

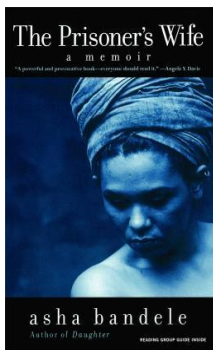
Non-fiction Social Justice books for High School

Amy, Ericka, Nancy



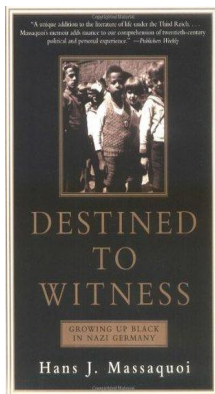
Convicted in the Womb by Carl Upchurch

Once Carl Upchurch was an elementary school dropout fighting for survival on the streets of South Philadelphia, a gang member wedded to a life of violence, a bank robber facing a future in federal penitentiaries. Now he is a respected community organizer and one of the most compelling and visionary leaders of the civil rights movement. Catapulted into the national spotlight following his organization of a summit that brought together the country's most notorious gangs. Carl Upchurch has found himself in direct conflict with other African American civil right leaders. This is his scathing critique of the established civil rights movement and his bold manifesto for solving the critical problems facing today's urban American. And this is his own unforgettable story-reality of urban crime gang warfare, and racial injustice from one who knows firsthand what it's like to be convicted in the womb.



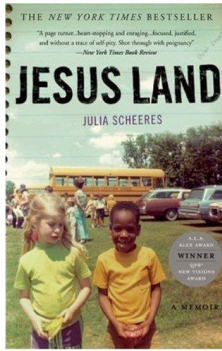
The Prisoner's Wife by asha bandele

As a favor for a friend, a bright and talented young woman volunteered to read her poetry to a group of prisoners during a Black History Month program. It was an encounter that would alter her life forever, because it was there, in the prison, that she would meet Rashid, the man who was to become her friend, her confidant, her husband, her lover, her soul mate. At the time, Rashid was serving a sentence of twenty years to life for his part in a murder. *The Prisoner's Wife* is a testimony, for wives and mothers, friends and families. It's a tribute to anyone who has ever chosen, against the odds, to love.



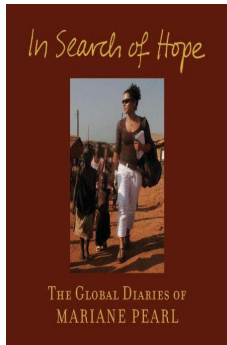
Destined to Witness: Growing up Black in Nazi Germany by Hans J. Massaquoi

This is a story of the unexpected. Hans Massaquoi has crafted a beautifully rendered memoir - an astonishing true tale of how he came of age as a black child in Nazi Germany. The son of a prominent African and a German nurse, Hans remained behind with his mother when Hitler came to power, due to concerns about his fragile health, after his father returned to Liberia. Like other German boys, Hans went to school; like other German boys, he swiftly fell under the Fuhrer's spell. So he was crushed to learn that, as a black child, he was ineligible for the Hitler Youth. His path to a secondary education and an eventual profession was blocked. He now lived in fear that, at any moment, he might hear the Gestapo banging on the door -- or Allied bombs falling on his home. Ironic, moving, and deeply human, Massaquoi's account of this lonely struggle for survival brims with courage and intelligence.



***Jesus Land* by Julia Scheeres**
ALA Alex Award (2006)

For Julia Scheeres and her adopted brother David, "Jesus Land" stretched from their parents' fundamentalist home, past the hostilities of high school, and deep into a Christian reform school in the Dominican Republic. For these two teenagers - brother and sister, black and white - the 1980's were a trial by fire. In this memoir, Scheeres takes us from the familiar Midwest, a land of cottonwood trees and trailer parks, to a place beyond her imagining. At home, the Scheeres kids must endure the usual trials of adolescence under the shadow of virulent racism neither knows how to contend with. When they start to crack (or fight back), they are packed off to Escuela Caribe - a brutal, prison-like "Christian boot camp" demands that its inhabitants repent for their sins. Julia and David's determination to make it through with heart and soul intact is told here with immediacy, candor, sparkling humor, and not an ounce of malice. *Jesus Land* is, on every page, a keenly moving ode to the sustaining power of love, and rebellion, and the dream of a perfect family.



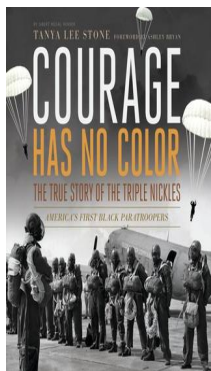
In Search of Hope: The Global Diaries of Mariane Pearl

Mariane Pearl started traveling the globe for *Glamour* magazine in 2006 to profile courageous women and show that hope is stronger than fear. During the first year of writing her monthly "Global Diary" column, Pearl logged nearly 100,000 miles and met 12 brave, determined women-true agents of change in their communities-who make the world a more just and harmonious place despite personal hardship, discouraging odds and even death threats.



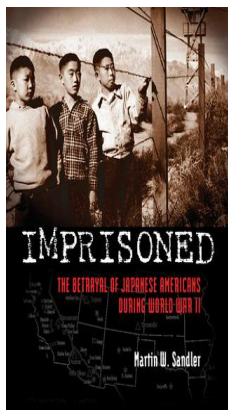
***Traffik* by Norman Jean Roy and Mariane Pearl**

While on assignment for *Glamour's* "Women of the Year" portfolio, photographer Norman Jean Roy was introduced to Somaly Mam, a former Cambodian sex slave who was being honored for her work rescuing women trapped in the sex industry and reintegrating them into society. Overwhelmed by her story and haunted by the faces of the women she'd worked with, Roy decided to spearhead a project that would expose and elevate the grave reality and gross injustice of their experiences with images of an industry that doesn't just sell sex; young women and children are routinely bartered, exchanged, and sold across international borders, resulting in a soulless flow of human traffic. Part exposé and part call to action, Roy's intimate and affecting photographs are aimed toward giving these victims a voice that will resonate across Cambodia's borders.



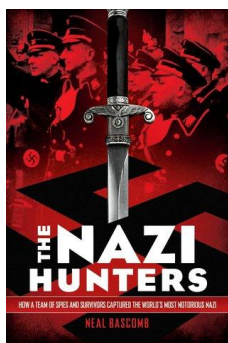
***Courage Has No Color* by Tanya Lee Stone**
YALSA Awards for Excellence in Nonfiction (2013), YALSA Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults (2014)

World War II is raging, and thousands of American soldiers are fighting overseas against the injustices brought on by Hitler. Back on the home front, the injustice of discrimination against African Americans plays out as much on Main Street as in the military. Enlisted black men are segregated from white soldiers and regularly relegated to service duties. At Fort Benning, Georgia, First Sergeant Walter Morris's men serve as guards at The Parachute School, while the white soldiers prepare to be paratroopers. Morris knows that for his men to be treated like soldiers, they have to train and act like them, but would the military elite and politicians recognize the potential of these men as well as their passion for serving their country?



***Imprisoned: The Betrayal of Japanese Americans During WWII* by Martin Sandler**
YALSA Awards for Excellence in Nonfiction (2013)

While Americans fought for freedom and democracy abroad, fear and suspicion towards Japanese Americans swept the country after Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. Culling information from extensive, previously unpublished interviews and oral histories with Japanese American survivors of internment camps, Martin W. Sandler gives an in-depth account of their lives before, during their imprisonment, and after their release. Bringing readers inside life in internment camps and explaining how a country that is built on the ideals of freedom for all could have such a dark mark on its history, this in-depth look at a troubling period of American history sheds light on the prejudices in today's world and provides the historical context we need to prevent similar abuses of power.



***The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi* by Neal Bascomb**
ALA Book Award (2014)

At the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi leader responsible for organizing the deportation and imprisonment of millions of Holocaust victims, went into hiding under an assumed identity. Eventually he fled to Argentina where he lived and worked under a false name for 10 years. Bascomb tells the story of Eichmann's crimes, his years in hiding, and his eventual capture and trial with rich detail and riveting suspense. At the same time, Bascomb introduces readers to the courageous Israeli agents, Holocaust survivors, and their families who worked together to track down, capture, and bring Eichmann to justice.

“Neal Bascomb, a bestselling author for adults, brings an important moment in history to life for teen readers in a gripping and exhaustively researched narrative,” said YALSA Nonfiction Award Chair Jamison Hedin.

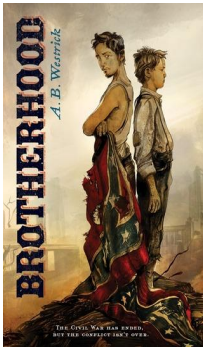
Fiction



Rose Under Fire by Elizabeth Wein

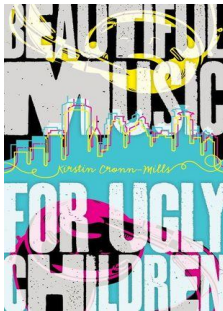
While flying an Allied fighter plane from Paris to England, American ATA pilot and amateur poet, Rose Justice, is captured by the Nazis and sent to Ravensbrück, the notorious women's concentration camp. Trapped in horrific circumstances, Rose finds hope in the impossible through the loyalty, bravery and friendship of her fellow prisoners. But will that be enough to endure the fate that's in store for her?

Elizabeth Wein, author of the critically-acclaimed and bestselling *Code Name Verity*, delivers another stunning WWII thriller. The unforgettable story of Rose Justice is forged from heart-wrenching courage, resolve, and the slim, bright chance of survival.



Brotherhood by A.B. Westrick 2014 Jane Adams Book Award

The civil war-era novel has also been named as an ALA/YALSA 2014 Best Book for Young Adults, a Junior Library Guild selection, and is the winner of the 2014 National Council for the Social Studies Notable Trade Book Award. The novel, told from the vantage point of fourteen-year-old Shadrach, takes place in the South during one of this country's most trying times, post-Civil War Reconstruction.



Beautiful Music for Ugly Children by Kirstin Cronn-Mills YALSA Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults (2014), ALA Rainbow List (2013), Stonewall Children's and Young Adult Literature Award winner (2014), Stonewall Book Award-Mike Morgan and Larry Romans Children's & Young Adult Literature Award (2014)

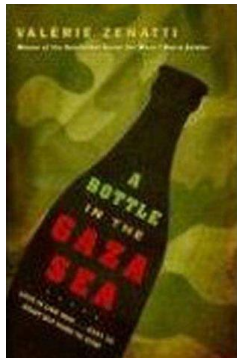
My birth name is Elizabeth, but I'm a guy. Gabe. My parents think I've gone crazy and the rest of the world is happy to agree with them, but I know I'm right. I've been a boy my whole life. When you think about it, I'm like a record. Elizabeth is my A side, the song everybody knows, and Gabe is my B side--not heard as often, but just as good. It's time to let my B side play.

<https://www.goodreads.com/award/show/17784-stonewall-book-award-mike-morgan-and-larry-romans-children-s-young-adu>



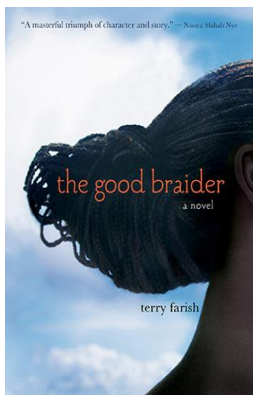
***Blue Gold* by Elizabeth Stewart**

"Coltan, or "blue gold," is a rare mineral used in making cell phones and computers. Across continents, the lives of three teen girls are affected by the "blue gold" trade. " Sylvie's family had to flee the Democratic Republic of the Congo after her father was killed by a rogue militia gang in the conflict for control of coltan. Laiping labors in a Chinese factory, soldering components for cell phones. Fiona is a North American girl who, in one thoughtless moment, takes a picture on her cell phone she comes to regret. All three teens are unexpectedly linked by these events. The result is an intense and powerful story about their struggles to create better lives for themselves in the face of the world's increasing appetite for coltan.



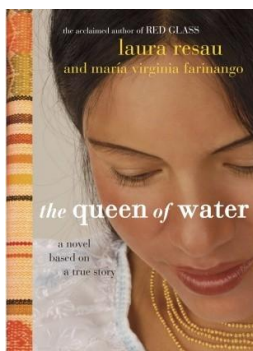
***A Bottle in the Gaza Sea* by Valerie Zenatti**

When Israeli teenager Tal Levine decides to throw a bottle with a letter into the Gaza Sea, she has little idea what to expect. Against all odds, Tal longs to strike up a correspondence with someone on the other side -- to forge something positive out of the turbulent and troubled times in which Israelis and Palestinians live. But what kind of response might a Palestinian give to an Israeli girl? Tal is not expecting "Gazaman," the boy who retrieves her bottle on a Gaza beach: Gazaman, a thorny, sarcastic young man with a reluctance to reveal anything about his true identity; Gazaman, who at first mocks Tal, only to be gradually drawn in by her. A remarkable e-mail exchange begins, which shakes the beliefs of both to the core and confounds all their expectations.



***The Good Braider* by Terry Farish**

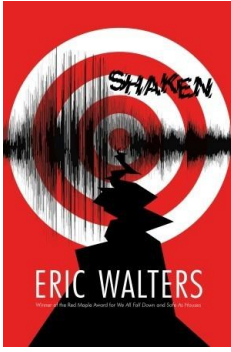
In spare free verse laced with unforgettable images, Viola's strikingly original voice sings out the story of her family's journey from war-torn Sudan, to Cairo, and finally to Portland, Maine. Here, in the sometimes too close embrace of the local Southern Sudanese Community, she dreams of South Sudan while she tries to navigate the strange world of America a world where a girl can wear a short skirt, get a tattoo or even date a boy; a world that puts her into sharp conflict with her traditional mother who, like Viola, is struggling to braid together the strands of a displaced life.



***The Queen of Water* by Laura Resau**

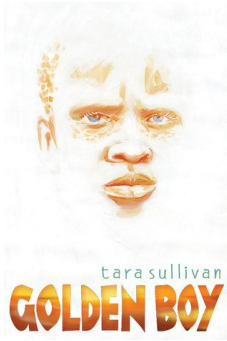
School Library Journal Best Book of the Year, Colorado Book Award Nominee, Junior Library Guild Selection, Blank Street Books "Outstanding Merit, Americas Award Honorable Mention

Born in an Andean village in Ecuador, Virginia lives with her large family in a small, earthen-walled dwelling. In her village of indigenas, it is not uncommon to work in the fields all day, even as a child, or to be called a longa tonta—stupid Indian—by members of the ruling class of mestizos, or Spanish descendants. When seven-year-old Virginia is taken from her village to be a servant to a mestizo couple, she has no idea what the future holds. In this poignant novel based on a true story, acclaimed author Laura Resau has collaborated with María Virginia Farinango to recount one girl's unforgettable journey to self-discovery.



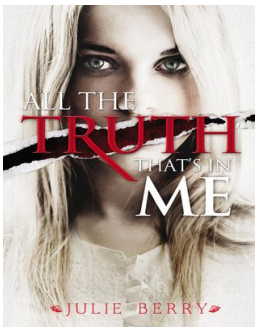
***Shaken* by Eric Walters**

Set in Port-au-Prince, Haiti during the January 2009 earthquake, follows the struggle of Joshua, a Canadian boy at the centre of the tragedy. Fifteen-year-old Joshua has travelled from Toronto to Port-au-Prince, Haiti in order to help with a charity mission. In confronting the poverty and and injustice that surrounds him, Joshua struggles to find meaning in the cruelty of the world. And then devastation hits — and Joshua finds himself at the very centre of a catastrophic earthquake. Will he be able to save himself? And, if he does, how will he find the faith and hope he needs to go on?



***Golden Boy* by Tara Sullivan
ALA Award-winner 2014**

Thirteen-year-old Habo has always been different— light eyes, yellow hair and white skin. Not the good brown skin his family has and not the white skin of tourists. Habo is strange and alone. His father, unable to accept Habo, abandons the family; his mother can scarcely look at him. His brothers are cruel and the other children never invite him to play. Only his sister Asu loves him well. But even Asu can't take the sting away when the family is forced from their small Tanzanian village, and Habo knows he is to blame. Seeking refuge in Mwanza, Habo and his family journey across the Serengeti. His aunt is glad to open her home until she sees Habo for the first time, and then she is only afraid. Suddenly, Habo has a new word for himself: Albino. But they hunt Albinos in Mwanza because Albino body parts are thought to bring good luck. And soon Habo is being hunted by a fearsome man with a machete. To survive, Habo must not only run but find a way to love and accept himself.



***All the Truth That's in Me* by Julie Berry**

ALA Award-winner 2014

Four years ago, Judith and her best friend disappeared from their small town of Roswell Station. Two years ago, only Judith returned, permanently mutilated, reviled and ignored by those who were once her friends and family. Unable to speak, Judith lives like a ghost in her own home, silently pouring out her thoughts to the boy who's owned her heart as long as she can remember—even if he doesn't know it—her childhood friend, Lucas. But when Roswell Station is attacked, long-buried secrets come to light, and Judith is forced to choose: continue to live in silence, or recover her voice, even if it means changing her world, and the lives around her, forever. This startlingly original novel will shock and disturb you;

it will fill you with Judith's passion and longing; and its mysteries will keep you feverishly turning the pages until the very last.

Patti, Kathie, Sam and Sarah
Multicultural/World Literature

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros

This is a classic coming-of-age story presented in semi-autobiographical fashion. Esperanza Cordero is a young girl growing up in the Hispanic part of Chicago. Her story is told through a series of short vignettes that when, as one reviewer put it, "seen from up close, each chapter is a self-contained beauty. Seen from a distance, the chapters come together to reveal a masterpiece of Latino literature."

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

This is a non-fiction story about a young boy named William and how "with a small pile of once-forgotten science textbooks; some scrap metal, tractor parts, and bicycle halves; and an armory of curiosity and determination, he embarked on a daring plan to forge an unlikely contraption and small miracle that would change the lives around him." William helped his community gain electricity, running water, and a new perspective on the world around them in Malawi.

Beneath My Mother's Feet by Amjed Qamar

A gripping story about a Pakistani girl named Nazia who only wants to be a good daughter to her mother--a mother who has spent every year since Nazia was born saving up in order to eventually pay her dowry. At just fourteen years old, she drops out of school when her father is injured and can no longer work to support the family. Nazia joins her mother in cleaning houses, but worries because who would want a housekeeper for a daughter-in-law. Nazia struggles with growing up too quickly and still trying to figure out who she is in a world that seems ready to dictate her every move.

Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States by Lori Marie Carlson and Oscar Hijuelos

This is a collection of poems written in both English and Spanish that deal with the struggles of coming of age in America. The poems are all written by well-known Latin@ authors, and each reflects on different individual and global topics. An excerpt:

i think in spanish
i write in english

i want to go back to puerto rico,
but i wonder if my kink could live
in ponce, mayagüez and carolina

tengo las venas aculturadas
escribo en spanglish
abraham in español

--from "My Graduation Speech," by Tato Laviera

***Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida* by Victor Martinez**

In this beautifully written novel, Victor Martinez gives readers a vivid portrait of one Mexican-American boy's life. Manny's story is like a full-color home movie--sometimes funny, sometimes sad, but always intensely original. For Manuel Hernandez, the year leading up to his test of courage, his initiation into a gang, is a time filled with the pain and tension, awkwardness and excitement of growing up in a mixed-up, crazy world. Manny's dad is always calling him el perico, or parrot. It's from a Mexican saying about a parrot that complains how hot it is in the shade while all along he's sitting inside the oven and doesn't know it. But Manny wants to be smarter than the parrot in the oven—he wants to find out what it means to be a vato firme, a guy to respect. From an exciting new voice in Chicano literature, this is a beautifully written, vivid portrait of one Mexican-American boy's life. (scholastic.com, National Book Award for Young People's Literature)

***Waiting* by Ha Jin**

The demands of human longing contend with the weight of centuries of custom in acclaimed author Ha Jin's *Waiting*, a novel of unexpected richness and universal resonance. Every summer Lin Kong, a doctor in the Chinese Army, returns to his village to end his loveless marriage with the humble and touchingly loyal Shuyu. But each time Lin must return to the city to tell Manna Wu, the educated, modern nurse he loves, that they will have to postpone their engagement once again. Caught between conflicting claims of these two utterly different women and trapped by a culture in which adultery can ruin lives and careers, Lin has been waiting for eighteen years. This year, he promises, will be different. (good reads.com)

***Sea of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh**

In a time of colonial upheaval, fate has thrown together a diverse cast of Indians and Westerners, from a bankrupt raja to a widowed tribeswoman, from a mulatto American freedman to a free-spirited French orphan. As their old family ties are washed away, they, like their historical counterparts, come to view themselves as jahaj-bhais, or ship-brothers. An unlikely dynasty is born, which will span continents, races, and generation

***Life of Pi* by Y. Martel**

(High School). A fabulous romp through an imagination by turns ecstatic, cunning, despairing and resilient, this novel is an impressive achievement "a story that will make you believe in God," as one character says. The peripatetic Pi (ne the much-taunted Piscine) Patel spends a beguiling boyhood in Pondicherry, India, as the son of a zookeeper. Growing up beside the wild beasts, Pi gathers an encyclopedic knowledge of the animal world. His curious mind also makes the leap from his native Hinduism to Christianity and Islam, all three of which he practices with joyous abandon. In his 16th year, Pi sets sail with his family and some of their menagerie to start a new life in Canada. Halfway to Midway Island, the ship sinks into the Pacific, leaving Pi stranded on a life raft with a hyena, an orangutan, an injured zebra and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. After the beast dispatches the others, Pi is left to survive for 227 days with his large feline companion on the 26-foot-long raft, using all his knowledge, wits and faith to keep himself alive. The scenes flow together effortlessly, and the sharp observations of the young narrator keep the tale brisk and engaging. Martel's potentially unbelievable plot line soon demolishes the reader's defenses, cleverly set up by events of young Pi's life that almost naturally lead to his biggest ordeal. This richly patterned work, Martel's second novel, won Canada's 2001 Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction and the 2002 Man Booker Prize. In it, Martel displays the clever voice and tremendous storytelling skills of an emerging

master. (Publishers Weekly) [It is a book that many of my male students have enjoyed as it has many non-fiction elements at the beginning. The book does take some patience because, as my students put it, "nothing happens" for the first half of the book. However, patience is richly rewarded and students always want to discuss their interpretations of the ending.]

***A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini**

Hosseini's follow-up to his best-selling debut, *The Kite Runner* (2003) views the plight of Afghanistan during the last half-century through the eyes of two women. Mariam is the illegitimate daughter of a maid and a businessman, who is given away in marriage at 15 to Rasheed, a man three times her age; their union is not a loving one. Laila is born to educated, liberal parents in Kabul the night the Communists take over Afghanistan. Adored by her father but neglected in favor of her older brothers by her mother, Laila finds her true love early on in Tariq, a thoughtful, chivalrous boy who lost a leg in an explosion. But when tensions between the Communists and the mujahideen make the city unsafe, Tariq and his family flee to Pakistan. A devastating tragedy brings Laila to the house of Rasheed and Mariam, where she is forced to make a horrific choice to secure her future. At the heart of the novel is the bond between Mariam and Laila, two very different women brought together by dire circumstances. Unimaginably tragic, Hosseini's magnificent second novel is a sad and beautiful testament to both Afghani suffering and strength. Readers who lost themselves in *The Kite Runner* will not want to miss this unforgettable follow-up. (Booklist) Nominated for ALA's Best Book for Young Readers Award, 2008.

***A Game for Swallows: To Die, to Leave, to Return* By Zeina Abirached. Illus. by the author. Lerner/Graphic Universe.**

This graphic novel memoir focuses on one night during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) during which the author, her brother, and neighbors huddle in the safest corner of their apartment sharing memories, food, and comfort. (A 2013 Batchelder Honor Book)

Gr 5 Up-Zeina and her younger brother are growing up in Beirut, where civil war is a part of daily life. To protect against strikes and sniper fire, the family's living space has been reduced to the relative security of their apartment foyer, where a rug hanging on the wall, depicting Moses and the Hebrews fleeing Egypt, figures predominantly as a story background. This account chronicles one day in their lives, as the siblings await their parents' return and neighbors come and spend time with them, building an island of sanctuary for the children during this time of uncertainty. Bold, graphic, black-and-white images are visually and emotionally striking. Excellent use of maps and diagrams provides reference points and enhances understanding of spatial relationships. Unique panel placement includes several sequences of horizontal strips, read as columns. Images portray elapsed time, such as repeated smoking and countdown panels, and control pacing while revealing mounting tension. Excruciating wait time is depicted with cumulative "tic" and "toc" filling successive panels. Circular images of an embracing family contrast with the stark linear images of a war-torn country. Warmth and humor of daily life is shown in baking and storytelling, and wedding-dress close-ups touchingly highlight a mother's worry over soiling the hem, masking her worry over sniper fire. This superb memoir is destined to become a classic.

***The War Within These Walls* by Aline Sax**

(2011). Written by Aline Sax, illustrated by Caryl Strzelecki, translated by Laura Watkinson, and published by Eerdmans Books for Young Readers.

Originally published in Dutch in 2011 as “De kleuren van het getto,” “The War Within These Walls” was written by Aline Sax, illustrated by Caryl Strzelecki and translated by Laura Watkinson. With powerful text and stark illustrations, this novella provides a harrowing account of Jewish suffering in the Warsaw ghetto during World War II. Misha's poetic first-person account tells of his struggle to survive. Together with a band of revolutionaries, they make a courageous stand to tell the world their story. A 2014 Batchelder Honor Book.

Teenage Misha narrates the story of what happened during WWII when Nazi forces took over Poland and walled off a part of Warsaw in 1940 to hold all the Jews in that city. Misha rebels against the inhumane conditions of meager rations and the tremendous overcrowding in the Warsaw Ghetto by smuggling food until his younger sister disappears while on a run through the sewer system. Then, in 1943, when he learns that the Nazis plan to kill all the Jews by transporting them to concentration camps, he joins a rebel group determined to fight back no matter how hopeless their cause might be. Everything about the format of the book—its tall and narrow shape, the somber blue-and-white illustrations that work together with the spare prose, the alternating white and black pages—makes the reader pause and take notice of what is happening. This very personal viewpoint of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising makes a powerful impact that will last long after reading. Grades 9-12

***The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by J Diaz**

(2007). The titular Oscar is a 300-pound-plus "lovesick ghetto nerd" with zero game (except for Dungeons & Dragons) who cranks out pages of fantasy fiction with the hopes of becoming a Dominican J.R.R. Tolkien. The book is also the story of a multi-generational family curse that courses through the book, leaving troubles and tragedy in its wake. This was the most dynamic, entertaining, and achingly heartfelt novel I've read in a long time. My head is still buzzing with the memory of dozens of killer passages that I dog-eared throughout the book. The rope-a-dope narrative is funny, hip, tragic, soulful, and bursting with desire. Make some room for *Oscar Wao* on your bookshelf—you won't be disappointed. Pulitzer Prize 2008.

Palace Walk by Naguib Mahfouz

The story of the Ahmad Abd al-Jawad family in *Palace Walk* will strike a chord of sympathy with any reader. This novel, first published in Arabic in 1956 and written by Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz, reveals the daily life of a middle class Moslem, Cairo family of two daughters and three sons. The young people struggle with sibling rivalry and community respectability, the love of their nurturing mother and the fear of their authoritarian, ill-tempered father, among the sounds and sights of modern Egypt. Although their religion or houses may seem strange and the place of women in their society alien, the thoughts and feelings of this sympathetic family struggling to get along, find mates, establish careers are universally human (The Alan Review <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu>) *Palace Walk* is the first novel in Nobel Prize-winner Naguib Mahfouz's magnificent Cairo Trilogy, an epic family saga of colonial Egypt that is considered his masterwork (Amazon)

A Hand Full of Stars by Rafik Schami translated by Rika Lesser 2012

Amid the turmoil of modern Damascus, one teenage boy finds his political voice in a message of rebellion that echoes throughout Syria and as far away as Western Europe. Inspired by his dearest friend, old Uncle Salim, he begins a journal to record his thoughts and impressions of family, friends, life at school, and his growing feelings for his girlfriend, Nadia. Soon the hidden diary becomes more than just a way to remember his daily adventures; on its pages he explores his frustration with the government injustices he witnesses. His courage and ingenuity finally find an outlet when he and his friends begin a subversive underground newspaper. Warmed by a fine sense of humor, this novel is

at once a moving love story and a passionate testimony to the difficult and committed actions being taken by young people around the world (Amazon)

This won the Mildred L. Batchelder Award, which is given annually to the most outstanding children's book originally published in a foreign language in a foreign country (The Alan Review)

Shizuko's Daughter by Kyoko Mori

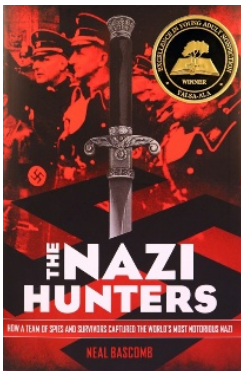
"Lyrical...A beautifully written book about a bitterly painful coming of age."

THE KIRKUS REVIEWS

Yuki Okuda knows her mother would be proud of her grades and her achievements in sports if she were alive. But she committed suicide. And Yuki has to learn how to live with a father who doesn't seem to love her and a stepmother who treats her badly. Most important, she has to learn how to live with herself: a twelve-year-old Japanese girl growing up alone, trying to make sense of a tragedy that makes no sense at all.... (Amazon)

[This book] was written in English by Kyoko Mori, a woman born and raised in Japan but now residing in America. This ALA Best Book for Young Adults traces the struggle of Yuki, whose mother Shizuko kills herself, to create a life free of her cruel father and stepmother, a life in which she can learn to love and be loved again. *Shizuko's Daughter* offers insights into Japanese schooling and culture, but, most of all, it makes the reader care about a young Japanese girl.

Non-fiction for Middle School

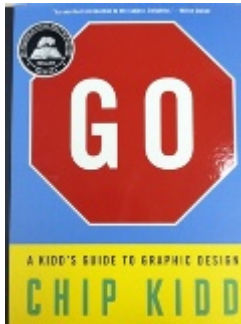


The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi written by Neal Bascomb, published by Arthur A. Levine Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.

At the end of World War II, Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi leader responsible for organizing the deportation and imprisonment of millions of Holocaust victims, went into hiding under an assumed identity. Eventually he fled to Argentina where he lived and worked under a false name for 10 years. Bascomb tells the story of Eichmann's crimes, his years in hiding, and his eventual capture and trial with rich detail and riveting suspense. At the same time, Bascomb introduces readers to the courageous Israeli agents, Holocaust survivors, and their families who worked together to track down, capture, and bring Eichmann to justice.

“Neal Bascomb, a bestselling author for adults, brings an important moment in history to life for teen readers in a gripping and exhaustively researched narrative,” said YALSA Nonfiction Award Chair Jamison Hedin.

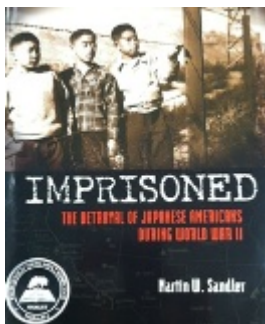
Winner of the 2014 YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



Go: A Kidd's Guide to Graphic Design written by Chip Kidd, published by Workman Publishing Company.

This innovative book offers an introduction to the history and basic concepts of graphic design from one of the most successful designers working today. Using real world examples and rich visual aids, Kidd teaches readers how effective design can communicate ideas and messages, and he suggests ways to think critically about the design elements that infuse the media around us. Kidd invites readers to experiment with design themselves by ending the book with a series of 10 design challenges and offers a venue to share their work online.

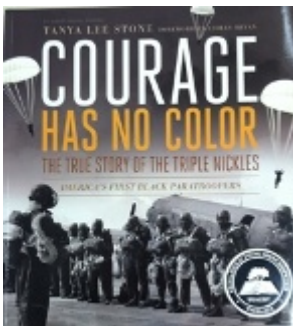
Finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



Imprisoned: The Betrayal of Japanese Americans During World War II written by Martin W. Sandler, published by Walker Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing, Inc.

After the Japanese military bombed Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, forcing the internment of over 100,000 Japanese-Americans. This detailed and compassionate chronicle of the internment years incorporates many first-hand accounts and photographs. Sandler skillfully provides context for the internment and also examines its lasting legacy by examining anti-Japanese sentiment in America before World War II and then the redress movement, which advocated for compensation and formal apologies for internees after the war.

Finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



Courage Has No Color: The True Story of the Triple Nickles, America's First Black Paratroopers written by Tanya Lee Stone, published by Candlewick Press.

“What is it like to jump out of an airplane? Imagine.” From these opening sentences, Stone chronicles the courage and persistence that were the hallmarks of the Triple Nickles, the African Americans who pushed through military barriers to become the first black paratroopers. Their individual efforts, the eventual recognition of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, and the broader issues of segregation during the war period are illustrated with a with a rich collection of interviews, letters, and photos. Stone’s afterword, the timeline, and the detailed source notes offer valuable insights into her research methods. Ashley Bryan’s foreword and artwork add personal insight and extend the power of this skillfully told story.

Finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



The President Has Been Shot! The Assassination of John F. Kennedy written by James L. Swanson, published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.

James Swanson takes readers back in time with a thoroughly researched and tightly written narrative of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Beginning with a succinct introduction to Kennedy's early life and presidential administration, Swanson sets the scene for a detailed and engaging examination of the events before, during, and after November 22, 1963, when JFK and Lee Harvey Oswald crossed paths in Dallas with tragic results. The book brings events to life with extensive photographs, diagrams, and primary documents, and illuminates Swanson's research and writing process with detailed source notes, an extensive bibliography, suggestions for further reading, and a comprehensive index.

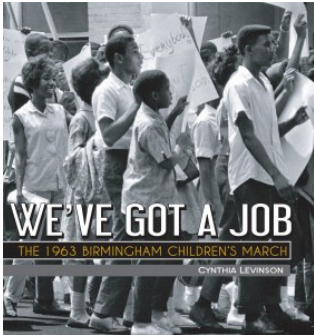
Finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



Titanic: Voices from the Disaster, written by Deborah Hopkinson

Great mix of voices, pictures, and diagrams from this famous disaster. This book introduces the disaster and profiles a few of the survivor's and what they were doing before, during, and after the fateful collision. They are the voices of real people who were both passengers and crew. Even today over one hundred years later, who isn't curious about what happened, why, who said what and when, and what if ?

“First Officer Murdoch had few good options and a mere 37 seconds...” Very appealing to middle schoolers of both genders and a great way to open up discussion about social classes, fairness, and the choices we make. Beth’s 6th grade class loved it!



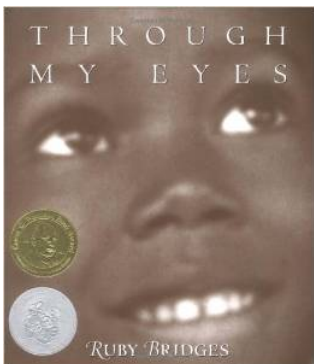
The 1963 Birmingham Children's March, written by Cynthia Levinson

Winner of IRA Young Adult Nonfiction Award and Jane Addams Book Award and many, many more.

From the prologue: On Thursday morning, May 2, 1963, nine-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks woke up with freedom on her mind. But, before she could be free, there was something important she had to do.

“I want to go to jail,” Audrey had told her mother.

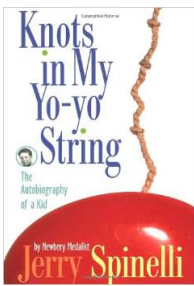
Since Mr. and Mrs. Hendricks thought that was a good idea, they helped her get ready. Her father had even bought her a new game she’d been eyeing. Audrey imagined that it would entertain her if she got bored during her week on a cell block.



Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges

On November 14, 1960, a tiny six-year-old black child, surrounded by federal marshals, walked through a mob of screaming segregationists and into her school. From where she sat in the office, Ruby Bridges could see parents marching through the halls and taking their children out of classrooms. The next day, Ruby walked through the angry mob once again and into a school where she saw no other students. The white children did not go to school that day, and they wouldn't go to school for many days to come. Surrounded by racial turmoil, Ruby, the only student in a classroom with one wonderful teacher, learned to read and add.

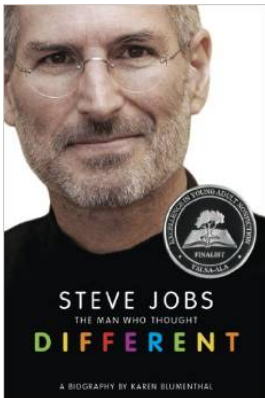
This is the story of a pivotal event in history as Ruby Bridges saw it unfold around her. Ruby's poignant words, quotations from writers and from other adults who observed her, and dramatic photographs recreate an amazing story of innocence, courage, and forgiveness.



Knots in My Yo-Yo String

by Jerry Spinelli

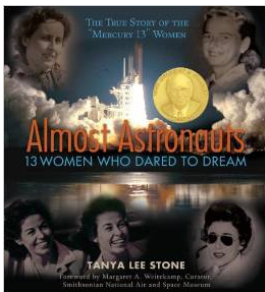
"A master of those embarrassing, gloppy, painful, and suddenly wonderful things that happen on the razor's edge between childhood and full-fledged adolescence" (The Washington Post), Newbery medalist Jerry Spinelli has penned his early autobiography with all the warmth, humor, and drama of his best-selling fiction. From first memories through high school, including first kiss, first punch, first trip to the principal's office, and first humiliating sports experience, this is not merely an account of a highly unusual childhood. Rather, like Spinelli's fiction, its appeal lies in the accessibility and universality of his life. Entertaining and fast-paced, this is a highly readable memoir-- a must-have for Spinelli fans of all ages.



Steve Jobs: The Man Who Thought Different, a biography by Karen Blumenthal
"Your time is limited. . . . have the courage to follow your heart and intuition."--

Steve Jobs

From the start, his path was never predictable. Steve Jobs was given up for adoption at birth, dropped out of college after one semester, and at the age of twenty, created Apple in his parents' garage with his friend Steve Wozniack. Then came the core and hallmark of his genius--his exacting moderation for perfection, his counterculture life approach, and his level of taste and style that pushed all boundaries. A devoted husband, father, and Buddhist, he battled cancer for over a decade, became the ultimate CEO, and made the world want every product he touched.

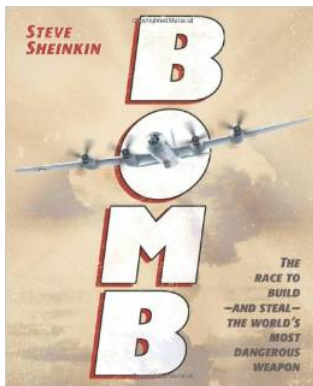


Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream by Tanya Lee Stone

They had the right stuff. They defied the prejudices of the time. And they blazed a trail for generations of women to follow.

What does it take to be an astronaut? Excellence at flying, courage, intelligence, resistance to stress, top physical shape — any checklist would include these. But when America created NASA in 1958, there was another unspoken rule: you had to be a man. Here is the tale of thirteen women who proved that they were not only as tough as the toughest man but also brave enough to challenge the government. They were blocked by prejudice, jealousy, and the scrawled note of one of the most powerful men in Washington. But even though the Mercury 13 women did not make it into space, they did not lose, for their example empowered young women to take their place in the sky, piloting jets and commanding space capsules. *ALMOST ASTRONAUTS* is the story of thirteen true pioneers of the space age.

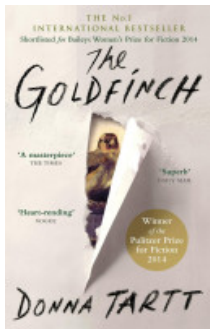
Finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction honors the best nonfiction book published for young adults (ages 12-18)



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

In December of 1938, a chemist in a German laboratory made a shocking discovery: When placed next to radioactive material, a Uranium atom split in two. That simple discovery launched a scientific race that spanned 3 continents. In Great Britain and the United States, Soviet spies worked their way into the scientific community; in Norway, a commando force slipped behind enemy lines to attack German heavy-water manufacturing; and deep in the desert, one brilliant group of scientists was hidden away at a remote site at Los Alamos. This is the story of the plotting, the risk-taking, the deceit, and genius that created the world's most formidable weapon. This is the story of the atomic bomb.

Recommendations for students in grades 11 and 12 (mature readers and/or very difficult reading in length, complexity, or pace).

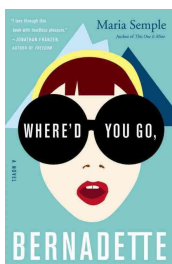


***The Goldfinch*
by Donna Tartt**

Awards: Pulitzer Prize for Fiction 2014

"*The Goldfinch* is a rarity that comes along perhaps half a dozen times per decade, a smartly written literary novel that connects with the heart as well as the mind....Donna Tartt has delivered an extraordinary work of fiction."--**Stephen King, *The New York Times Book Review***

Thirteen-year-old New Yorker, Theo Decker, survives a tragic explosion that kills his mother. As one of the sole survivors, Theo crawls out from the rubble with a small, captivating painting--his mother's favorite--as his most prized possession. Seeking refuge at the Park Avenue home of a wealthy friend, Theo learns how to navigate a world of luxury and little love as he discovers who he is within the dusty labyrinth of the antique shop where he works. The winner of the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, *The Goldfinch* includes well-developed characters that face struggles of love, loss, obsession, identity, and fate. Despite its 784 pages, Amazon reviews it as a "mesmerizing, stay-up-all-night and tell-all-your-friends triumph."

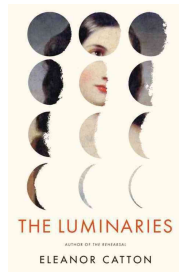


***Where'd You Go, Bernadette*
by Maria Semple**

Awards: ALA Alex Award (2013), Women's Prize for Fiction Nominee (2013)

Agoraphobic Bernadette might be a gifted architect, but she would struggle to complete even basic tasks without her online assistant in India. Quirky Bernadette might not fulfill the cookie cutter image of the other mom's at her 15-year-old daughter Bee's private school, but Bee doesn't mind. After Bee makes straight As on her report card, she requests a family trip to Antarctica. All is set until Bernadette goes missing. To solve the mystery of her mother's disappearance, Bee pieces

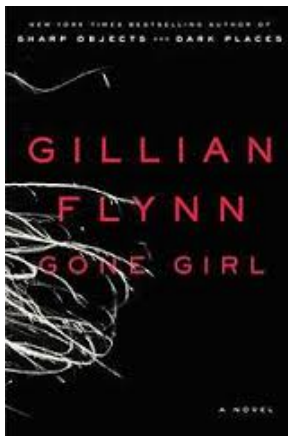
together letters, e-mails, and various other documents to create a highly readable, multigenre novel. A 2013 ALA Alex Award recipient and a 2013 nominee for the Women's Prize for Fiction, *Where'd You Go, Bernadette* is a fun, witty satire that will keep students entertained.



The Luminaries
by Eleanor Catton

Awards: Man Booker Prize (2013)

Walter Moody catches gold fever and arrives in New Zealand in 1866 set on striking it rich; instead, he happens upon a mystery in which a horde of gold has turned up at a local drunk's home, a prostitute has attempted suicide, and a wealthy man has gone missing. Not only has *The Luminaries* received the 2013 Man Book Prize, but also *The New York Times* selected it as one of the 100 most notable books of 2013, praising it as "a true achievement. Catton has built a lively parody of a 19th-century novel, and in so doing created a novel for the 21st, something utterly new. The pages fly." With its quirky cast of characters and complex puzzle, this page turning, ghost story keeps its audience intrigued.

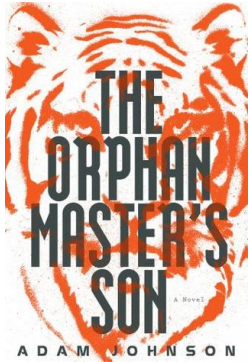


Gone Girl
by Gillian Flynn

Awards: *People Magazine* Best Book of the Year, Edgar Award Nominee for Best Novel, Anthony Award Nominee for Best Novel

Nick and Amy Dunne appear to be the ideal, doting couple until Amy goes missing on their fifth wedding anniversary. Despite this wife's disappearance, Nick's calm

response is atypical of what most would expect from a distraught husband. This novel shifts between the perspectives of Nick as he contemplates the loss of his wife as well as passages from Amy's diary. Both viewpoints reveal dark, twisted, complex characters who redefine the concept of true love. A haunting thriller, *Gone Girl* will keep readers guessing until the last page.

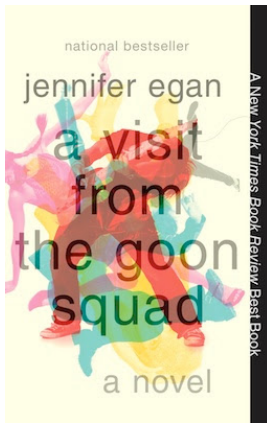


The Orphan Master's Son
by Adam Johnson

Awards: Pulitzer Prize for Fiction 2012, National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist, Dayton Literary Peace Prize Winner, Longlisted for the American Library Association's Andrew Carnegie Medal, Winner of the California Book Award for Fiction, *New York Times* Bestseller.

Named one of the best books of the year by: *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, Stephen King for *Entertainment Weekly*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Financial Times*, *Newsweek/The Daily Beast*, *The Plain Dealer*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Scott Turow for *The Millions*, *Slate*, *Salon*, *BookPage*, *NS Shelf Awareness*.

The list of accolades should speak for itself--this book is a must-have for classroom shelves. Still, for those not yet convinced, *The Orphan Master's Son* welcomes readers into the secretive dictatorship of North Korea. Readers follow Pak Jun Do, the son of a "lost" mother and a father who runs an orphan work camp. Excelling at his duties of picking orphans for manual labor, Jun Do becomes an orphan kidnapper--that is until love forces him to become a rival to Kim Jong Il in an attempt to save the woman, Sun Moon. *The Orphan Master's Son* provides a dauntingly realistic portrayal of the small glimpses of beauty that can exist in a country rife with political corruption, hunger, and terror.



***A Visit from the Goon Squad*
by Jennifer Egan**

Awards: National Bestseller, National Book Critics Circle Award Winner, PEN/Faulkner Award Finalist, *A New York Times Book Review Best Book*
One of the Best Books of the Year: *Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, The Daily Beast, The Miami Herald, The Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Newsday, NPR's On Point, O, the Oprah Magazine, People, Publishers Weekly, Salon, San Francisco Chronicle, Seattle Times, Slate, Time, The Washington Post, and Village Voice*

This collection of short stories details the eclectic lives of a cast of colorful characters. Held together by music, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* shows the intersection between the lives of a variety of fascinating characters ranging from a punk-rocker-has-been-turned-record-executive to a troubled kleptomaniac. Written in a variety of styles ranging from newspaper clippings to even a chapter done entirely in Powerpoint, this is a must read for any student fascinated by the music industry.

THE MONUMENTS MEN – Robert M. Edsel with Bret Witter

This WWII tale tells the story of Nazi art hoarding and its retrieval by an unassuming group of “Monuments Men”—enlisted soldiers who held jobs related to museums and art curation before the war. It is long—473 pages—and contains little dialogue, but plentiful excerpts from letters, diaries, and telegrams. The excellent story, the presence of the historical artifacts, and the lure of the movie adaptation make this a reach book our students will read.

(National Humanities Medal Winner [author]; pairs well with *Unbroken, The Hundred-Foot Journey*)

AMERICANAH – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

This epic love story that spans Africa, England, and America will sweep all readers off their feet. At 477 pages, this tome is no light read, but the sheer beauty and scope of its content will be enough to keep readers going. The beautiful Ifemelu and the dashing Obinze experience disappointments and triumphs, centered around race and class, while together and apart. Its blend of unique settings, dark humor, and universal themes will help our students grow.

(National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction 2013, Women’s Prize for Fiction Nominee 2014, Paris Review Best of the Best 2013; pairs well with *Things Fall Apart, Ghana Must Go*)

LOST MEMORY OF SKIN – Russell Banks

This provocative novel sheds light on the lives of convicted sex offenders in modern day America. Its protagonist is a young man called 'The Kid' whose mistakes landed him in jail, and upon his release, he struggles to find his way in the world. He is homeless and alone until 'The Professor', a sociologist studying homelessness and recidivism among sex offenders, tries to help him. However, situations arise that make both characters, and the reader, call into question every moral assumption they hold. This compelling content will entrance readers.

(Andrew Carnegie Medal Nominee for Excellence in Fiction 2012; pairs well with *Lolita*)

THE ROUND HOUSE – Louise Erdrich

Set on an Indian reservation in North Dakota, this book explores the savage attack and subsequent emotional trauma of one Geraldine Coutts. Her husband, Bazil, and her 13-year-old son, Joe, want to help and heal her, but she will not reveal details of the crime to them or the police. Joe's father, a tribal judge, is having no luck finding justice, so Joe and his friends decide to find answers of their own—which leads them to The Round House. This coming-of-age epic journey will captivate our students, especially the boys.

(National Book Award for Fiction 2012, ALA Alex Award 2013, Indies Choice Book Award for Adult Fiction 2013, Andrew Carnegie Medal Nominee for Excellence in Fiction 2013, pairs well with *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, *Dear Life*, *Where'd You Go, Bernadette*)

CATHERINE THE GREAT: PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN – Robert K. Massie

As biographies go, this is one of the greats. It's not just about Catherine the Great of Russia—it's about lots of history related to all of Europe and its culture, with amazing writing to boot. Catherine was just a minor German noble when she emigrated to Russia at age 14, and became an empress who strongly influenced culture, foreign policy, and political change through sheer force of will. In 642 pages of detail and style, Massie tells the life story of this amazingly well read, outside-her-time woman and makes her relatable to all readers.

(Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction 2012, PEN/Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award for Biography 2012, Pulitzer Prize for Biography [author]; pairs well with *Cleopatra*, *Elizabeth the Queen*)

A CONSTELLATION OF VITAL PHENOMENA – Anthony Marra

Set in Chechnya, this intricate story weaves together the wartime interactions of an abandoned 8-year-old, an innocent bystander, and a weary doctor. Havaa, a young girl living in a small village, watches her father's abduction and the burning of their home. Akhmed, her lifelong neighbor, finds Havaa and takes her to the hospital, where they meet Dr. Sonja Rabina. Taking place over only five days but spanning 400 pages, this story is detailed, complex, and fascinating.

(National Book Award Nominee for Fiction 2013, Paris Review Best of the Best 2013, Goodreads Choice Nominee for Fiction 2013, pairs well with *Between Shades of Grey*, *TransAtlantic*)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE – David Finkel

Ahhh, David Finkel, you journalistic god of writing you! This gripping nonfiction piece follows up Finkel's haunting *The Good Soldiers*, exploring the lives of soldiers beyond the battlefield—along with the prices paid by their spouses, children, and friends. This paints the dark picture of a soldier's life after war in a society that simultaneously glorifies and shies away from the reality of wartime

experiences. With Finkel's signature writing style to guide readers through this tough tale, everyone will learn from and engage with this beautiful book. (National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction 2013 Nominee, pairs well with *The Good Soldiers*, *The Yellow Birds*)

FIVE DAYS AT MEMORIAL: LIFE AND DEATH IN A STORM-RAVAGED HOSPITAL – Sheri Fink

Written by a journalist and physician, this story follows the seemingly unbelievable but sadly true tale of the horror of healthcare immediately following Hurricane Katrina. In all of the chaos, rumors abounded that some survivors were left to die or helped to die by physicians at Memorial Medical Center in New Orleans. After six years of painstaking research and reflection, Fink unravels the mystery of what really happened in a story that will compel readers even as it terrifies them.

(National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction 2013; pairs well with *Zeitoun*)

Science Fiction

***The Lives of Tao* by Wesley Chu**

When out-of-shape IT technician Roen Tan woke up and started hearing voices in his head, he naturally assumed he was losing it.

He wasn't.

He now has a passenger in his brain – an ancient alien life-form called Tao, whose race crash-landed on Earth before the first fish crawled out of the oceans. Now split into two opposing factions – the peace-loving, but under-represented Prophus, and the savage, powerful Genjix – the aliens have been in a state of civil war for centuries. Both sides are searching for a way off-planet, and the Genjix will sacrifice the entire human race, if that's what it takes.

Meanwhile, Roen is having to train to be the ultimate secret agent. Like that's going to end up well...

2014 YALSA Alex Award winner

***The Testing (The Testing Trilogy Series #1)* by Joelle Charbonneau**

It's graduation day for sixteen-year-old Malencia Vale, and the entire Five Lakes Colony (the former Great Lakes) is celebrating. All Cia can think about—hope for—is whether she'll be chosen for The Testing, a United Commonwealth program that selects the best and brightest new graduates to become possible leaders of the slowly revitalizing post-war civilization.

When Cia is chosen, her father finally tells her about his own nightmarish half-memories of The Testing. Armed with his dire warnings ("Cia, trust no one"), she bravely heads off to Tosu City, far away from friends and family, perhaps forever. Danger, romance—and sheer terror—await.

YALSA 2014 Top Ten Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers

***Proxy* by Alex London**

London (the Accidental Adventures series) moves from middle-grade to YA with an entertaining throwback to '70s dystopias like Logan's Run, offering intriguing moral dilemmas amid breakneck action. Knox is a spoiled rich kid who spends his time doing

drugs, seducing girls, and occasionally stealing a car for a joyride. He has nothing to worry about, because whenever he gets in trouble, it's his Proxy—a slum resident and tech genius named Syd—who pays the price, since he's tied to Knox as a result of crippling debt he was born into. When Knox's recklessness gets his latest conquest killed, the consequences and the boys' reactions lead to fast-paced chases, conspiratorial revelations, and assorted twists. London has no qualms about killing off his characters, major or minor, and the matter-of-fact presence of a gay lead (Syd) in an action-driven story is welcome and overdue. Some scenes (like Syd's early escape from "justice") over-rely on coincidence or tech that fails in just the right way, but the novel's ethical questions, tense relationships, and exciting battles will carry readers swiftly through. Ages 12–up.

YALSA 2014 Top Ten Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers

***Chupacabra* by Roland Smith**

CHUPACABRA, the riveting sequel to TENTACLES and CRYPTID HUNTERS, reunites Marty and his unusual uncle, cryptozoologist Travis Wolfe, as they search the world for Wolfe's daughter, Grace. Grace has been kidnapped by her grandfather, the ruthless and dangerous Noah Blackwood, who has also stolen the two dinosaur hatchlings Wolfe was raising in secrecy. Now, with word that the mysterious creature known as Chupacabra has been sighted again, Wolfe is torn between his obsession with finding cryptids and his desperate need to rescue his daughter. With trouble at every turn and a dangerous journey ahead, will Marty and Wolfe come face-to-face with the mythic monster? Even more frightening, will they reach Grace before it's too late?

***Dragonson* by Anne McCaffrey (Book One of Harper Hall Trilogy)**

For centuries, the world of Pern has faced a destructive force known as Thread. But the magnificent dragons who've protected this world and the men and women who ride them are dwindling.

As fewer dragons ride the winds and destruction falls from the sky, fifteen-year-old Menolly holds one dream only: to sing, play, and weave the music that comes to her so easily—she wishes to become a Harper. But despite her great talents, her father believes that a young girl is unworthy of such a respected position and forbids her to pursue her dreams. Menolly runs away and happens upon nine fire lizards that could possibly save her world... and change her life forever.

In 1999 McCaffrey was the recipient of the Margaret A. Edwards Award, honoring her lifetime contribution to writing for teens. In 2005 the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America named McCaffrey its twenty-second Grand Master, an annual award to living writers of fantasy and science fiction. She was inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2006.

***Inside Out* by Maria Snyder (Inside Out Series)**

I'm Trella. I'm a scrub. A nobody. One of thousands who work the lower levels, keeping Inside clean for the Uppers. I've got one friend, do my job and try to avoid the Pop Cops. So what if I occasionally use the pipes to sneak around the Upper levels? The only neck at risk is my own...until I accidentally start a rebellion and become the go-to girl to lead a revolution.

Fantasia's Snyder's YA debut is an engrossing homage to the dystopian youth-driven science fiction of the late '60s and early '70s (it even features a character named Logan), with enough hooks to engage adult science fiction fans. Teenage Trella is one of the teeming masses of "scrubs" who live in the lowest regions of the dank and crowded construct known simply as "Inside." She's a loner, called "The Queen of the Pipes," as those hidden passages are where she spends time working or exploring. Her reputation brings her to the attention of an injured prophet (and exiled member of the "uppers," the ruling caste that lives in luxury), who gets her to investigate the fabled Gateway, which carries the hope of salvation. As she explores, she discovers that many of her assumptions about the uppers—and some about her fellow scrubs—are wrong. Although the twists are rarely surprising, the characters—including Riley, a rebellious upper, and the sweet and idealistic Cog—are well-developed, and the solid action sequences and world-building make for an entertaining read. Ages 13-18.

***I am Four* by Pittacus Lore**

Despite the amazing powers that many of the people of Lorien possess, the planet was defeated and its natural resources looted by Mogadorians in a matter of days. Only nine children escaped with their guardians to Earth, where they planned to hide until they developed their powers in order to defeat their enemies and revive Lorien. The Mogadorians hunt the Nine and have already killed three of them. And that's just the backstory. When Number Four, bearing the name "John Smith," moves to Paradise, OH, he runs afoul of the school bully, falls for the most beautiful girl in town, and befriends the local alien conspiracy nerd in short order. There is plenty of great action, but the dialogue is average, as is the character development. With its interesting premises and a fast-pace telling, the story will grab readers who are willing to suspend quite a bit of disbelief. Others, who like their science fiction with a bit more science and internal logic, will have to search elsewhere.

***The Inventor's Secret (The Inventor's Secret #1)* by Andrea Cremer**

Sixteen-year-old Charlotte and her fellow refugees have scraped out an existence on the edge of Britain's industrial empire. Though they live by the skin of their teeth they have their health (at least when they can find enough food and avoid the Imperial Labor Gatherers) and each other. When a new exile with no memory of his escape from the coastal cities or even his own name seeks shelter in their camp he brings new dangers with him and secrets about the terrible future that awaits all those who have struggled has to live free of the bonds of the empire's Machineworks.

The Inventor's Secret is the first book of a YA steampunk series set in an alternate nineteenth-century North America where the Revolutionary War never took place and the British Empire has expanded into a global juggernaut propelled by marvelous and horrible machinery. (Goodreads)

***The Long Earth* by Terry Pratchett, Stephen Baxter**

From the inside jacket:

The possibilities are endless. Just be careful what you wish for....

1916: The Western Front. Private Percy Blakeney wakes up. He is lying on fresh spring grass. He can hear birdsong, and the wind in the leaves. Where has the mud, blood and blasted landscape of no-man's-land gone? For that matter, where has Percy gone?

2015: Madison, Wisconsin. Police officer Monica Jansson is exploring the burned-out home of a reclusive--some said mad, others allege dangerous--scientist who seems to have vanished. Sifting through the wreckage, Jansson finds a curious gadget: a box containing some rudimentary wiring, a three-way switch, and...a potato. It is the prototype of an invention that will change the way humankind views the world forever.

The first novel in an exciting new collaboration between Discworld creator Terry Pratchett and the acclaimed SF writer Stephen Baxter, *The Long Earth* transports readers to the ends of the earth and far beyond. All it takes is a single step.

2012 Goodreads Choice Awards for Science Fiction

***MaddAddam* by Margaret Atwood**

Bringing together *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*, this thrilling conclusion to Margaret Atwood's speculative fiction trilogy points toward the ultimate endurance of community, and love. Months after the Waterless Flood pandemic has wiped out most of humanity, Toby and Ren have rescued their friend Amanda from the vicious Painballers. They return to the MaddAddamite cob house, newly fortified against man and giant pigeon alike. Accompanying them are the Crakers, the gentle, quasi-human species engineered by the brilliant but deceased Crake. Their reluctant prophet, Snowman-the-Jimmy, is recovering from a debilitating fever, so it's left to Toby to preach the Craker theology, with Crake as Creator. She must also deal with cultural misunderstandings, terrible coffee, and her jealousy over her lover, Zeb.

Zeb has been searching for Adam One, founder of the God's Gardeners, the pacifist green religion from which Zeb broke years ago to lead the MaddAddamites in active resistance against the destructive CorpSeCorps. But now, under threat of a Painballer attack, the MaddAddamites must fight back with the aid of their newfound allies, some of whom have four trotters. At the center of *MaddAddam* is the story of Zeb's dark and twisted past, which contains a lost brother, a hidden murder, a bear, and a bizarre act of revenge.

Combining adventure, humor, romance, superb storytelling, and an imagination at once dazzlingly inventive and grounded in a recognizable world, *MaddAddam* is vintage Margaret Atwood—a moving and dramatic conclusion to her internationally celebrated dystopian trilogy. (amazon)

A New York Times Notable Book; A Washington Post Notable Book; A Best Book of the Year: The Guardian, NPR, The Christian Science Monitor, The Globe and Mail

***The Martian Chronicles* by Ray Bradbury**

What if we colonized Mars? This is a current question that we are asking today that Bradbury explored years ago, making this collection of short stories very thought provoking. The Washington Post calls it “a modern classic.” If you read *Fahrenheit 451* you may be interested in these stories to continue an author study. Also included is “Usher II,” which is captures many allusions to Edgar Allan Poe’s short stories, specifically “The Fall of the House of Usher.”

“The Martian Chronicles tells the story of humanity’s repeated attempts to colonize the red planet. The first men were few. Most succumbed to a disease they called the Great

Loneliness when they saw their home planet dwindle to the size of a fist. They felt they had never been born. Those few that survived found no welcome on Mars. The shape-changing Martians thought they were native lunatics and duly locked them up.

But more rockets arrived from Earth, and more, piercing the hallucinations projected by the Martians. People brought their old prejudices with them – and their desires and fantasies, tainted dreams. These were soon inhabited by the strange native beings, with their caged flowers and birds of flame.” (Goodreads)

Timebound (The Chronos Files, Book 1) by Rysa Walker

This inventive science fiction adventure asks the dramatic question: what do you do when you're a normal 16-year-old girl attending a private school in Washington, D.C., you find out that your grandmother is actually a time-traveling historian from the future (the 23rd century, to be precise), and she sends you into the past (the Chicago Exposition in 1893, to be exact) in order to stop your grandfather (also from the future) from changing history by creating a new religion, the Cyrists? Prudence Katherine Pierce-Keller (just call her Kate) has to be a quick study in order to enter the family business -- time travel. Her adventures in trying to stop the cult's temporal shift take her across alternate time lines and involve her with past and future versions of the people in her life. Confusing? At times. But also nonstop fun as Kate races to restore her basic reality. Along the way, she falls for a boy, Trey Coleman, and hopes that he will still be around after she fiddles with history. Kate is the Katniss Everdeen of time travel, even though this means that she adapts a little too quickly to being an action heroine. Her story reads like a mash-up of Jack Finney's "Time and Again" and Erik Larson's "The Devil in the White City." In the end, this novel works as a contemporary, sexed-up tribute to one of those great old Heinlein juveniles from the 1950s. —Publishers Weekly

Young Adult and Grand Prize winner in the 2013 Amazon Breakthrough Novel Awards

The Iron Breed by Andre Norton

Two bestselling novels of science fiction adventure from legendary storyteller Andre Norton collected together for the first time, *The Iron Cage* and *Breed to Come*. A young woman and a young man face down powerful enemies as they come of age in a far future universe full of menace and technology so powerful as to be almost magic. Two bestselling novels of science fiction adventure from the People saga of legendary storyteller Andre Norton together for the first time.

The Iron Cage: Johnny has always loved and been protected by the People, the bearlike inhabitants on the planet he calls home. But when a star ship arrives carrying Johnny's original species, humans—humans who seek to exploit the People for their own ends—Johnny is forced to choose between loyalty to the creatures he considers his family, and the need to reconnect with his long lost heritage.

Breed to Come: On a distant future Earth, humans have polluted the planet and departed, leaving their pets behind to inherit a blasted world. But from that devastated past, a new breed of intelligence arises: the catlike People. Now humans return and the People are in no mood to deal once again with the “demons” who abandoned them to fate so long ago. (Goodreads.com)

Scan by Sarah Fine and Walter Jury

Tate and his father don't exactly get along. As Tate sees it, his father has unreasonably high expectations for Tate to be the best—at everything. Tate finally learns what he's being prepared for when he steals one of his dad's odd tech inventions and mercenaries ambush the school, killing his father in the process and sending Tate on the run from aliens who look just like humans.

All Tate knows—like how to make weapons out of oranges and lighter fluid—may not be enough to save him as he's plunged into a secret inter-species conflict that's been going on for centuries. Aided only by his girlfriend and his estranged mother, with powerful enemies closing in on all sides, Tate races to puzzle out the secret behind his father's invention and why so many are willing to kill for it. A riveting, fast-paced adventure, *Scan* is a clever alien thriller with muscle and heart. (Goodreads.com)

***The Fifth Wave* by Rick Yancey**

After the 1st wave, only darkness remains. After the 2nd, only the lucky escape. And after the 3rd, only the unlucky survive. After the 4th wave, only one rule applies: trust no one. Now, it's the dawn of the 5th wave, and on a lonely stretch of highway, Cassie runs from Them. The beings who only look human, who roam the countryside killing anyone they see. Who have scattered Earth's last survivors. To stay alone is to stay alive, Cassie believes, until she meets Evan Walker.

Beguiling and mysterious, Evan Walker may be Cassie's only hope for rescuing her brother—or even saving herself. But Cassie must choose: between trust and despair, between defiance and surrender, between life and death. To give up or to get up. (Goodreads.com)

***The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams**

Seconds before the Earth is demolished to make way for a galactic freeway, Arthur Dent is plucked off the planet by his friend Ford Prefect, a researcher for the revised edition of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* who, for the last fifteen years, has been posing as an out-of-work actor.

Together this dynamic pair begin a journey through space aided by quotes from *The Hitchhiker's Guide* ("A towel is about the most massively useful thing an interstellar hitchhiker can have") and a galaxy-full of fellow travelers: Zaphod Beeblebrox—the two-headed, three-armed ex-hippie and totally out-to-lunch president of the galaxy; Trillian, Zaphod's girlfriend (formally Tricia McMillan), whom Arthur tried to pick up at a cocktail party once upon a time zone; Marvin, a paranoid, brilliant, and chronically depressed robot; Veet Voojagig, a former graduate student who is obsessed with the disappearance of all the ballpoint pens he bought over the years.

***Speed of Dark* by Elizabeth Moon**

In the near future, disease will be a condition of the past. Most genetic defects will be removed at birth; the remaining during infancy. Unfortunately, there will be a generation left behind. For members of that missed generation, small advances will be made. Through various programs, they will be taught to get along in the world despite their differences. They will be made active and contributing members of society. But they will never be normal.

Lou Arrendale is a member of that lost generation, born at the wrong time to reap the awards of medical science. Part of a small group of high-functioning autistic adults, he has a steady job with a pharmaceutical company, a car, friends, and a passion for fencing. Aside from his annual visits to his counselor, he lives a low-key, independent life. He has learned to shake hands and make eye contact. He has taught himself to use “please” and “thank you” and other conventions of conversation because he knows it makes others comfortable. He does his best to be as normal as possible and not to draw attention to himself.

But then his quiet life comes under attack. It starts with an experimental treatment that will reverse the effects of autism in adults. With this treatment Lou would think and act and *be* just like everyone else. But if he was suddenly free of autism, would he still be himself? Would he still love the same classical music—with its complications and resolutions? Would he still see the same colors and patterns in the world—shades and hues that others cannot see? Most importantly, would he still love Marjory, a woman who may never be able to reciprocate his feelings? Would it be easier for her to return the love of a “normal”?

There are intense pressures coming from the world around him—including an angry supervisor who wants to cut costs by sacrificing the supports necessary to employ autistic workers. Perhaps even more disturbing are the barrage of questions within himself. For Lou must decide if he should submit to a surgery that might completely change the way he views the world . . . and the very essence of who he is.

Thoughtful, provocative, poignant, unforgettable, *The Speed of Dark* is a gripping exploration into the mind of an autistic person as he struggles with profound questions of humanity and matters of the heart. (Goodreads.com) 2003 Winner Nebula Award

***Fair Coin* By E.C. Myers**

Ephraim is horrified when he comes home from school one day to find his mother unconscious at the kitchen table, clutching a bottle of pills. Even more disturbing than her suicide attempt is the reason for it: the dead boy she identified at the hospital that afternoon—a boy who looks exactly like him. While examining his dead double's belongings, Ephraim discovers a strange coin that makes his wishes come true each time he flips it. Before long, he's wished his alcoholic mother into a model parent, and the girl he's liked since second grade suddenly notices him.

But Ephraim soon realizes that the coin comes with consequences --several wishes go disastrously wrong, his best friend Nathan becomes obsessed with the coin, and the world begins to change in unexpected ways. As Ephraim learns the coin's secrets and how to control its power, he must find a way to keep it from Nathan and return to the world he remembers. (Goodreads.com) 2012 Nebula Award Winner

Middle School Fantasy - Annotated Book List for *Book Love* Class (Ray Hebert / Colleen Tims)

***The Graveyard Book* - Neil Gaiman:**

A retelling of Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. A boy named Nobody Owens is Mowgli and Shere Khan is a murderer. The wolf pack that takes the boy in has been replaced in this

version with ghosts in a graveyard. Themes include murder mystery, what is family, and a bit of magic. (Neil Gaiman is an adult and kid lit. writer, winner of many awards and honors.)

Breadcrumbs - Anne Ursu:

Breadcrumbs and the hit musical *Frozen* were inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's *Snow Queen*. Students do love the retelling of a fairy tale. Paired up with *A Tale Dark and Grimm* by Adam Gidwitz, *A Curse as Dark as Gold* by Elizabeth Bunce, and many other retellings and twists of fairy tales can lead to many students reading the Andrew Lang, Hans Christian Anderson, Joseph Jacobs, and Brother's Grimm versions of fairy tales. These "original" stories are way darker than student expect and more of a reading challenge.

The Thief Lord - Cornelia Funke:

This novel, originally written in German and translated into English by Oliver Latsch, tells the story of two brothers who run away to Venice, Italy and join a gang of street children. The leader of this gang is a clever "orphan" known by the nickname "the thief lord" - who, naturally, is a thief. Some of the language in the translation might be off-putting to low level readers at the middle-school level, but it could also provide an interesting challenge (similar to reading an "old" book) for stronger readers. *The Thief Lord* was also made into a movie in 2006.

Son - Lois Lowry:

Son is the recently-released fourth book in the *Giver* series, following *Gathering Blue* and *The Messenger*. It follows a woman named Claire, who is the mother of the child Gabriel who Jonas saves from being "released" in *The Giver*, in her quest to find her lost son. While the sequels to the *Giver* are controversial, some students who recently read it and wanted to "know more" might be interested in reading them.

House of the Scorpion - Nancy Farmer:

This dystopian novel is perfect for fans of *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* who are looking for more to read along the same lines. It is set in a world where the rich and powerful have clones so that they can take the organs of their clones when their own organs fail. Matteo Alacrán, unbeknownst to him, is one of these clones - the clone of a drug lord. This book won the National Book Award for Young People's Literature in 2002 and has been designated a Newbery Honor Book.

The Compound - S. A. Bodeen:

A wealthy family spends six years in an underground bunker after a catastrophic event. As life becomes more isolating and uncomfortable, the teenage boy wonders how bad it could really have been. He wonders what the future will be like for him. Things get more

and more complicated as he asks more and more questions. A Bank Street Award (given by Bank Street College of Education New York, New York) winner in 2009.

Life as We Knew It (Series) - Susan Beth Pfeffer:

A fantasy/sci-fi novel imagining life after the moon is pushed closer to Earth from a meteor. The Geological changes that happen to Earth are told as a first person narrative in the diary of a teenage girl. Her life continues on as the world dramatically changes. (Ms. Pfeffer's own blog includes links to some of her prewriting notes about characters and plot lines for some author studies.)

The Maze Runner - James Dashner:

Thomas has no memory of his life before he was brought to The Glade. All he knows is working in the Glade and the mysterious Maze that surrounds it, which is filled with the violent, slug-like monsters known as Grievers. As the story unfolds, he learns more both about the setting in which he has awoken and his past life. *The Maze Runner* has inspired two sequels and a prequel, and is being made into a 2014 movie.

Nation - Terry Pratchett:

A Printz Honor book in 2009. Pratchett is a frequent award winner and was, prior to J. K. Rowling, the best selling children's author in the UK. *Nation* has two protagonists, a boy from a rural tropical island, and a girl from a fictional European country. A tsunami brings them together, but destroys almost everyone else. They are together and they are alone.

Under the Never Sky - Veronica Rossi:

Main character Aria lives an extremely sheltered life under a protective dome - that is, until she meets an outsider named Perry who introduces her to the dangerous world outside. Together, they strike out on an adventure to save Aria's mother, and learn how to work together and teach each other what they know. The book is recent - it came out in 2012 - and has two sequels.

Nobody's Princess - Esther M. Freisner:

Move over Percy Jackson. This story is a retelling of the Greek Myths. Helen of Sparta is a teenager before she is "the face that launched a thousand ships". Her backstory is told in a Xena warrior princess style. Reviews are mixed. But I know just this kid who would read this next.

Dealing With Dragons - Patricia C. Wrede

This is the first book in the *Enchanted Forest Chronicles* series, which follows a girl named Cimorene as she exchanges her dull, "proper" life as a princess for the more adventurous life of getting captured by dragons and tricking wizards. Cimorene is a

strong female character who is constantly challenging gender roles and asserting her independence. The book also plays with the conventions of the fantasy/fairy tale genre in ways that may be entertaining for readers who are familiar with its tropes, or those who usually do not enjoy fantasy novels.

**Upper Elementary Speculative Fiction—with a focus on Fantasy
(A term to collectively describe the genres of Science Fiction, Fantasy,
and Horror)**



Grade 5-8—In James Patterson's blockbuster series, fourteen-year-old Maximum Ride, better known as Max, knows what it's like to soar above the world. She and all the members of the "flock"—Fang, Iggy, Nudge, Gasman and Angel—are just like ordinary kids—only they have wings and can fly. It may seem like a dream come true to some, but their lives can morph into a living nightmare at any time...like when Angel, the youngest member of the flock, is kidnapped and taken back to the "School" where she and the others were experimented on by a crew of wack jobs. Her friends brave a journey to blazing hot Death Valley, CA, to save Angel, but soon enough, they find themselves in yet another nightmare--this one involving fighting off the half-human, half-wolf "Erasers" in New York City. Whether in the treetops of Central Park or in the bowels of the Manhattan subway system, Max and her adopted family take the ride of their lives. Along the way Max discovers from her old friend and father-figure Jeb--now her betrayed and greatest enemy--that her purpose is save the world--but can she?

The Angel Experiment is the first book in the series. Some themes for discussion include ethics of experimentation and trusting authority.

Source: Amazon.com



Grade 5-8—When 12-year-old Stephanie's eccentric Uncle Gordon dies, a mysterious man bundled in an overcoat, scarf, sunglasses, and a hat shows up at both the funeral and the reading of the will. This man, as it turns out, is Skulduggery Pleasant, a walking, talking skeleton who rescues Stephanie when she is attacked while alone in the house that she has just inherited. It seems that a particularly evil person named Serpine is trying to obtain a scepter that will allow him to rule the world. Stephanie is swept into a world of magic, secrets, power, and intrigue as she and Skulduggery try to keep one step ahead of Serpine and various other nefarious folk. Deadly hand-to-hand combat, nasty villains, magical derring-do, and traitorous allies will keep readers turning the pages, but it is the dynamic duo of Stephanie and Skulduggery who provide the real magic. The girl eagerly jumps into this new, dangerous, action-packed life, but she isn't sure that she has the guts or the power to pull it off. Skulduggery Pleasant lives up to his name, performing amazing feats with such self-effacing drollness that readers will wish they had a similar skeletal friend. Give this one to fans of Eoin Colfer's "Artemis Fowl" books (Hyperion) or to anyone who likes a dash of violence and danger served up with the magic.—*School Library Journal*

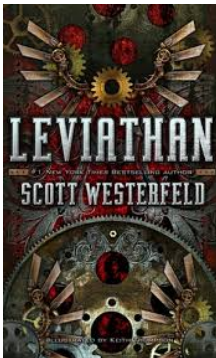
Source: Amazon.com



Grades 3-up—Kendra and her brother, Seth, have no idea that their grandfather is the current caretaker of Fablehaven. Inside the gated woods, ancient laws keep relative order among the greedy trolls, mischievous satyrs, plotting witches, spiteful imps, and jealous fairies. But when the rules get broken, powerful forces are unleashed, and Kendra and her brother face the greatest challenge of their lives. To save their family, Fablehaven, and maybe even the world, Kendra and Seth must find the courage to do what they fear most...

Great for younger readers who like Harry Potter but may not be ready for the last 3 books of the series yet.

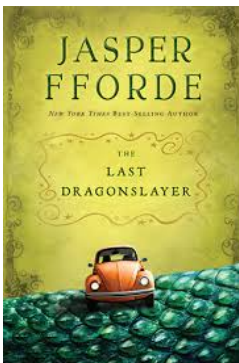
Source: Amazon.com



Advanced 5-6 graders (and up)Prince—It is the cusp of World War I. The Austro-Hungarians and Germans have their Clankers, steam-driven iron machines loaded with guns and ammunition. The British Darwinists employ genetically fabricated animals as their weaponry. Their *Leviathan* is a whale airship, and the most masterful beast in the British fleet.

Aleksandar Ferdinand, a Clanker, and Deryn Sharp, a Darwinist, are on opposite sides of the war. But their paths cross in the most unexpected way, taking them both aboard the *Leviathan* on a fantastical, around-the-world adventure....One that will change both their lives forever.

Great connector to any unit on World War I through a lesson on how to tie in fiction with non-fiction. Also considered [steam punk literature](#).

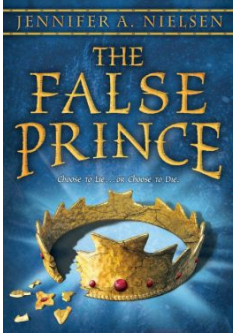


Grade 5-up (or advanced 4th graders)—in the good old days, magic was indispensable. But now magic is fading: Drain cleaner is cheaper than a spell, and magic carpets are used for pizza delivery. Fifteen-year-old Jennifer Strange runs Kazam, an employment agency for magicians—but it's hard to stay in business when magic is drying up. And then the visions start, predicting the death of the world's last dragon at the hands of an unnamed Dragonslayer. If the visions are true, everything will change for Kazam—and for Jennifer.

This book is one of the 2015 Nutmeg Nominees (Connecticut's Book Award). In this first book in a remarkable trilogy, an orphan is forced into a twisted game with deadly stakes.

In this first book in a remarkable trilogy, an orphan is forced into a twisted game with deadly stakes. Choose to lie...or choose to die. In a discontent kingdom, civil war is brewing. To unify the divided people, Conner, a nobleman of the court, devises a cunning plan to find an impersonator of the king's long-lost son and install him as a puppet prince. Four orphans are recruited to compete for the role, including a defiant boy named Sage. Sage knows that Conner's motives are more than questionable, yet his life balances on a sword's point -- he must be chosen to play the prince or he will certainly be killed. But Sage's rivals have their own agendas as well. As Sage moves from a rundown orphanage to Conner's sumptuous palace, layer upon layer of treachery and deceit unfold, until finally, a truth is revealed that, in the end, may very well prove more dangerous than all of the lies taken together. An extraordinary adventure filled with danger and action, lies and deadly truths that will have readers clinging to the edge of their seats.

This book is one of the 2015 Nutmeg Nominees (Connecticut's Book Award).





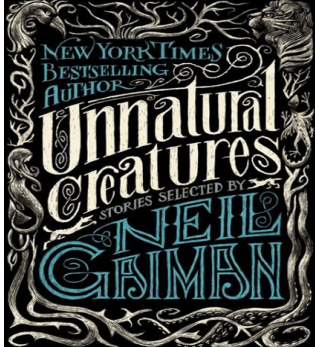
Good read with some crudeness, drinking, and spiritual content.

Plot

After Sabrina and Daphne Grimm's parents disappear, they are shuffled from foster home to foster home, until they come to live with a crazy old woman who claims to be their grandmother. Only their grandmother is supposed to be dead.

It turns out Granny Relda lives in Ferryport Landing, a town inhabited by Everafters, characters from fairy tales. Snow White teaches the local women's defense class, the Bad Apples; Prince Charming is the mayor (and divorcee of at least three princesses); Puck, the Trickster King, is always wreaking mischief; and the Big Bag Wolf lives down the hall. The sisters learn that they are the descendants of Wilhelm, one of the famous Brothers Grimm, and that their parents have been kidnapped by a shadowy group of Everafters known as the Scarlet Hand.

Source: Amazon reviews.



I was a voracious reader as a child, but don't take that to mean I had good taste. I had more *Goosebumps* than a shaved polar bear, and I read a whole series of [videogame-themed](#) Choose Your Own Adventure books. What I really needed was a good librarian to knock some sense into me ("Hey kid, put down that novelization of *Gremlins 2: The New Batch* and read something worthwhile!") Luckily, today's youth has Neil Gaiman, who recently assembled fantastic, fantastical short works by 15 writers into *Unnatural Creatures*, a collection that works as nothing less than a kids' primer to some of the greatest writers of fantasy, both classic and contemporary.

Source: Barnes and Noble blog



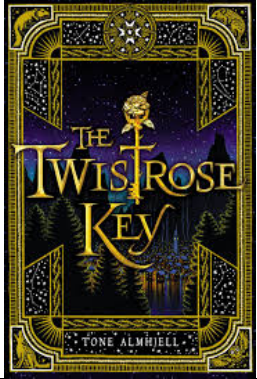
A riveting middle-grade dystopian novel from *New York Times* bestselling *Wake* author Lisa McMann that *Kirkus Reviews* calls "The Hunger Games meets Harry Potter." When Alex finds out he is Unwanted, he expects to die. That is the way of the people of Quill. Each year, all the thirteen-year-olds are labeled as Wanted, Necessary, or Unwanted. WANTEDs get more schooling and train to join the Quillitary. Necessarys keep the farms running. Unwanteds are set for elimination. It's hard for Alex to leave behind his twin, Aaron, a Wanted, but he makes peace with his fate—until he discovers that instead of a "death farm," what awaits him is a magical place called ArtimÉ

Source: Barnes and Noble.com

KIRKUS REVIEW

Skillfully blending facets of classic high fantasy, this debut novel will captivate readers with its rich plot and detailed worldbuilding.

Sylveros is populated by the formerly beloved pets of Earth children. After an animal's death on Earth, it passes over to a life of apparent harmony in the winter beauty of the Sylver Valley. While a winter setting inevitably invites Narnia comparisons, this layered plot holds its own. The peace in Sylver has



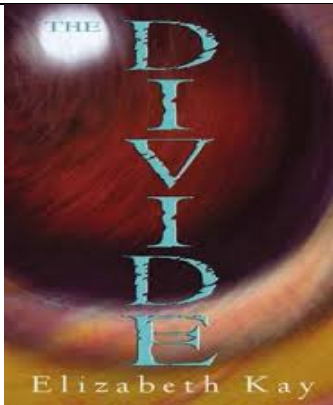
been disturbed, and chief chronicler Teodor does not know why. Nightmares are threatening the protected border. In times like these, a Twistrose—a human child—is called from Earth to give aid. Lin Rosenquist, mourning her tamed pet vole, Rufus, who died some five weeks earlier, finds herself magically transported to Sylver and is met by Rufus himself, now as big as she is.



When Charlie discovers he can hear people talking in photographs, his entire life changes. Sent to Bloor's Academy, a school for incredibly talented and a handful of magically gifted children, Charlie is thrown into a new world. Nothing is what it seems at Bloor's Academy- from mysterious strangers to kidnappings; Charlie has to learn to use his new-found talents and friendships to solve some of the mysteries that are swirling through Bloor's.

With shades of Harry Potter, *Midnight for Charlie Bone* is the first in a series about a boy whose extraordinary talents throw him into situations that force him to face up to his fears, stay true to himself and survive school without getting detention... again.

Source: Bookilicious.com



When Felix's parents take him to "The Divide"--a spot in Costa Rica where the waters that run down to the Pacific and Atlantic oceans separate--Felix finds himself in a bizarre parallel world where mythical creatures and magic are a reality. There, he meets Betony, a tangle child and herbalist who becomes his friend in this strange land.

Source: Goodreads.com