

## Just One More Page!

Compiled by WSRA's Children's Literature Committee for the 2017 Convention  
from titles published between September 2015-December 2016

*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 representing high-quality literature with a focus on diversity, authenticity, real-world awareness, thought-provoking response, engaging storytelling, artistry of writing craft, and exemplary illustrations.*

### **Interest Level K-3**

***Frozen Wild: How Animals Survive in the Coldest Places on Earth*** by Jim Arnosky (Sterling Children's Books, 2015).

Kids can bundle up and join award-winning author, illustrator, and naturalist Jim Arnosky as he follows the tracks of otters, beavers, moose, polar bears, killer whales, penguins, fur seals, and other creatures to discover more about their lives during winter. Arnosky's stunning art includes five magnificent foldouts that reveal worlds under the ice and at the farthest, frostiest reaches of the globe.

***\*Hippopotamister*** by John Patrick Green. (First Second, 2016).

Hippo isn't happy. But what can he do? A hippopotamus can't leave the zoo. A hippopotamus can't get a job. But a hippopotamister can. And so, with the help of his friend Red Panda, Hippo tries on a few new hats. He makes a great construction worker! There's no better hair stylist! And he's a natural as a chef! But what hippo really needs... is a job where he can be himself.

***Lucy*** by Randy Cecil (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Lucy is a small dog without a home. She had one once, but she remembers it only in her dreams. Eleanor is a little girl who looks forward to feeding the stray dog that appears faithfully beneath her window each day. Eleanor's father is a juggler with stage fright. The overlapping stories of three ... characters, offering a slightly different perspective each time.

***Narwhal: Unicorn of the Sea*** by Ben Clanton (Tundra Books, 2016).

Narwhal is a happy-go-lucky narwhal. Jelly is a no-nonsense jellyfish. The two might not have a lot in common, but they do they love waffles, parties and adventures. Join Narwhal and Jelly as they discover the whole wide ocean together.

***National Geographic Book of Nature Poetry*** by J. Patrick (National Geographic, 2015).

When words in verse are paired with the awesomeness of nature, something magical happens! From trickling streams to deafening thunderstorms to soaring mountains, discover majestic photography perfectly paired with contemporary (such as Billy Collins), classics (such as Robert Frost), and never-before-published works.

***The Great Pet Escape*** by Victoria Jamieson (Henry Holt and Company, 2016).

The class pets at Daisy P. Flugelhorn Elementary School want OUT . . . and GW (short for George Washington), the deceptively cute hamster in the second-grade classroom, is just the guy to lead the way. But when he finally escapes and goes to find his former partners in crime, Barry and Biter, he finds that they actually LIKE being class pets. Impossible!

\* indicates committee favorite

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***The Princess in Black and the Perfect Princess Party*** by Shannon Hale (Candlewick Press, 2016).

***The Princess in Black and the Hungry Bunny Horde*** by Shannon Hale (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Continue the journey with Princess Magnolia in books 2 and 3 of The Princess in Black Series. In book 2 Princess Magnolia has to sneak out of her own birthday party over and over to change into her alter ego, to fight monsters. How will she keep her friends from guessing her secret? And, will she ever get to open her presents?

In book 3 Princess Magnolia and Frimplepants are transformed into the Princess in Black and her faithful pony, Blacky. But when they get to the goat pasture, all they can see is a field full of darling little bunnies nibbling on grass, twitching their velvet noses, and wiggling their fluffy tails. Where are the monsters? Are these bunnies as innocent as they appear?

### **Interest Level 3-6**

***All Rise for the Honorable Perry T. Cook*** by Leslie Connor (Katherine Tegen Books, 2016).

Eleven-year-old Perry was born and raised by his mom at the Blue River Co-ed Correctional Facility in tiny Surprise, Nebraska. His mom is a resident on Cell Block C, and so far Warden Daugherty has made it possible for them to be together. That is, until a new district attorney discovers the truth—and Perry is removed from the facility and forced into a foster home. When Perry moves to the "outside" world, he feels trapped. Desperate to be reunited with his mom, Perry goes on a quest for answers about her past crime. As he gets closer to the truth, he will discover that love makes people resilient no matter where they come from...but can he find a way to tell everyone what home truly means?

***Confessions of an Imaginary Friend*** by Michelle Cuevas (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2015).

Jacques Papier enjoys being best friends with his twin sister, Fleur, but he is upset that everyone else ignores him. In a clever twist, it slowly dawns on readers (and Jacques!) that he is made only of imagination. Reluctantly, Fleur frees Jacques so he can discover his true self, but it turns out his emotionally wrought frying pan is not nearly as unpleasant as the fire he jumps into when he learns that imaginary friends must be reassigned. Alternately amusing and philosophical, this quirky read will get kids thinking about love, loss, and life.

***Dog Man*** by Dav Pilkey (Graphix, 2016).

George and Harold have created a new hero who digs into deception, claws after crooks, and rolls over robbers. When Greg the police dog and his cop companion are injured on the job, a life-saving surgery changes the course of history, and Dog Man is born. With the head of a dog and the body of a human, this heroic hound has a real nose for justice. But can he resist the call of the wild to answer the call of duty?

***Fenway and Hattie*** by Victoria J. Coe (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2016).

Fenway is an excitable and endlessly energetic Jack Russell terrier. He lives in the city with Food Lady, Fetch Man, and--of course--his beloved short human and best-friend-in-the-world, Hattie. But when his family moves to the suburbs, Fenway must adjust to the changes that come with their new home.

***Full of Beans*** by Jennifer Holm (Random House, 2016).

Ten-year-old Beans Curry, a member of the Keepsies, the best marble playing gang in Depression-era Key West, Florida, engages in various schemes to earn money while "New Dealers" from Washington, D.C., arrive to turn run down Key West into a tourist resort.

+***Ghosts*** by Raina Telgemeier (Graphix, 2016).

Catrina and her family have moved to the coast of Northern California for the sake of her little sister, Maya, who has cystic fibrosis--and Cat is even less happy about the move when she is told that her new town is inhabited by ghosts, and Maya sets her heart on meeting one. +Please see list addendum for additional information

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***Moo*** by Sharon Creech (Joanna Cotler Books, 2016).

When Reena, her little brother, Luke, and their parents first move to Maine, Reena doesn't know what to expect. She's ready for beaches, blueberries, and all the lobster she can eat. Instead, her parents "volunteer" Reena and Luke to work for an eccentric neighbor named Mrs. Falala, who has a pig named Paulie, a cat named China, a snake named Edna—and that stubborn cow, Zora. This heartwarming story, told in a blend of poetry and prose, reveals the bonds that emerge when we let others into our lives.

\****Ms. Bixby's Last Day*** by John David Anderson (Walden Pond Press, 2016).

Everyone knows there are different kinds of teachers. The boring ones, the mean ones, the ones who try too hard, the ones who stopped trying long ago. The ones you'll never remember, and the ones you want to forget. Ms. Bixby is none of these. She's the sort of teacher who makes you feel like school is somehow worthwhile. Who recognizes something in you that sometimes you don't even see in yourself. Who you never want to disappoint. What Ms. Bixby is, is one of a kind. Topher, Brand, and Steve know this better than anyone. And so when Ms. Bixby unexpectedly announces that she won't be able to finish the school year, they come up with a risky plan—more of a quest, really—to give Ms. Bixby the last day she deserves. Through the three very different stories they tell, we begin to understand what Ms. Bixby means to each of them—and what the three of them mean to each other.

\****nine, ten: A September 11 Story*** by Nora Raleigh Baskin (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2016).

Sergio, a math whiz, is headed back to New York after a trip to Chicago. Nadira, uncomfortable at a new school where her head scarf earns her funny looks, is at the airport to greet family. Aimee's mother is headed to New York on a business trip, while Aimee and her dad fly home to L.A. Will and what's left of his family after his father's sudden death are returning to Pennsylvania. Over the course of two days—September 9 and 10, 2001—this follows these four characters through the ordinary days before the event that rocked a nation. Baskin's novel reminds readers that our lives are interconnected in ways we might never understand; by focusing on four young characters, she underscores the effects September 11 had on those involved and those bearing witness.

***Paper Wishes*** by Lois Sepahban (Margaret Ferguson Books, 2016).

Along with many other Japanese Americans on the West Coast in 1942, Manami, her parents, and her grandfather are evacuated from their home. When they leave Bainbridge Island, she manages to hide her beloved dog under her coat, but a soldier takes him away. Overwhelmed by distress and sadness, Manami stops speaking. Life is difficult for the family at the Manzanar Relocation Center. Troublemakers bring turmoil to the crowded camp and other changes come as well, but Manami and her relatives gradually find ways to cope and look toward the future.

***Pax*** by Sara Pennypacker (Balzer + Bray, 2016).

Pax and Peter have been inseparable ever since Peter rescued him as a kit. But one day, the unimaginable happens: Peter's dad enlists in the military and makes him return the fox to the wild. At his grandfather's house, three hundred miles away from home, Peter knows he isn't where he should be—with Pax. He strikes out on his own despite the encroaching war, spurred by love, loyalty, and grief, to be reunited with his fox. Meanwhile Pax, steadfastly waiting for his boy, embarks on adventures and discoveries of his own. . . .

***Ranger in Time: Long Road to Freedom*** by Kate Messner (Scholastic Inc., 2015).

Ranger is a time-traveling golden retriever with search-and-rescue training. In this adventure, he goes to a Maryland plantation during the days of American slavery, where he meets a young girl named Sarah. When she learns that the owner has plans to sell her little brother, Jesse, to a plantation in the Deep South, it means they could be separated forever. Sarah takes their future into her own hands and decides there's only one way to run -- north.

***Sara Lost and Found*** by Virginia Castleman (Aladdin, 2016).

Sara and Anna Olsen face an uncertain world. Their mother left home and may—or may not—be coming back. Their father is a drummer in a band and comes home long after the girls go to sleep—if he comes home at all. Then one night, three loud knocks at the door change everything: their father is in jail and social services has

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come to take the girls away. Rather than risk being split up, Sara and Anna decide their only option is to run away. But the girls don't get very far, and when the authorities catch up with them, Sara and Anna are forced back into the foster care system. Inspired by true events, this heartrending and hopeful novel of survival, friendship, and sisterhood, tells the tale of two sisters who must find the strength to face anything that life may throw their way.

***Save Me a Seat*** by Sara Weeks and Gita Varadarajan (Scholastic Press, 2016).

Joe and Ravi might be from very different places, but they're both stuck in the same place: SCHOOL. Joe's lived in the same town all his life, and was doing just fine until his best friends moved away and left him on his own. Ravi's family just moved to America from India, and he's finding it pretty hard to figure out where he fits in. Joe and Ravi don't think they have anything in common -- but soon enough they have a common enemy (the biggest bully in their class) and a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week.

***Science Comics: Coral Reefs: Cities of the Ocean*** by Maris Wicks (First Second, 2016).

This gorgeously illustrated graphic novel offers wildly entertaining views of coral reefs. In this volume of the Science Comics series, we learn all about these tiny, adorable sea animals! This absorbing look at ocean science covers the biology of coral reefs as well as their ecological importance. Nonfiction comics genius Maris Wicks brings to bear her signature combination of hardcore cuteness and in-depth science.

***\*Secret Coders*** by Gene Luen Yang (First Second, 2015).

Welcome to Stately Academy, a school which is just crawling with mysteries to be solved! The founder of the school left many clues and puzzles to challenge his enterprising students. Using their wits and their growing prowess with coding, Hopper and her friend Eni are going to solve the mystery of Stately Academy no matter what it takes!

***+\*Some Kind of Courage*** by Dan Gemeinhart (Scholastic Press, 2016).

In 1890 Washington the only family Joseph Johnson has left is his half-wild Indian pony, Sarah, so when she is sold by a man who has no right to do so, he sets out to get her back--and he plans to let nothing stop him in his quest. The critically acclaimed author of *The Honest Truth* returns with a poignant, hopeful, and action-packed story about hearts that won't be tamed... and spirits that refuse to be broken. **+Please see list addendum for additional information.**

***Some Writer*** by Melissa Sweet (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

"SOME PIG," Charlotte the spider's praise for Wilbur, is just one fondly remembered snippet from E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web*. In *Some Writer!*, the two-time Caldecott Honor winner Melissa Sweet mixes White's personal letters, photos, and family ephemera with her own exquisite artwork to tell his story, from his birth in 1899 to his death in 1985. Budding young writers will be fascinated and inspired by the journalist, *New Yorker* contributor, and children's book author who loved words his whole life. This authorized tribute is the first fully illustrated biography of E. B. White and includes an afterword by Martha White, E. B. White's granddaughter.

***The Best Man*** by Richard Peck (Dial Books, 2016).

Archer has four important role models in his life--his dad, his grandfather, his uncle Paul, and his favorite teacher, Mr. McLeod. When Uncle Paul and Mr. McLeod get married, Archer's sixth-grade year becomes one he'll never forget.

***The Great Shelby Holmes*** by Elizabeth Eulberg (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Shelby Holmes is not your average sixth grader. She's nine years old, barely four feet tall, and the best detective her Harlem neighborhood has ever seen--always using logic and a bit of pluck to solve the toughest crimes. When eleven-year-old John Watson moves downstairs, Shelby finds something that's eluded her up till now: a friend. The easy-going John isn't sure of what to make of Shelby, but he soon finds himself her most-trusted (read: only) partner in a dog-napping case that'll take both their talents to crack. By a Wisconsin author.

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***The Hero Two Doors Down*** by Sharon Robinson (Scholastic Press, 2016).

Based on the true story of a Brooklyn boy's friendship with his hero, Jackie Robinson. Eight-year-old Steve Satlow is thrilled when Jackie Robinson moves into his Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn in 1948, although many of his neighbors are not, and when Steve actually meets his hero he is even more excited--and worried that a misunderstanding over a Christmas tree could damage his new friendship.

***The Key to Extraordinary*** by Natalie Lloyd (Scholastic Press, 2016).

Twelve-year old orphan Emma Casey lives by a haunted graveyard in her Tennessee town, giving tours, and helping her brother and Granny Blue with the family bakery, and waiting for the destiny dream of her ancestors--but when it comes it shows her only a key, and she finds that she must solve a ghostly mystery that has haunted her town for generations.

***The Land of Forgotten Girls*** by Erin Entrada Kelly (Greenwillow Books, 2016).

Abandoned by their father and living in poverty with their heartless stepmother in Louisiana, two sisters from the Philippines, twelve-year-old Sol and six-year-old Ming, learn the true meaning of family.

***The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary*** by Laura Shovan (Wendy Lamb Books, 2016).

Eighteen kids,  
one year of poems,  
one school set to close.  
Two yellow bulldozers  
crouched outside,  
ready to eat the building  
in one greedy gulp.

But look out, bulldozers.  
Ms. Hill's fifth-grade class  
has plans for you.  
They're going to speak up  
and work together  
to save their school

***The Last Kids on Earth*** by Max Brallier (Viking, 2015).

Ever since the monster apocalypse hit town, average thirteen year old Jack Sullivan has been living in his tree house, which he's armed to the teeth with catapults and a moat, not to mention video games and an endless supply of Oreos and Mountain Dew scavenged from abandoned stores. But Jack alone is no match for the hordes of Zombies and Winged Wretches and Vine Thingies, and especially not for the eerily intelligent monster known only as Blarg. So Jack builds a team: his dorky best friend, Quint; the reformed middle school bully, Dirk; Jack's loyal pet monster, Rover; and Jack's crush, June. With their help, Jack is going to slay Blarg, achieve the ultimate Feat of Apocalyptic Success, and be average no longer! Can he do it?

***The Remarkable Journey of Charlie Price*** by Jennifer Maschari (Balzer + Bray, 2016).

Ever since twelve-year-old Charlie Price's mom died, he feels like his world has been split into two parts. Before included stargazing and Mathletes and Saturday scavenger hunts with his family. After means a dad who's completely checked out, comically bad dinners, and grief group that's anything but helpful. It seems like losing Mom meant losing everything else he loved, too. Just when Charlie thinks things can't get any worse, his sister, Imogen, starts acting erratically-missing school and making up lies about their mother. But everything changes when one day he follows her down a secret passageway in the middle of her bedroom and sees for himself. Imogen has found a parallel world where Mom is alive! There's hot cocoa and Scrabble and scavenger hunts again and everything is perfect . . . at first. But something doesn't feel right. Whenever Charlie returns to the real world, things are different, and not in a good way. And Imogen wants to spend more and more time on the other side. It's almost as if she wants to leave the real world for good. If Charlie doesn't uncover the truth, he could lose himself, the true memory of their mother, and Imogen . . . forever.

***\*The Seventh Wish*** by Kate Messner (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Charlie feels like she's always coming in last. From her Mom's new job to her sister's life away at college, everything else always seems to be more important than Charlie's upcoming dance competition or science project. Unsure of how to get her family's attention, Charlie comes across the surprise of her life one day while ice-fishing . . . in the form of a floppy, scaly fish offering to grant her a wish in exchange for its freedom. Charlie can't

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believe her luck until she realizes that this fish has a funny way of granting wishes, despite her best intentions. But when her family faces a challenge bigger than any they've ever experienced, Charlie wonders if some things might be too important to risk on a wish.

**\**The Wild Robot*** by Peter Brown (Little, Brown and Company, 2016).

Can a robot survive in the wilderness? When robot Roz opens her eyes for the first time, she discovers that she is alone on a remote, wild island. She has no idea how she got there or what her purpose is—but she knows she needs to survive. After battling a fierce storm and escaping a vicious bear attack, she realizes that her only hope for survival is to adapt to her surroundings and learn from the island's unwelcoming animal inhabitants. As Roz slowly befriends the animals, the island starts to feel like home—until, one day, the robot's mysterious past comes back to haunt her.

***Towers Falling*** by Jewell Parker Rhodes (Little, Brown and Company, 2016).

When her fifth-grade teacher hints that a series of lessons about home and community will culminate with one big answer about two tall towers once visible outside their classroom window, Deja can't help but feel confused. She sets off on a journey of discovery, with new friends Ben and Sabeen by her side. But just as she gets closer to answering big questions about who she is, what America means, and how communities can grow (and heal), she uncovers new questions, too. Like, why does Pop get so angry when she brings up anything about the towers?

***Wolf Hollow*** by Lauren Wolk (Dutton Children's Books, 2016).

Growing up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness, Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount.

### **Interest Level 5-8**

***As Brave As You*** by Jason Reynolds (Atheneum, 2016).

Genie's summer is full of surprises. The first is that he and his big brother, Ernie, are leaving Brooklyn for the very first time to spend the summer with their grandparents all the way in Virginia—in the COUNTRY! The second surprise comes when Genie figures out that their grandfather is blind. Thunderstruck and—being a curious kid—Genie peppers Grandpop with questions about how he covers it so well (besides wearing way cool Ray-Bans). Genie thinks Grandpop must be the bravest guy he's ever known, but he starts to notice that his grandfather never leaves the house—as in NEVER. And when he finds the secret room that Grandpop is always disappearing into, he begins to wonder if his grandfather is really so brave after all. Add that to being dumbfounded by Ernie's reluctance to learn how to shoot a gun, Genie is left to wonder—is bravery and becoming a man only about proving something, or is it just as important to own up to what you won't do?

**\**Booked*** by Kwame Alexander (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

Twelve-year-old Nick loves soccer and hates books, but soon learns the power of words as he wrestles with problems at home, stands up to a bully, and tries to impress the girl of his dreams. This electric and heartfelt novel-in-verse by poet Kwame Alexander bends and breaks as it captures all the thrills and setbacks, action and emotion of a World Cup match!

***Breakthrough!: How Three People Saved “Blue Babies” and Changed Medicine Forever*** by Jim Murphy (Clarion Books, 2015).

The story of the landmark 1944 surgical procedure that repaired the heart of a child with blue baby syndrome—lack of blood oxygen caused by a congenital defect. The team that developed the procedure included a cardiologist and a surgeon, but most of the actual work was done by Vivien Thomas, an African American lab assistant who was frequently mistaken for a janitor.

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***Full Cicada Moon*** by Marilyn Hilton (Dial Books for Young Readers, 2015).

In 1969 twelve-year-old Mimi and her family move to an all-white town in Vermont, where Mimi's mixed-race background and interest in "boyish" topics like astronomy make her feel like an outsider.

\****Ghost*** by Jason Reynolds (Atheneum, 2016).

Ghost has a crazy natural talent, but no formal training. If he can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all starting with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who blew his own shot at success by using drugs, and who is determined to keep other kids from blowing their shots at life.

\****Hour of the Bees*** by Lindsay Eagar (Candlewick Press, 2016).

What does it mean to be fully alive? Magic blends with reality in a stunning coming-of-age novel about a girl, a grandfather, wanderlust, and reclaiming your roots. While her friends are spending their summers having pool parties and sleepovers, twelve-year-old Carolina — Carol — is spending hers in the middle of the New Mexico desert, helping her parents move the grandfather she's never met into a home for people with dementia. At first, Carol avoids prickly Grandpa Serge. But as the summer wears on and the heat bears down, Carol finds herself drawn to him, fascinated by the crazy stories he tells her about a healing tree, a green-glass lake, and the bees that will bring back the rain and end a hundred years of drought. As the thin line between magic and reality starts to blur, Carol must decide for herself what is possible — and what it means to be true to her roots. Readers who dream that there's something more out there will be enchanted by this captivating novel of family, renewal, and discovering the wonder of the world.

\****House Arrest*** by KA Holt (Chronicle Books, 2016).

Timothy is on probation. It's a strange word--something that happens to other kids, to delinquents, not to kids like him. And yet, he is under house arrest for the next year. He must check in weekly with a probation officer and a therapist, and keep a journal for an entire year. And mostly, he has to stay out of trouble. But when he must take drastic measures to help his struggling family, staying out of trouble proves more difficult than Timothy ever thought it would be.

***It Ain't So Awful Falafel*** by Firoozeh Dumas (Clarion Books, 2016).

Zomorod (Cindy) Yousefzadeh is the new kid on the block . . . for the fourth time. California's Newport Beach is her family's latest perch, and she's determined to shuck her brainy loner persona and start afresh with a new Brady Bunch name--Cindy. It's the late 1970s, and fitting in becomes more difficult as Iran makes U.S. headlines with protests, revolution, and finally the taking of American hostages. Even mood rings and puka shell necklaces can't distract Cindy from the anti-Iran sentiments that creep way too close to home.

***Lily and Dunkin*** by Donna Gephart (Delacourt Press, 2016).

Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you're in the eighth-grade. Norbert Dorfman, nicknamed Dunkin Dorfman, is bipolar and has just moved from the New Jersey town he's called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change

***Maybe a Fox*** by Kathi Appelt & Alison McGhee (Atheneum, 2016).

When her sister Sylvie goes missing on a snowy morning and is never seen again, Jules refuses to believe she is gone forever, meanwhile, in the shadow world, a shadow fox is born. Writing in alternate voices—one Jules's, the other the fox's—Kathi Appelt and Alison McGhee tell the searingly beautiful tale of one small family's moment of heartbreak, a moment that unfolds into one that is epic, mythic, shimmering, and most of all, hopeful.

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***Mighty Jack*** by Ben Hatke (First Second, 2016).

Jack might be the only kid in the world who is dreading the summer. But he's got a good reason: summer is when his single mom takes a second job and leaves him at home to watch his autistic kid sister, Maddy. It's a lot of responsibility, and it's boring, too, because Maddy doesn't talk. Ever. But then, one day at the flea market, Maddy does talk--and tells Jack to trade their mom's car for a box of mysterious seeds. It's the best mistake Jack has ever made. What starts as a normal garden behind the house quickly grows up into a wild, magical jungle with tiny onion babies running amok, huge, pink pumpkins that bite, and, on one moonlit night that changes everything...a dragon.

***Our Moon: New Discoveries About Earth's Closest Companion*** by Elaine Scott (Clarion Books, 2016).

Since the dawn of human existence, people have gazed up at the night sky and wondered about the moon. Elaine Scott skillfully presents a wealth of captivating, kid-friendly information, covering everything from the newest theories on how the moon formed, to the recent, startling discovery of water on its surface and the very real possibility of future moon colonies. Illustrated with stunning, full-color photographs and packed with fun facts, this is the most complete and up-to-date book available on the moon and should find a home on every curious child's bookshelf. Includes glossary, bibliography, and index.

***Raymie Nightingale*** by Kate DiCamillo (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Hoping that if she wins a local beauty pageant her father will come home, Raymie practices twirling a baton and performing good deeds as she is drawn into an unlikely friendship with a drama queen and a saboteur. Two-time Newbery Medalist Kate DiCamillo returns to her roots with a moving, masterful story of an unforgettable summer friendship.

***Snow White*** by Matt Phelan (Candlewick Press, 2016).

The scene: New York City. The dazzling lights cast shadows that grow ever darker as the glitzy prosperity of the Roaring Twenties screeches to a halt. Enter a cast of familiar characters: a young girl, Samantha White, returning after being sent away by her cruel stepmother, the Queen of the Follies, years earlier; her father, the King of Wall Street, who survives the stock market crash only to suffer a strange and sudden death; seven street urchins, brave protectors for a girl as pure as snow; and a mysterious stock ticker that holds the stepmother in its thrall, churning out ticker tape imprinted with the wicked words 'Another ... More Beautiful ... KILL.

***Some Kind of Happiness*** by Claire Legrand (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016).

Finley Hart is sent to her grandparents' house for the summer, but her anxiety and overwhelmingly sad days continue until she escapes into her writings, which soon turn mysteriously real, and she realizes she must save this magical world in order to save herself.

***Sophie Quire and the Last Storyguard*** by Jonathan Auxier (Amulet Books, 2016).

Twelve-year-old Sophie knows little beyond the four walls of her father's bookshop, where she repairs old books and dreams of escaping the confines of her dull life. But when a strange boy and his talking cat/horse companion show up with a rare and mysterious book, she finds herself pulled into an adventure beyond anything she has ever read. A Peter Nimble adventure.

***Still a Work in Progress*** by Jo Knowles (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Noah is just trying to make it through seventh grade. The girls are confusing, the homework is boring, and even his friends are starting to bug him. Not to mention that his older sister, Emma, has been acting pretty strange, even though Noah thought she'd been doing better ever since the Thing They Don't Talk About. The only place he really feels at peace is in art class, with a block of clay in his hands. As it becomes clear through Emma's ever-stricter food rules and regulations that she's not really doing better at all, the normal seventh-grade year Noah was hoping for begins to seem pretty unattainable. In an affecting and realistic novel with bright spots of humor, Jo Knowles captures the complexities of navigating middle school while feeling helpless in the face of a family crisis.

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***The Charmed Children of Rookskill Castle*** by Janet Fox (Viking, 2016).

In 1940, during the Blitz, Katherine, Robbie and Amelie Bateson are sent north to a private school in Rookskill Castle in Scotland, a brooding place, haunted by dark magic from the past--but when some of their classmates disappear Katherine has to find out if the cause is hidden in the past or very much in the present.

***The Girl Who Drank the Moon*** by Kelly Barnhill (Algonquin Young Readers, 2016).

Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind and compassionate. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. One year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic. Xan decides she must raise this girl, whom she calls Luna, as her own.

***The Nameless City*** by Faith Erin Hicks (First Second, 2016).

Every time it is invaded the City gets a new name, but to the natives it is the Nameless City, and they survive by not letting themselves get involved--but now the fate of the City rests in the hands of Rat, a native, and Kaidu, one of the Dao, the latest occupiers, and the two must somehow work together if the City is to survive.

***We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance*** by Russell Freedman (Clarion Books, 2016).

The story of Austrian-born Hans Scholl and his sister Sophie. They belonged to Hitler Youth as young children, but began to doubt the Nazi regime. As older students, the Scholls and a few friends formed the White Rose, a campaign of active resistance to Hitler and the Nazis. Risking imprisonment or even execution, the White Rose members distributed leaflets urging Germans to defy the Nazi government. Their belief that freedom was worth dying for will inspire young readers to stand up for what they believe in.

***Wish*** by Barbara O'Connor (Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, 2016).

A middle-grade novel about a girl who, with the help of a true-blue friend, a big-hearted aunt and uncle, and the dog of her dreams, unexpectedly learns the true meaning of family in the least likely of places.

***You Can Fly: The Tuskegee Airmen*** by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Jeffery Boston Weatherford (Atheneum, 2016).

I WANT YOU! says the poster of Uncle Sam. But if you're a young black man in 1940, he doesn't want you in the cockpit of a war plane. Yet you are determined not to let that stop your dream of flying. So when you hear of a civilian pilot training program at Tuskegee Institute, you leap at the chance. Soon you are learning engineering and mechanics, how to communicate in code, how to read a map. At last the day you've longed for is here: you are flying! From training days in Alabama to combat on the front lines in Europe, told in vibrant second-person poems, this is the story of the Tuskegee Airmen, the groundbreaking African-American pilots of World War II.

## **Interest Level YA**

***American Ace*** by Marilyn Nelson (Dial, 2016).

Connor's grandmother leaves his dad a letter when she dies, and the letter's confession shakes their tight-knit Italian-American family: The man who raised Dad is not his birth father. But the only clues to this birth father's identity are a class ring and a pair of pilot's wings. And so Connor takes it upon himself to investigate--a pursuit that becomes even more pressing when Dad is hospitalized after a stroke. What Connor discovers will lead him and his father to a new, richer understanding of race, identity, and each other.

***Dumplin'*** by Julie Murphy (Balzer + Bray, 2015).

Sixteen-year-old Willowdean wants to prove to everyone in her small Texas town that she is more than just a fat girl, so, while grappling with her feelings for a co-worker who is clearly attracted to her, Will and some other misfits prepare to compete in the beauty pageant her mother runs.

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***Everything, Everything*** by Nicola Yoon (Delacorte Press, 2015).

The story of a teenage girl who's literally allergic to the outside world. When a new family moves in next door, she begins a complicated romance that challenges everything she's ever known. The narrative unfolds via vignettes, diary entries, texts, charts, lists, illustrations, and more.

***Girl in the Blue Coat*** by Monica Hesse (Little, Brown and Company, 2016).

In 1943 Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, teenage Hanneke--a 'finder' of black market goods--is tasked with finding a Jewish girl a customer had been hiding, who has seemingly vanished into thin air, and is pulled into a web of resistance activities and secrets as she attempts to solve the mystery and save the missing girl.

***Illuminae*** by Amie Kaufman & Jay Kristoff (Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

The planet Kerenza is attacked, and Kady and Ezra find themselves on a space fleet fleeing the enemy, while their ship's artificial intelligence system and a deadly plague may be the end of them all.

***Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War*** by Steve Sheinkin (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).

On June 13, 1971, the front page of the New York Times announced the existence of a 7,000-page collection of documents containing a secret history of the Vietnam War. Known as The Pentagon Papers, these files had been commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Chronicling every action the government had taken in the Vietnam War, they revealed a pattern of deception spanning over twenty years and four presidencies, and forever changed the relationship between American citizens and the politicians claiming to represent their interests. A provocative and political book that interrogates the meanings of patriotism, freedom, and integrity, *Most Dangerous* further establishes Steve Sheinkin as a leader in children's nonfiction.

***Paper Hearts*** by Meg Wiviott (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2015).

Amid the brutality of Auschwitz during the Holocaust, a forbidden gift helps two teenage girls find hope, friendship, and the will to live in this novel in verse that's based on a true story. Making a birthday card in Auschwitz was all of those things. But that is what Zlatka did, in 1944, for her best friend, Fania. She stole and bartered for paper and scissors, secretly creating an origami heart. Then she passed it to every girl at the work tables to sign with their hopes and wishes for happiness, for love, and most of all—for freedom. Fania knew what that heart meant, for herself and all the other girls. And she kept it hidden, through the bitter days in the camp and through the death marches. She kept it always.

***\*Salt to the Sea*** by Ruta Sepetys (Philomel, 2016).

World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, many with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia, and Florian, whose paths converge en route to the ship that promises salvation, the Wilhelm Gustloff. Forced by circumstance to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety. Just when it seems freedom is within their grasp, tragedy strikes. Not country, nor culture, nor status matter as all ten thousand people aboard must fight for the same thing: survival. Told in alternating points of view this masterful work of historical fiction is inspired by the real-life tragedy that was the sinking of the Wilhelm Gustloff--the greatest maritime disaster in history.

***The Bitter Side of Sweet*** by Tara Sullivan (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2016).

Kept as forced labor on a chocolate plantation in the Ivory Coast, Amadou and his younger brother Seydou had given up hope, until a young girl arrives at the camp who rekindles the urge to escape.

***The Diabolic*** by S.J. Kincaid (Simon & Schuster, 2016).

A Diabolic is ruthless. A Diabolic is powerful. A Diabolic has a single task: Kill in order to protect the person you've been created for. Nemesis is a Diabolic, a humanoid teenager created to protect a galactic senator's daughter, Sidonia. When the power-mad Emperor learns Sidonia's father is participating in a rebellion, he summons Sidonia to the Galactic court. She is to serve as a hostage. Now, there is only one way for Nemesis to

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protect Sidonia. She must become her. Nemesis learns there is something more to her than just deadly force. She finds a humanity truer than what she encounters from most humans. Amidst all the danger, action, and intrigue, her humanity just might be the thing that saves her life—and the empire.

***The Hired Girl*** by Laura Amy Schultz (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Fourteen-year-old Joan Skraggs, just like the heroines in her beloved novels, yearns for real life and true love. But what hope is there for adventure, beauty, or art on a hardscrabble farm in Pennsylvania where the work never ends? Over the summer of 1911, Joan pours her heart out into her diary as she seeks a new, better life for herself--because maybe, just maybe, a hired girl cleaning and cooking for six dollars a week can become what a farm girl could only dream of--a woman with a future.

***The Inside of Out*** by Jenn Marie Thorne (Dial, 2016).

When her best friend Hannah comes out the day before junior year, Daisy is all set to let her ally flag fly. Before you can spell LGBTQIA, she's leading the charge to end their school's antiquated ban on same-sex dates at dances--starting with homecoming. When an interview with Daisy goes viral, catching fire in the national media, Hannah is left in the dust of Daisy's good intentions. Daisy finds herself caught between her bold plans, her bad decisions, and her big fat mouth.

***The Memory of Things*** by Gae Polisner (St. Martin's Press, 2016).

On the morning of September 11, 2001, sixteen-year-old Kyle Donohue watches the first Twin Tower come down from the window of Stuyvesant High School. Moments later, terrified and fleeing home to safety across the Brooklyn Bridge, he stumbles across a girl perched in the shadows, covered in ash, and wearing a pair of costume wings. With his mother and sister in California and unable to reach his father, an NYC detective likely on his way to the disaster, Kyle makes the split-second decision to bring the girl home. What follows is their story, told in alternating points of view, as Kyle tries to unravel the mystery of the girl so he can return her to her family. But what if the girl has forgotten everything, even her own name? And what if the more Kyle gets to know her, the less he wants her to go home?

***Urban Tribes: Native Americans in the City*** by Lisa Charleyboy (Annick Press, 2015).

*Urban Tribes* offers unique insight into this growing and often misperceived group. Emotionally potent and visually arresting, the anthology profiles young urban Natives from across North America, exploring how they connect with Native culture and values in their contemporary lives. Their stories are as diverse as they are. From a young Dene woman pursuing an MBA at Stanford to a Pima photographer in Phoenix to a Mohawk actress in New York, these urban Natives share their unique perspectives to bridge the divide between their past and their future, their cultural home, and their adopted cities.

***When We Collided*** by Emery Lord (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Seventeen year-old Jonah Daniels has lived in Verona Cove, California his whole life, and only one thing has ever changed: his father used to be alive, and now he is not. With a mother lost in a deep bout of depression, Jonah and his five siblings struggle to keep up their home and the restaurant their dad left behind. But at the start of summer, a second change rolls in: Vivi Alexander, the new girl in town. Vivi is in love with life. Charming and unfiltered, she refuses to be held down by the medicine she's told should make her feel better. After meeting Jonah, she slides into the Daniels' household seamlessly, winning over each sibling with her imagination and gameness. But it's not long before Vivi's zest for life begins to falter. Soon her adventurousness becomes all-out danger-seeking. Through each high and low, Vivi and Jonah's love is put to the test . . . but what happens when love simply isn't enough?

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## **Addendum**

We encourage teachers to educate themselves about critical reviews so they can understand diverse perspectives and discuss with students. You can find several critiques related to books on this year's list at the links below:

***Ghosts*** by Raina Telgemeier (Graphix, 2016).

- ◆ Debbie Reese at *American Indians in Children's Literature*:  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2016/09/not-recommended-ghosts-by-raina.html>
- ◆ *Reading While White*:  
<http://readingwhilewhite.blogspot.com/2016/09/on-ghosts-and-magic-of-day-of-dead.html>
- ◆ Laura Jimenez at Booktoss: <https://booktoss.wordpress.com/2016/09/18/ghosts-swing-and-a-hard-miss/>
- ◆ Karen Jensen at *Teen Librarian Toolbox*:  
<http://www.teenlibrariantoolbox.com/2016/07/reading-and-wrestling-with-ghosts-by-raina-telgemeier/>
- ◆ Yuyi Morales guest post at *Reading While White*:  
<http://readingwhilewhite.blogspot.com/2016/11/day-of-dead-ghosts-and-work-we-do-as.html>
- ◆ Faythe Arrendondo at *Teen Services Underground*:  
<http://www.teenservicesunderground.com/a-look-at-ghosts/>

***Some Kind of Courage*** by Dan Gemeinhart (Scholastic Press, 2016)

- Debbie Reese at *American Indians in Children's Literature*:  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2016/12/dan-gemeinharts-some-kind-of-courage.html>

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