dan Gemeinhart (Scholastic Press, 2018)

Brodie was a good dog. And good dogs go to heaven. Except Brodie can't move on. He can't forget the boy he left behind. The boy he loved, and who loved him in return. The boy who's still in danger. So Brodie breaks the rules of heaven. He returns to Earth as a spirit. With the help of two other lost souls -- lovable pitbull Tuck and surly house-cat Patsy -- he is determined to find his boy and to save him. Even if it costs him paradise. Because it's what a good dog would do.

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls 2 by Francesca Cavallo (Timbuktu, 2017)

The authors, Francesca Cavallo and Elena Favilli, will take you and your kids on an empowering journey through 100 new bedtime stories, featuring the adventures of extraordinary women from Nefertiti to Beyonce. The unique narrative style of *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls* transforms each biography into a fairy-tale, filling the readers with wonder and with a burning curiosity to know more about each hero. *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls 2* boasts a brand new graphic design, a glossary and 100 incredible new portraits created by the best female artists of our time.

Halfway Normal by Barbara Dee (Aladdin, 2017)

Norah Levy has just completed two years of treatment for leukemia and is ready to go back to the "real world" of middle school. She knows it'll be tricky--but like the Greek mythological characters she read about while she was sick, Norah's up for any challenge. But seventh grade turns out to be harder than she thought. Norah's classmates don't know what to make of her. Her best friend, Harper, tries to be there for her, but she doesn't get it, really--and is hanging out with a new group of girls. Norah's other good friend, Silas, is avoiding her. What's that about, anyway? When Norah is placed with the eighth graders for math and science, she meets Griffin, a cute boy who encourages her love of Greek mythology and art. And Norah decides not to tell him her secret--that she was "that girl" who had cancer. But when something happens to make secret-keeping impossible, Norah must figure out a way to share her story. But how do you explain something to others that you can't explain to yourself? Can Nora take her cue from her favorite Greek myth? And then, once she finds the words, can she move forward with a whole new "normal?"

Ivy Aberdeen's Letter to the World by Ashley Herring Blake (Little, Brown and Company, 2018)

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. A 2019 Stonewall Honor Book in Children's Literature.

Lions and Liars by Kate Beasley (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2018)

Frederick Frederickson has a food-chain theory about life. There are lions, like the school bully. Gazelles, like the bullied kids. There are meerkats, and the fleas that live on the butts of meerkats. Frederick's a flea. Fifth grade is off to a terrible start when Frederick is sent to a disciplinary camp for troublesome boys. His fellow troop mates--Nosebleed, Specs, The Professor, and little-yet-lethal Ant Bite--are terrifying. But in between trust-building exercises and midnight escape attempts, a tenuous friendship grows between them. Which is lucky, because a Category 5 hurricane is coming and everyone will have to work together--lions and fleas alike--to survive!

Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison (Little, Brown and Company, 2017)

This beautifully illustrated *New York Times* bestseller introduces readers of all ages to 40 women who changed the world. An important book for all ages, *Little Leaders* educates and inspires as it relates true stories of forty trailblazing black women in American history. Illuminating text paired with irresistible illustrations bring to life both iconic and lesser-known female figures of Black history. Whether they were putting pen to paper, soaring through the air or speaking up for the rights of others, the women profiled in these pages were all taking a stand against a world that didn't always accept them.

Love Sugar Magic: A Dash of Trouble (#1) by Anna Meriano (Walden Pond Press, 2018)

Leonora Logrono's family owns the most beloved bakery in Rose Hill, Texas, spending their days conjuring delicious cookies and cakes for any occasion. And no occasion is more important than the annual Dia de los Muertos festival. Leo hopes that this might be the year that she gets to help prepare for the big celebration--but, once again, she is told she's too young. Sneaking out of school and down to the bakery, she discovers that her mother, aunt, and four older sisters have in fact been keeping a big secret: they're brujas--witches of Mexican ancestry--who pour a little bit of sweet magic into everything that they bake. Leo knows that she has magical ability as well and is more determined than ever to join the family business--even if she can't let her mama and

hermanas know about it yet. And when her best friend, Caroline, has a problem that needs solving, Leo has the perfect opportunity to try out her craft. It's just one little spell, after all...what could possibly go wrong?

Power Forward (Zayd Saleem, Chasing the Dream #1) by Hena Khan (Salaam Reads, 2018)

Fourth grader Zayd Saleem has some serious hoop dreams. He's not just going to be a professional basketball player. He's going to be a star. A legend. The first Pakistani-American kid to make it to the NBA. He knows this deep in his soul. It's his destiny. There are only a few small things in his way. For starters, Zayd's only on the D-team. (D stands for developmental, but to Zayd it's always felt like a bad grade or something.) Not to mention, he's a bit on the scrawny side, even for the fourth grade team. But his best friend Adam is on the Gold Team, and it's Zayd's dream for the two of them to play together. His mom and dad don't get it. They want him to practice his violin way more than his jump shot. When he gets caught blowing off his violin lessons to practice, Zayd's parents lay down the ultimate punishment: he has to hang up his high tops and isn't allowed to play basketball anymore. As tryouts for the Gold Team approach, Zayd has to find the courage to stand up for himself and chase his dream.

Shaking Things Up: 14 Young Women Who Changed the World by Susan Hood (HarperCollins, 2018)

In this book of poems, you will find Mary Anning, who was just thirteen when she unearthed a prehistoric fossil. You'll meet Ruby Bridges, the brave six year old who helped end segregation in the South. And Maya Lin, who at twenty-one won a competition to create a war memorial, and then had to appear before Congress to defend her right to create.

Snowy Owl Invasion by Sandra Markle (Millbrook Press, 2018)

Late in 2013, snowy owls started showing up in places no one expected to find them--including Florida. What had caused so many of these majestic birds to leave their Arctic home and fly to southern Canada and the United States? Scientists quickly began working to find out. Author Sandra Markle brings together firsthand reports from the scientists involved along with stunning photographs of the owls to explain this rare event, known as an irruption. Follow along as scientists figure out why snowy owls took part in this unusual migration and discover what they learned from the unexpected opportunity to study them up close.

Stella Diaz Has Something to Say by Angela Dominguez (Roaring Brook Press, 2018).

Stella Diaz loves marine animals, especially her betta fish, Pancho. But Stella Diaz is not a betta fish. Betta fish like to be alone, while Stella loves spending time with her mom and brother and her best friend Jenny. Trouble is, Jenny is in another class this year, and Stella feels very lonely. When a new boy arrives in Stella's class, she really wants to be his friend, but sometimes Stella accidentally speaks Spanish instead of English and pronounces words wrong, which makes her turn roja. Plus, she has to speak in front of her whole class for a big presentation at school! But she better get over her fears soon, because Stella Diaz has something to say!

Takedown by Laura Shovan (Wendy Lamb Books, 2018)

Mikayla is a wrestler; when you grow up in a house full of brothers who wrestle, it's inevitable. It's also a way to stay connected to her oldest brother, Evan, who moved in with their dad. Some people object to having a girl on the team. But that's not stopping Mikayla. She's determined to work harder than ever, and win. Lev is determined to make it to the state championships this year. He's used to training with his two buddies as the Fearsome Threesome; they know how to work together. At the beginning of sixth grade, he's paired with a new partner--a girl. This better not get in the way of his goal. Mikayla and Lev work hard together and become friends. But when they face each other, only one of them can win.

The Benefits of Being An Octopus by Ann Braden (Sky Pony Press, 2018)

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 Albro focuses on caring for three younger siblings and avoiding rich classmates at school until her fascination with octopuses gets her on the debate team and she begins to speak out. 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 Cardboard Kingdom by Chad Sell (Alfred A. Knopf, 2018)

Perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier, *Awkward*, and *All's Faire in Middle School*, this graphic novel follows a neighborhood of kids who transform ordinary cardboard into fantastical homemade costumes as they explore conflicts with friends, family, and their own identity. Welcome to a neighborhood of kids who transform ordinary boxes into colorful costumes, and their ordinary block into cardboard kingdom. This is the summer when sixteen kids encounter knights and rogues, robots and monsters--and their own inner demons--on one last quest before school starts again. In the Cardboard Kingdom, you can be anything you want to be--imagine that!

The Care and Feeding of a Pet Black Hole by Michelle Cuevas (Dial Books, 2017)

When eleven-year-old Stella Rodriguez shows up at NASA to request that her recording be included in Carl Sagan's Golden Record, something unexpected happens: A black hole follows her home, and sets out to live in her house as a pet. The black hole swallows everything he touches, which is challenging to say the least--but also turns out to be a convenient way to get rid of those items that Stella doesn't want around. Soon the ugly sweaters her aunt has made for her all disappear within the black hole, as does the smelly class hamster she's taking care of, and most important, all the reminders of her dead father that are just too painful to have around. It's not until Stella, her younger brother, Cosmo, the family puppy, and even the bathroom tub all get swallowed up by the black hole that Stella comes to realize she has been letting her own grief consume her. And that's not the only thing she realizes as she attempts to get back home. This is an astonishingly original and funny adventure with a great big heart.

The Creature of the Pines (The Unicorn Rescue Society #1) by Adam Gidwitz, illustrated by Hatem Aly (Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2018)

Elliot Eisner isn't exactly excited about starting at a brand-new school in a brand-new town; he'd much rather stay at home and read a book. But things take an unexpected turn when he finds out his weird new teacher, Professor Fauna, has planned a field trip for Elliot's very first day. Along with a new friend-brave, outspoken Uchenna Devereaux-Elliot gets caught up in a secret group of adventurers, The Unicorn Rescue Society, whose goal is to protect and defend the world's mythical creatures. Together with Professor Fauna, Elliot and Uchenna must help rescue a Jersey Devil from a duo of conniving, greedy billionaires, the Schmoke Brothers.

The Elephant Keeper: Caring for Orphaned Elephants in Zambia by Margriet Ruurs (Kids Can Press, 2017)

When teenage Aaron discovers a baby elephant nearly drowning in the swimming pool at the guest lodge where he works, he acts quickly and manages to save the animal just in time. The rescued baby is brought to an elephant orphanage for care, and given the name Zambezi. When Aaron is offered a job at the orphanage, his life is suddenly transformed, as he discovers a bond of friendship with Zambezi and his lifelong vocation as an elephant keeper.

The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl by Stacy McAnulty (Random House, 2018)

Lucy Callahan was struck by lightning. She doesn't remember it, but it changed her life forever. The zap gave her genius-level math skills, and ever since, Lucy has been homeschooled. Now, at 12 years old, she's technically ready for college. She just has to pass 1 more test--middle school! Lucy's grandma insists- Go to middle school for 1 year. Make 1 friend. Join 1 activity. And read 1 book (that's not a math textbook!). Lucy's not sure what a girl who does calculus homework for fun can possibly learn in 7th grade. She has everything she needs at home, where nobody can make fun of her rigid routines or her superpowered brain. The equation of Lucy's life has already been solved. Unless there's been a miscalculation? A celebration of friendship, Stacy McAnulty's smart and thoughtful middle-grade debut reminds us all to get out of our comfort zones and embrace what makes us different.

***The Night Diary* by Veera Hiranandani (Dial Books, 2018)**

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. A 2019 Newbery Award Honor book.

***The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson (Arthur A. Levine Books, 2018)**

The letter waits in a book, in a box, in an attic, in an old house in Lambert, South Carolina. It's waiting for Candice Miller. When Candice finds the letter, she isn't sure she should read it. It's addressed to her grandmother, after all, who left Lambert in a cloud of shame. But the letter describes a young woman named Siobhan Washington. An injustice that happened decades ago. A mystery enfolding the letter-writer. And the fortune that awaits the person who solves the puzzle. Grandma tried and failed. But now Candice has another chance. So with the help of Brandon Jones, the quiet boy across the street, she begins to decipher the clues in the letter. The challenge will lead them deep into Lambert's history, full of ugly deeds, forgotten heroes, and one great love; and deeper into their own families, with their own unspoken secrets. Can they find the fortune and fulfill the letter's promise before the summer ends? A 2019 Coretta Scott King Author Award Honor book.

***The Peculiar Incident on Shady Street* by Lindsay Currie (Aladdin, 2017)**

Tessa Woodward isn't exactly thrilled to move to rainy, cold Chicago from her home in sunny Florida. But homesickness turns to icy fear when unexplainable things start happening in her new house. Things like flickering lights, mysterious drawings appearing out of nowhere, and a crackling noise she can feel in her bones. When her little brother's doll starts crying real tears, Tessa realizes that someone--or something--is trying to communicate with her. And it involves a secret that's been shrouded in mystery for more than one hundred years. With the help of three new friends, Tessa begins unraveling the mystery of what happened in the house on Shady Street--and more importantly, what it has to do with her!

***The Science of Unbreakable Things* by Tae Keller (Random House, 2018)**

How do you grow a miracle? For the record, this is not the question Mr. Neely is looking for when he says everyone in class must answer an important question using the scientific method. But Natalie's botanist mother is suffering from depression, so this is The Question that's important to Natalie. When Mr. Neely suggests that she enter an egg drop competition, Natalie has hope. Eggs are breakable. Hope is not. Natalie has a secret plan for the prize money. She's going to fly her mother to see the Cobalt Blue Orchids--flowers that survive against impossible odds. The magical flowers are sure to inspire her mother to love life again. Because when parents are breakable, it's up to kids to save them, right? An extraordinary debut about the coming-of-age moment when kids realize that parents are people, too, and that talking about problems is like taking a plant out of a dark cupboard and giving it light.

***The Serpent's Secret* by Sayantani Dasgupta (Scholastic Press, 2018)**

On the morning of her 12th birthday, Kiranmala is just a regular sixth grader living in Parsippany, New Jersey... until her parents mysteriously vanish and a drooling rakkhosh demon slams through her kitchen, determined to eat her alive. Turns out there might be some truth to her parents' fantastical stories -- like how Kiranmala is a real Indian princess and how she comes from a secret place not of this world. To complicate matters, two crush-worthy princes ring her doorbell, insisting they've come to rescue her. Suddenly, Kiran is swept into another dimension full of magic, winged horses, moving maps, and annoying, talking birds. There she must solve riddles and battle demons all while avoiding the Serpent King of the underworld and the Rakkhoshi Queen in order to find her parents and basically save New Jersey, her entire world, and everything beyond it.

The War I Finally Won by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley (Dial Books, 2018)

When Ada's clubfoot is surgically fixed at last, she knows for certain that she's not what her mother said she was--damaged, deranged, crippled mentally as well as physically. She's not a daughter anymore, either. Who is she now? World War II rages on, and Ada and her brother, Jamie, move with their guardian, Susan, into a cottage with the iron-faced Lady Thornton and her daughter, Maggie. Life in the crowded home is tense. Then Ruth moves in. Ruth, a Jewish girl, from Germany. A German? Could Ruth be a spy? As the fallout from war intensifies, calamity creeps closer, and life during wartime grows even more complicated. Who will Ada decide to be? How can she keep fighting? And who will she struggle to save?

The Wild Robot Escapes by Peter Brown (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2018)

Shipwrecked on a remote, wild island, Robot Roz learned from the unwelcoming animal inhabitants and adapted to her surroundings--but can she survive the challenges of the civilized world and find her way home to Brightbill and the island? From bestselling and award-winning author and illustrator Peter Brown comes a heartwarming and action-packed sequel to his *New York Times* bestselling *The Wild Robot*, about what happens when nature and technology collide.

Trash Revolution: Breaking the Waste Cycle by Erica Fyvie, Illustrated by Bill Slavin (Kids Can Press, 2018)

All the stuff that surrounds us has a life cycle: materials are harvested, the stuff is made and distributed, it's consumed and then it gets trashed or recycled. Using the typical contents of a child's school backpack (defined as water, food, clothing, paper, plastic, metals, electronics), this book explores those stages in detail, including lots of ways to reduce, reuse or recycle waste along the way.

Young, Gifted and Black: Meet 52 Black Heroes from Past and Present by Jamia Wilson (Wide Eye Editions, 2018)

Meet 52 icons of color from the past and present in this celebration of inspirational achievement--a collection of stories about changemakers to encourage, inspire and empower the next generation of changemakers. Jamia Wilson has carefully curated this range of black icons and the book is stylishly brought together by Andrea Pippins' colorful and celebratory illustrations. Written in the spirit of Nina Simone's song "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black," this vibrant book is a perfect introduction to both historic and present-day icons and heroes. Meet figureheads, leaders and pioneers such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela and Rosa Parks, as well as cultural trailblazers and athletes like Stevie Wonder, Oprah Winfrey and Serena Williams. All children deserve to see themselves represented positively in the books they read. Highlighting the talent and contributions of black leaders and changemakers from around the world, readers of all backgrounds will be empowered to discover what they too can achieve.

Interest Level 5-8

Amal Unbound by Aisha Saeed (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018)

Life is quiet and ordinary in Amal's Pakistani village, but she had no complaints, and besides, she's busy pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher one day. Her dreams are temporarily dashed when--as the eldest daughter--she must stay home from school to take care of her siblings. Amal is upset, but she doesn't lose hope and finds ways to continue learning. Then the unimaginable happens--after an accidental run-in with the son of her village's corrupt landlord, Amal must work as his family's servant to pay off her own family's debt.

Be Prepared by Vera Brosgol (FirstSecond, 2018)

All Vera wants to do is fit in--but that's not easy for a Russian girl in the suburbs. Her friends live in fancy houses and their parents can afford to send them to the best summer camps. Vera's single mother can't afford that sort of luxury, but there's one summer camp in her price range--Russian summer camp. Vera is sure she's found the one place she can fit in, but camp is far from what she imagined. And nothing could prepare her for all the "cool girl" drama, endless Russian history lessons, and outhouses straight out of nightmares!

Betty Before X by Ilyasah Shabazz with Renee Watson (Farrar, Straus, Giroux 2018)

In Detroit, 1945, eleven-year-old Betty's house doesn't quite feel like home. She believes her mother loves her, but she can't shake the feeling that her mother doesn't want her. Church helps those worries fade, if only for a little while. The singing, the preaching, the speeches from guest activists like Paul Robeson and Thurgood Marshall stir African Americans in her community to stand up for their rights. Betty quickly finds confidence and purpose in volunteering for the Housewives League, an organization that supports black-owned businesses. Soon, the American civil rights icon we now know as Dr. Betty Shabazz is born.

Breakout by Kate Messner (Bloomsbury, 2018)

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.

Ebb & Flow by Heather Smith (Kids Can Press, 2018)

Last year, eleven-year-old Jett and his mother had moved to a new town for a fresh start after his father went to jail. But Jett soon learned that fresh starts aren't all they're cracked up to be. When he befriended a boy with a difficult home life, Jett found himself in a cycle of bad decisions that culminated in the betrayal of a friend - a shameful secret he still hasn't forgiven himself for. Will a summer spent with his unconventional grandmother help Jett find his way to redemption?

Every Shiny Thing by Cordelia Jensen and Laurie Morrison (Amulet, 2018)

In this beautifully constructed middle-grade novel, told half in prose and half in verse, Lauren prides herself on being a good sister, and Sierra is used to taking care of her mom. When Lauren's parents send her brother to a therapeutic boarding school for teens on the autism spectrum and Sierra moves to a foster home in Lauren's wealthy neighborhood, both girls are lost until they find a deep bond with each other. But when Lauren recruits Sierra to help with a Robin Hood scheme to raise money for autistic kids who don't have her family's resources, Sierra has a lot to lose if the plan goes wrong. Lauren must learn that having good intentions isn't all that matters when you battle injustice, and Sierra needs to realize that sometimes, the person you need to take care of is yourself.

Everything I Know About You by Barbara Dee (Aladdin, 2018)

During a class trip to DC, twelve-year-old Tally and her best friends, Sonnet and Caleb (a.k.a. Spider) are less than thrilled when they are assigned roommates and are paired with kids who are essentially their sworn enemies. For Tally, rooming with "clonergirl" Ava Seely feels like punishment, rather than potential for fun. But the trip is full of surprises. Despite a pact to stick together as much as they can, Sonnet pulls away, and spider befriends Marco, the boy who tormented him last year. And Marco just might "like" Tally--what's that about?

Fly Girls: The Daring American Women Pilots Who Helped Win WWII by P. O'Connell Pearson (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2018)

At the height of World War II, the US Army Airforce faced a desperate need for skilled pilots--but only men were allowed in military airplanes, even if the expert pilots who were training them to fly were women. Through grit and pure determination, 1,100 of these female pilots--who had to prove their worth time and time again--were finally allowed to ferry planes from factories to bases, to tow targets for live ammunition artillery training, to test repaired planes and new equipment, and more. Though the WASPs lived on military bases, trained as military pilots, wore uniforms, marched in review, and sometimes died violently in the line of duty, they were civilian employees and received less pay than men doing the same jobs and no military benefits, not even for burials. Their story is one of patriotism, the power of positive attitudes, the love of flying, and the willingness to do good with no concern for personal gain.

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes (Little Brown, 2018)

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.

Greetings from Witness Protection! by Jake Burt (Feiwel & Friends, 2018)

Nicki Demere is an orphan and a pickpocket. She also happens to be the U.S. Marshals' best bet to keep a family alive. . . .The marshals are looking for the perfect girl to join a mother, father, and son on the run from the nation's most notorious criminals. After all, the bad guys are searching for a family with one kid, not two, and adding a streetwise girl who knows a little something about hiding things may be just what the marshals need.

Harbor Me by Jacqueline Woodson (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018)

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.

Hope in the Holler by Lisa Lewis Tyre (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018)

Right before Wavie's mother died, she gave Wavie a list of instructions to help her find her way in life, including this one- Be brave, Wavie B! You got as much right to a good life as anybody, so find it!But little did Wavie's mom know that events would conspire to bring Wavie back to Conley Hollow, the Appalachian hometown her mother tried to leave behind. Now Wavie's back in the Holler--and in the clutches of her Aunt Samantha Rose. Life with the devilish Samantha Rose and her revolting cousin Hoyt is no picnic, but there's real pleasure in sleeping in her own mother's old bed, and making friends with the funny, easygoing kids her aunt calls the "neighborhood-no-accounts." With their help, Wavie just might be able to prevent her aunt from becoming her legal guardian, and find her courage and place in the world.

Illegal by Eoin Colfer, illustrated by Giovanni Rigano (Sourcebooks, 2018)

Ebo is alone. His brother, Kwame, has disappeared, and Ebo knows it can only be to attempt the hazardous journey to Europe, and a better life--the same journey their sister set out on months ago. But Ebo refuses to be left behind in Ghana. He sets out after Kwame and joins him on the quest to reach Europe. Ebo's epic journey takes him across the Sahara Desert to the dangerous streets of Tripoli, and finally out to the merciless sea. But with every step, he holds on to his hope for a new life, and a reunion with his family.

Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus by Dusti Bowling (Sterling Children's Books, 2017)

Aven Green loves to tell people that she lost her arms in an alligator wrestling match, or a wildfire in Tanzania, but the truth is she was born without them. And when her parents take a job running Stagecoach Pass, a rundown western theme park in Arizona, Aven moves with them across the country knowing that she'll have to answer the question over and over again. Her new life takes an unexpected turn when she bonds with Connor, a classmate who also feels isolated because of his own disability, and they discover a room at Stagecoach Pass that holds bigger secrets than Aven ever could have imagined. It's hard to solve a mystery, help a friend, and face your worst fears. But Aven's about to discover she can do it all . . . even without arms.

Just Like Jackie by Lindsey Stoddard (Harper, 2018)

For as long as Robinson Hart can remember, it's just been her and Grandpa. He taught her about cars, baseball, and everything else worth knowing. But Grandpa's memory has been getting bad--so bad that he sometimes can't even remember Robbie's name. She's sure that she's making things worse by getting in trouble at school, but she can't resist using her fists when bullies like Alex Carter make fun of her for not having a mom. Now she's stuck in group guidance--and to make things even worse, Alex Carter is there too. There's no way Robbie's going to open up about her life to some therapy group, especially not with Alex in the room. Besides, if she told anyone how forgetful Grandpa's been getting lately, they'd take her away from him. He's the only family she has--and it's up to her to keep them together, no matter what.

Louisiana's Way Home by Kate DiCamillo (Candlewick Press, 2018)

When Louisiana Elefante's granny wakes her up in the middle of the night to tell her that the day of reckoning has arrived and they have to leave home immediately, Louisiana isn't overly worried. After all, Granny has many middle-of-the-night ideas. But this time, things are different. This time, Granny intends for them never to return. Separated from her best friends, Raymie and Beverly, Louisiana struggles to oppose the winds of fate (and Granny) and find a way home.

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish by Pablo Cartaya (Viking Books for Young Readers, 2018)

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.

Playing Atari With Saddam Hussein by Jennifer Roy with Ali Fadhil (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Based on a true story. 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.

Rebound by Kwame Alexander (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

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 worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

Sunny by Jason Reynolds (Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2018)

Sunny is just that--sunny. Always ready with a goofy smile and something nice to say, Sunny is the chilliest dude on the Defenders team. But Sunny's life hasn't always been sun beamy-bright. You see, Sunny is a murderer. Or at least he thinks of himself that way. His mother died giving birth to him, and based on how Sunny's dad treats him--ignoring him, making Sunny call him Darryl, never "Dad"--it's no wonder Sunny thinks he's to blame. It seems the only thing Sunny can do right in his dad's eyes is win first place ribbons running the mile, just like his mom did. But Sunny doesn't like running, never has. So he stops. Right in the middle of a race. With his relationship with his dad now worse than ever, the last thing Sunny wants to do is leave the other newbies--his only friends--behind. But you can't be on a track team and not run. So Coach asks Sunny what he wants to do. Sunny's answer? Dance. Yes, dance. But you also can't be on a track team and dance.

The Girl Who Drew Butterflies: How Maria Merian's Art Changed Science by Joyce Sidman (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

One of the first naturalists to observe live insects directly, Maria Sibylla Merian was also one of the first to document the metamorphosis of the butterfly. In this visual nonfiction biography, richly illustrated throughout with full-color original paintings by Merian herself, the Newbery Honor-winning author Joyce Sidman paints her own picture of one of the first female entomologists and a woman who flouted convention in the pursuit of knowledge and her passion for insects. The 2019 Robert F. Sibert Medal Winner.

The Stars Beneath Our Feet by David Barclay Moore (Alfred A. Knopf, 2017)

It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward. His path isn't clear--and the pressure to join a "crew," as his brother did, is always there. When Lolly and his friend are beaten up and robbed, joining a crew almost seems like the safe choice. But building a fantastical Lego city at the community center provides Lolly with an escape--and an unexpected bridge back to the world.

The Summer of Owen Todd by Tony Abbott (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2017)

Owen and his best friend, Sean, are both eleven years old. They've lived on Cape Cod all their lives, and now that they're a little older, they'll finally be free to spend some time on their own. But Sean's mother has a different idea--she hires a babysitter to look after Sean. Paul is in his twenties, and a well-liked guy from church. Paul starts doing things that just feel wrong. Because they've always been as close as brothers, Sean tells Owen, and no one else. What's not certain to Owen is what he should do. Sean warns him not to tell anyone what is happening. But if Owen doesn't tell, could something even worse happen to Sean?

The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor (Katherine Tegen Books, 2018)

Mason Buttle is the biggest, sweatiest kid in his grade, and everyone knows he can barely read or write. Mason's learning disabilities are compounded by grief. Fifteen months ago, Mason's best friend, Benny Kilmartin, turned up dead in the Buttle family's orchard. An investigation drags on, and Mason, honest as the day is long, can't understand why Lieutenant Baird won't believe the story Mason has told about that day. Both Mason and his new friend, tiny Calvin Chumsky, are relentlessly bullied by the other boys in their neighborhood, so they create an underground club space for themselves. When Calvin goes missing, Mason finds himself in trouble again. He's desperate to figure out what happened to Calvin, and eventually, Benny. The 2019 Schneider Family Book Award Middle Grade Winner.

The Van Gogh Deception by Deron Hicks (Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt, 2017)

When a young boy is discovered in Washington DC's National Gallery without any recollection of who he is, so begins a high-stakes race to unravel the greatest mystery of all: his identity. As the stakes continue to rise, the boy must piece together the disjointed clues of his origins while using his limited knowledge to stop one of the greatest art frauds ever attempted. Digitally interactive, this breathtaking museum mystery offers QR codes woven throughout the book that bring renowned paintings to readers' fingertips.

Things That Surprise You by Jennifer Maschari (Balzer + Bray, 2017)

Emily Murphy is about to enter middle school. She's sort of excited...though not nearly as much as her best friend Hazel, who is ready for everything to be new. Emily wishes she and Hazel could just continue on as they always have, being the biggest fans ever of the Unicorn Chronicles, making up dance moves, and getting their regular order at The Slice. But things are changing. At home, Emily and her mom are learning to move on after her parents' divorce. Hardest of all, her beloved sister Mina has been in a treatment facility to deal with her anorexia. Emily is eager to have her back, but anxious about her sister getting sick again. Emily is trying to keep up, but she keeps doing and saying the wrong thing. She wants to be the perfect new Emily. But who is that really?

Where the Watermelons Grow by Cindy Baldwin (Harper, 2018)

When twelve-year-old Della Kelly finds her mother furiously digging black seeds from a watermelon in the middle of the night and talking to people who aren't there, Della worries that it's happening again--that the sickness that put her mama in the hospital four years ago is back. That her mama is going to be hospitalized for months like she was last time. With her daddy struggling to save the farm and her mama in denial about what's happening, it's up to Della to heal her mama for good. And she knows just how she'll do it: with a jar of the Bee Lady's magic honey, which has mended the wounds and woes of Maryville, North Carolina, for generations. But when the Bee Lady says that the solution might have less to do with fixing Mama's brain and more to do with healing her own heart, Della must learn that love means accepting her mama just as she is.

Interest Level Young Adult

#notyourprincess: Voices of Native American Women by Lisa Charleyboy and Mary Beth Leatherdale (Annick Press, 2017)

Whether looking back to a troubled past or welcoming a hopeful future, the powerful voices of Indigenous women across North America resound in this book. In the same style as the best-selling *Dreaming in Indian*, *#Not Your Princess* presents an eclectic collection of poems, essays, interviews, and art that combine to express the experience of being a Native woman. Stories of abuse, humiliation, and stereotyping are countered by the voices of passionate women making themselves heard and demanding change. Sometimes angry, often reflective, but always strong, the women in this book will give teen readers insight into the lives of women who, for so long, have been virtually invisible. The 2018 American Indian Youth Literature Award Best Young Adult Book.

A Land of Permanent Goodbyes by Atia Abawi (Philomel Books, 2018)

Tareq lives in Syria with his warm and loving family, until the bombs strike. He, his father, and his younger sister are the only survivors, and they have no choice but to go to Raqqa, where they have extended family. But Raqqa is a stronghold for Daesh, the militant group claiming to follow the tenets of Islam, yet who really exist only to enable violence and intolerance. Tareq's family leave quickly, and Tareq heads to Istanbul with his cousin. From there, reunited with his younger sister, they flee successfully to Greece.

A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi (Harper, 2018)

It's 2002, a year after 9/11. It's an extremely turbulent time politically, but especially so for someone like Shirin, a sixteen-year-old Muslim girl who's tired of being stereotyped. Shirin is never surprised by how horrible people can be. She's tired of the rude stares, the degrading comments--even the physical violence--she endures as a result of her race, her religion, and the hijab she wears every day. So she's built up protective walls and refuses to let anyone close enough to hurt her. Instead, she drowns her frustrations in music and spends her afternoons break-dancing with her brother. But then she meets Ocean James. He's the first person in forever who really seems to want to get to know Shirin. It terrifies her--they seem to come from two irreconcilable worlds--and Shirin has had her guard up for so long that she's not sure she'll ever be able to let it down.

After the Shot Drops by Randy Ribay (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Bunny and Nasir have been best friends forever, but when Bunny accepts an athletic scholarship across town, Nasir feels betrayed. While Bunny tries to fit in with his new, privileged peers, Nasir spends more time with his cousin, Wallace, who is being evicted. Nasir can't help but wonder why the neighborhood is falling over itself to help Bunny when Wallace is in trouble. When Wallace makes a bet against Bunny, Nasir is faced with an impossible decision--maybe a dangerous one. Told from alternating perspectives, *After the Shot Drops* is a heart-pounding story about the responsibilities of great talent and the importance of compassion.

American Panda by Gloria Chao (Simon Pulse, 2018)

At seventeen, Mei should be in high school, but skipping fourth grade was part of her parents' master plan. Now a freshman at MIT, she is on track to fulfill the rest of this predetermined future: become a doctor, marry a

preapproved Taiwanese Ivy Leaguer, produce a litter of babies. With everything her parents have sacrificed to make her cushy life a reality, Mei can't bring herself to tell them the truth--that she (1) hates germs, (2) falls asleep in biology lectures, and (3) has a crush on her classmate Darren Takahashi, who is decidedly not Taiwanese. But when Mei reconnects with her brother, Xing, who is estranged from the family for dating the wrong woman, Mei starts to wonder if all the secrets are truly worth it. Can she find a way to be herself, whoever that is, before her web of lies unravels?

Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card by Sara Saedi (Alfred A. Knopf, 2018)

At thirteen, bright-eyed, straight-A student Sara Saedi uncovered a terrible family secret: she was breaking the law simply by living in the United States. Only two years old when her parents fled Iran, she didn't learn of her undocumented status until her older sister wanted to apply for an after-school job, but couldn't because she didn't have a Social Security number. Fear of deportation kept Sara up at night, but it didn't keep her from being a teenager. She desperately wanted a green card, along with clear skin, her own car, and a boyfriend.

Black Girl Magic by Mahogany L. Brown, illustrated by Jess X. Snow (Roaring Brook Press, 2018)

Black Girl, they say you ain't 'posed to be here. Much of what 21st century culture tells black girls is not pretty: Don't wear this; don't smile at that. Don't have an opinion; don't dream big. And most of all, don't love yourself. In response to such destructive ideas, internationally recognized poet Mahogany Browne challenges the conditioning of society by crafting an anthem of strength and magic undeniable in its bloom for all beautiful Black girls. She has travelled the world sharing her vision of Black Girl Magic, and now in collaboration with artist Jess X. Snow, presents her acclaimed tribute in a visual form. Black Girl Magic is a journey from girlhood to womanhood and an invitation to readers to find magic in themselves.

Chasing King's Killer: The Hunt for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Assassin by James Swanson (Scholastic Press, 2018)

In his meteoric, thirteen-year rise to fame, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a mass movement for Civil Rights -- with his relentless peaceful, non-violent protests, public demonstrations, and eloquent speeches. But as violent threats cast a dark shadow over Dr. King's life, Swanson hones in on James Earl Ray, a bizarre, racist, prison escapee who tragically ends King's life. 80 photographs, captions, bibliography, various source notes, and index included.

Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi (Henry Holt and Company, 2018)

Zelie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zelie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zelie without a mother and her people without hope. Now Zelie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zelie 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 Zelie herself as she struggles to control her powers and her growing feelings for an enemy. A 2019 Morris Award Finalist.

Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram (Dial Books, 2018)

Darius Kellner speaks better Klingon than Farsi, and he knows more about Hobbit social cues than Persian ones. He's a Fractional Persian--half, his mom's side--and his first-ever trip to Iran is about to change his life. Darius has never really fit in at home, and he's sure things are going to be the same in Iran. His clinical depression doesn't exactly help matters, and trying to explain his medication to his grandparents only makes things harder. Then Darius meets Sohrab, the boy next door, and everything changes. Soon, they're spending their days together, playing soccer, eating faludeh, and talking for hours on a secret rooftop overlooking the city's skyline. Sohrab calls him Darioush--the original Persian version of his name--and Darius has never felt more like himself than he does now that he's Darioush to Sohrab. The 2019 Morris Award Finalist & The 2019 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature Young Adult Winner.

Escape from Syria by Samya Kullab, Illustrated by Jackie Roche (Firefly Books, 2017)

Escape from Syria is a fictionalized account that calls on real-life circumstances and true tales of refugee families to serve as a microcosm of the Syrian uprising and the war and refugee crisis that followed. The story spans six years in the lives of Walid, his wife Dalia, and their two children, Amina and Youssef. When the family home in Aleppo is destroyed by a government-led bomb strike, Walid has no choice but to take his wife and children and flee their war-torn and much loved homeland. They struggle to survive in the wretched refugee camps of Lebanon, and when Youssef becomes fatally ill as a result of the poor hygienic conditions, his father is forced to take great personal risk to save his family.

Far From the Tree by Robin Benway (Harper Teen, 2018)

Being the middle child has its ups and downs, but for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family, including--Maya, her loudmouthed younger bio sister, who has a lot to say about their newfound family ties. Having grown up the snarky brunette in a house full of chipper redheads, she's quick to search for traces of herself among these not-quite-strangers. And when her adopted family's long-buried problems begin to explode to the surface, Maya can't help but wonder where exactly it is that she belongs. And Joaquin, their stoic older bio brother, who has no interest in bonding over their shared biological mother. After seventeen years in the foster care system, he's learned that there are no heroes, and secrets and fears are best kept close to the vest, where they can't hurt anyone but him.

For Every One by Jason Reynolds (Atheneum, 2018)

For Every One is just that: for every one. For every one person. For every one dream. But especially for every one kid. The kids who dream of being better than they are. Kids who dream of doing more than they almost dare to dream. Kids who are like Jason Reynolds, a self-professed dreamer. All the kids who are scared to dream, or don't know how to dream, or don't dare to dream because they've NEVER seen a dream come true. Jason wants kids to know that dreams take time. They involve countless struggles. But no matter how many times a dreamer gets beat down, the drive and the passion and the hope never fully extinguish--because just having the dream is the start you need, or you won't get anywhere anyway, and that is when you have to take a leap of faith.

Hearts Unbroken by Cynthia Leitich Smith (Candlewick Press, 2018)

When Louise Wolfe's first real boyfriend mocks and disrespects Native people in front of her, she breaks things off and dumps him over e-mail. It's her senior year, anyway, and she'd rather spend her time with her family and friends and working on the school newspaper. The editors pair her up with Joey Kairouz, the ambitious new photojournalist, and in no time the paper's staff find themselves with a major story to cover: the school musical director's inclusive approach to casting *The Wizard of Oz* has been provoking backlash in their mostly white, middle-class Kansas town. From the newly formed Parents Against Revisionist Theater to anonymous threats, long-held prejudices are being laid bare and hostilities are spreading against teachers, parents, and students -- especially the cast members at the center of the controversy, including Lou's little brother, who's playing the Tin Man. As tensions mount at school, so does a romance between Lou and Joey -- but as she's learned, "dating while Native" can be difficult. In trying to protect her own heart, will Lou break Joey's?

I am Alfonso Jones by Tony Medina, illustrated by Stacey Robinson (Tu Books, 2018)

Alfonso Jones can't wait to play the role of Hamlet in his school's hip-hop rendition of the classic Shakespearean play. He also wants to let his best friend, Danetta, know how he really feels about her. But as he is buying his first suit, an off-duty police officer mistakes a clothes hanger for a gun, and he shoots Alfonso. When Alfonso wakes up in the afterlife, he's on a ghost train guided by well-known victims of police shootings, who teach him what he needs to know about this subterranean spiritual world. Meanwhile, Alfonso's family and friends struggle with their grief and seek justice for Alfonso in the streets. As they confront their new realities, both Alfonso and those he loves realize the work that lies ahead in the fight for justice.

In Sight of Stars by Gae Polisner (Wednesday Books, 2018)

Seventeen-year-old Klee's father was the center of his life. He introduced Klee to the great museums of New York City and the important artists on their walls, he told him stories made of myths and magic. Until his death. Now, forced to live in the suburbs with his mom, Klee can't help but feel he's lost all the identifying parts of himself--his beloved father, weekly trips to the MoMA, and the thrumming energy of New York City. That is until he meets wild and free Sarah in art class, with her quick smiles and jokes about his "brooding." Suddenly it seems as if she's the only thing that makes him happy. But when an act of betrayal sends him reeling, Klee lands in what is biting referred to as the "Ape Can," a psychiatric hospital for teens in Northhollow. While there, he undergoes intensive therapy and goes back over the pieces of his life to find out what was real, what wasn't, and whether he can stand on his own feet again.

Little & Lion by Brandy Colbert (Poppy, 2017)

When Suzette comes home to Los Angeles from her boarding school in New England, she's isn't sure if she'll ever want to go back. L.A. is where her friends and family are (as well as her crush, Emil). And her stepbrother, Lionel, who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, needs her emotional support. But as she settles into her old life, Suzette finds herself falling for someone new...the same girl her brother is in love with. When Lionel's disorder spirals out of control, Suzette is forced to confront her past mistakes and find a way to help her brother before he hurts himself--or worse.

Love, Hate, and Other Filters by Samira Ahmed (Soho Teen, 2018)

Seventeen-year-old Maya Aziz is torn between worlds. There's the proper one her parents expect for their good Indian daughter: attending a college close to their suburban Chicago home and being paired off with an older Muslim boy her mom deems "suitable." And then there is the world of her dreams: going to film school and living in New York City--and pursuing a boy she's known from afar since grade school. But in the aftermath of a horrific crime perpetrated hundreds of miles away, her life is turned upside down. The community she's known since birth becomes unrecognizable; neighbors and classmates are consumed with fear, bigotry, and hatred. Ultimately, Maya must find the strength within to determine where she truly belongs.

Mary's Monster: Love, Madness, and how Mary Shelley Created Frankenstein by Lita Judge (Roaring Brook Press, 2018)

Pairing free verse with over three hundred pages of black-and-white watercolor illustrations, *Mary's Monster* is a unique and stunning biography of Mary Shelley, the pregnant teenage runaway who became one of the greatest authors of all time. Legend is correct that Mary Shelley began penning *Frankenstein* in answer to a dare to write a ghost story. What most people don't know, however, is that the seeds of her novel had been planted long before that night. By age nineteen, she had been disowned by her family, was living in scandal with a married man, and had lost her baby daughter just days after her birth. Mary poured her grief, pain, and passion into the powerful book still revered two hundred years later.

Moxie by Jennifer Mathieu (Roaring Brook Press, 2017)

Vivian Carter is fed up. Fed up with an administration at her high school that thinks the football team can do no wrong. Fed up with sexist dress codes, hallway harassment, and gross comments from guys during class. But most of all, Viv Carter is fed up with always following the rules. Viv's mom was a tough-as-nails, punk rock Riot Grrrl in the '90s, and now Viv takes a page from her mother's past and creates a feminist zine that she distributes anonymously to her classmates. She's just blowing off steam, but other girls respond. As Viv forges friendships with other young women across the divides of cliques and popularity rankings, she realizes that what she has started is nothing short of a girl revolution. *Moxie* is a book about high school life that will make you wanna riot!

Seafire by Natalie Parker (Razorbill, 2018)

After her family is killed by corrupt warlord Aric Athair and his bloodthirsty army of Bullets, Caledonia Styx is left to chart her own course on the dangerous and deadly seas. She captains her ship, the *Mors Navis*, with a crew of girls and women just like her, who have lost their families and homes because of Aric and his men. The crew has one mission- stay alive, and take down Aric's armed and armored fleet. But when Caledonia's best friend and

second-in-command barely survives an attack thanks to help from a Bullet looking to defect, Caledonia finds herself questioning whether to let him join their crew. Is this boy the key to taking down Aric Athair once and for all...or will he threaten everything the women of the Mors Navishave worked for?

Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson, illustrated by Emily Carroll (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2018)

The critically acclaimed, award-winning, modern classic *Speak* is now a stunning graphic novel. "Speak up for yourself--we want to know what you have to say." From the first moment of her freshman year at Merryweather High, Melinda knows this is a big fat lie, part of the nonsense of high school. She is friendless--an outcast--because she busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops, so now nobody will talk to her, let alone listen to her. Through her work on an art project, she is finally able to face what really happened that night: She was raped by an upperclassman, a guy who still attends Merryweather and is still a threat to her. With powerful illustrations by Emily Carroll, Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak: The Graphic Novel* comes alive for new audiences and fans of the classic novel.

The 57 Bus by Dashka Slater (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2017)

One teenager in a skirt. One teenager with a lighter. One moment that changes both of their lives forever. If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.

The Belles by Dhonielle Clayton (Freeform Books, 2018)

Camellia Beauregard is a Belle. In the opulent world of Orleans, Belles are revered, for they control Beauty, and Beauty is a commodity coveted above all else. In Orleans, the people are born gray, they are born damned, and only with the help of a Belle and her talents can they transform and be made beautiful. But it's not enough for Camellia to be just a Belle. She wants to be the favorite, the Belle chosen by the Queen of Orleans to live in the royal palace, to tend to the royal family and their court, to be recognized as the most talented Belle in the land. But once Camellia and her Belle sisters arrive at court, it becomes clear that being the favorite is not everything she always dreamed it would be. Behind the gilded palace walls live dark secrets, and Camellia soon learns that the very essence of her existence is a lie, that her powers are far greater, and could be more dangerous, than she ever imagined. And when the queen asks Camellia to risk her own life and help the ailing princess by using Belle powers in unintended ways, Camellia now faces an impossible decision.

The Middle Passage: White Ships/Black Cargo by Tom Feelings (Dial Books, 2018)

Alex Haley's *Roots* awakened many Americans to the cruelty of slavery. *The Middle Passage* focuses attention on the tortuous journey which brought slaves from Africa to the Americas, allowing readers to bear witness to the sufferings of an entire people.

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo (Harper Teen, 2018)

Xiomara Batista feels unheard and unable to hide in her Harlem neighborhood. Ever since her body grew into curves, she has learned to let her fists and her fierceness do the talking. But Xiomara has plenty she wants to say, and she pours all her frustration and passion onto the pages of a leather notebook, reciting the words to herself like prayers--especially after she catches feelings for a boy in her bio class named Aman, who her family can never know about. With Mami's determination to force her daughter to obey the laws of the church, Xiomara understands that her thoughts are best kept to herself. So when she is invited to join her school's slam poetry club, she doesn't know how she could ever attend without her mami finding out. But she still can't stop thinking about performing her poems. Because in the face of a world that may not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to be silent. The 2019 Printz Award Winner & The 2019 Pura Belpré Author Award Winner & The 2019 Walter Award Teen Winner & The 2018 National Book Award for Young People's Literature Award Winner.

The Prince and the Dressmaker by Jen Wang (FirstSecond, 2018)

Paris, at the dawn of the modern age--Prince Sebastian is looking for a bride--or rather, his parents are looking for one for him. Sebastian is too busy hiding his secret life from everyone. At night he puts on daring dresses and takes Paris by storm as the fabulous Lady Crystallia--the hottest fashion icon in the world capital of fashion! Sebastian's secret weapon (and best friend) is the brilliant dressmaker Frances--one of only two people who know the truth: sometimes this boy wears dresses. But Frances dreams of greatness, and being someone's secret weapon means being a secret. Forever. How long can Frances defer her dreams to protect a friend?

The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees by Don Brown (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018)

Starting in 2011, refugees flood out of war-torn Syria in Exodus-like proportions. The surprising flood of victims overwhelms neighboring countries, and chaos follows. Resentment in host nations heightens as disruption and the cost of aid grows. By 2017, many want to turn their backs on the victims. The refugees are the unwanted. Don Brown depicts moments of both heartbreaking horror and hope in the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis. Shining a light on the stories of the survivors, *The Unwanted* is a testament to the courage and resilience of the refugees and a call to action for all those who read. The 2019 ALA Excellence in Nonfiction Winner & A 2019 Sibert Medal Honor book.

Tradition by Brendan Kiely (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2018)

Prestigious. Powerful. Privileged. This is Fullbrook Academy. Jules Devereux just wants to keep her head down, avoid distractions, and get into the right college, so she can leave Fullbrook and its old-boy social codes behind. Jamie Baxter feels like an imposter at Fullbrook, but the hockey scholarship that got him in has given him a chance to escape his past and fulfill the dreams of his parents and coaches, whose mantra rings in his ears: Don't disappoint us. As Jules and Jamie's lives intertwine, and the pressures to play by the rules and to keep the school's toxic secrets, they are faced with a powerful choice: remain silent while others get hurt, or stand together against the ugly, sexist traditions of an institution that believes it can do no wrong.

Tyler Johnson Was Here by Jay Coles (Little, Brown and Company, 2018)

When Marvin Johnson's twin, Tyler, goes to a party, Marvin decides to tag along to keep an eye on his brother. But what starts as harmless fun turns into a shooting, followed by a police raid. The next day, Tyler has gone missing, and it's up to Marvin to find him. But when Tyler is found dead, a video leaked online tells an even more chilling story: Tyler has been shot and killed by a police officer. Terrified as his mother unravels and mourning a brother who is now a hashtag, Marvin must learn what justice and freedom really mean.

You Bring the Distant Near by Mitali Perkins (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2017)

Told in alternating teen voices across three generations, *You Bring the Distant Near* explores sisterhood, first loves, friendship, and the inheritance of culture--for better or worse. From a grandmother worried that her children are losing their Indian identity to a daughter wrapped up in a forbidden biracial love affair to a granddaughter social-activist fighting to preserve Bengali tigers, Perkins weaves together the threads of a family growing into an American identity. Here is a sweeping story of five women at once intimately relatable and yet entirely new.