GREAT BOOKS TO READ IN 5TH GRADE 2015
SELECTED BY M. S. BOCK
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**This book belongs to:**

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Cover image by Ms. Bock. Next year, we’ll have a contest for students in each grade, so start thinking about ideas.
Introduction from the Librarian

Dear students, teachers, and families,

I am so pleased to offer these book lists to you. All year, students, teachers, and parents ask me for suggestions for reading material, and giving recommendations is one of my favorite things to do. I hope that these lists will offer a starting point for anyone looking for something excellent to read.

The most important thing in elementary school is that students find books they enjoy reading. I firmly believe that there is a book out there for every reader. If you haven’t yet found books that make you want to stay up all night reading under the covers, don’t worry. Maybe you’ll discover some in this booklet! The important thing is to keep trying different books until you find the ones that are perfect for you.

I sincerely hope that there will be something for everyone on this list. There are picture books, novels, informational books, poetry, and graphic novels. There are books in every genre, classics, and new releases. What they all have in common is that every single one is worth reading.

The lists are made up of books that will be of interest to students in that grade. I have paid little attention to reading level, except to make sure that there is a wide range on each list. For some students, this will mean listening to an audiobook or having someone read a book aloud to them. I encourage everyone to access the stories in whatever way suits them. Family read-alouds are a fantastic way to spend time together, regardless of anyone’s age.

I hope you’ll tell me if the lists are helpful. I already have some ideas for how to make them even better next year. When you find a new favorite, be sure to come and tell me about it!

Happy reading!

Amanda Bock
How to Use This Book

The list has been divided into broad categories.

**Realistic Stories:** These are made-up stories that could actually happen, but didn't. They might take place now or in the past. They might be novels, graphic novels, picture books, or stories told in poetry.

**Fantasy Stories:** These are made-up stories that could never happen in real life. They might have magic, fantastical creatures, or take place in the future. They might be novels, graphic novels, picture books, or stories told in poetry.

**Unlikely Stories:** These are the made-up stories that don't fit easily into Realistic or Fantasy. Perhaps there's one about a kid who is an international spy, or one about family, friendship, and school that just happens to have talking mice instead of people. This is where you'll find a story that is *almost* possible. These, too, might be novels, graphic novels, picture books, or stories told in poetry.

**Nonfiction:** These are true stories, biographies, and informational books, as well as poetry.

Within each section, the books are arranged in alphabetical order by the author’s last name.

Almost all of the books will be available at any self-respecting bookstore. There are a few under-appreciated gems that will only be available at the public library or a used bookstore. When that is the case, I have tried to include that information in the annotation.

Most of the annotations come from publishers’ websites, although some have been written especially for this list. The source or contributor is indicated in parentheses at the end. Can you do a better job describing a book or series? Write it up and bring it to the Library! Maybe it will be included in next year’s booklet!
What’s Great About Being a Reader in Fifth Grade

As a Fifth Grade reader, nothing will stop you. You will read books that reflect your world, introduce you to new ones, and maybe even a few that will blow your mind. You have probably found a genre or two that you like best, but keep trying others; you never know when something extraordinary will open up a whole new universe for you.

Ms. Bock’s Top Picks for Grade 5

Overwhelmed by the number of books on this list? Start with these. Find the annotations in the main list.

Realistic Stories
Doll Bones by Holly Black
Tangerine by Edward Bloor
Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea*
My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George
The Misfits by James Howe
Bull Run by Paul Fleischman
Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson
View From Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg
Wonder by R.J. Palacio*
When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead
Crooked Kind of Perfect by Linda Urban
One Crazy Summer by Rita Garcia-Williams

Unlikely Stories
Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbitt
Cosmic by Frank Cottrell Boyce
City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau
House of the Scorpion by Nancy FArmer
The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke
Stormbreaker by Anthony Horowitz
The Pushcart War by Jean Merrill
The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin
Echo by Pam Muñoz Ryan
Holes by Louis Sachar
Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli*
**Fantasy Stories**
The Book of Three by Lloyd Alexander
The Folk Keeper by Franny Billingsley
The Monsters of Morley Manor by Bruce Coville
So You Want to Be a Wizard by Diane Duane
The Ruins of Gorlan by John Flanagan
Inkheart by Cornelia Funke
The Dark Lord of Derkholm by Diana Wynne Jones
The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH by Robert C. O'Brien
Silverwing by Kenneth Oppel
Alanna: the First Adventure by Tamora Pierce
Larklight by Philip Reeve
The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone by J.K. Rowling
The Arrival by Shaun Tan
The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkein
Dealing With Dragons by Patricia C. Wrede

**Nonfiction**
The Great Race by Gary Blackwood
Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll
Wicked History of the World by Terry Deary
Give Me Liberty by Russell Freedman
The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone by James Cross Giblin
Chimpanzees I Love by Jane Goodall
We Were There, Too! by Philip Hoose
A Kick in the Head by Paul B. Janeczko
Zombie Makers by Rebecca L. Johnson
What’s Inside by Giles Laroche
The Fairy Ring by Mary Losure
The Game I’ll Never Forget by Chris McDonell
The Greatest: Muhammed Ali by Walter Dean Myers
We Are the Ship by Kadir Nelson
Tricky Vic by Greg Pizzoli
Lemonade by Bob Raczka
Scientists in the Field series by Various authors

*These titles are typically part of the Fifth Grade curriculum.*
New Recommended Books for Everyone

These books were published in the last year and may be of interest to all readers, regardless of age.

**Arégui, Matthias. Before After**
Which came first? No words are necessary in this beautiful, artfully humorous book, in which every turn of the page offers a surprise. (candlewick.com)

**Barnett, Mac. Sam and Dave Dig a Hole**
Sam and Dave are on a mission. A mission to find something spectacular. So they dig a hole. And they keep digging. And they find... nothing. Yet the day turns out to be pretty spectacular after all. Attentive readers will be rewarded with a rare treasure in this witty story of looking for the extraordinary — and finding it in a manner you’d never expect. (candlewick.com)

**Cronin, Doreen. The Chicken Squad: The First Misadventure**
No job is too big or small for the shortest, yellowest, fuzziest detectives around: The Chicken Squad. Follow Dirt, Sugar, Poppy and Sweetie as they piece together the mysteries of their backyard friends while stirring up some trouble too! (simonandschuster.com)

**DiPucchio, Kelly. Gaston**
A bulldog and a poodle learn that family is about love, not appearances in this adorable doggy tale from New York Times bestselling author Kelly DiPucchio and illustrator Christian Robinson. (simonandschuster.com)

**Escoffier, Michaël. Take Away the A**
Take Away the A is a fun, imaginative romp through the alphabet. The idea behind the book is that within every language there are words that change and
become a different word through the simple subtraction of a single letter. (enchantedlion.com)

**Florian, Douglas. Poem Depot: Aisles of Smiles**
In the vein of Shel Silverstein and Jack Prelutsky, this illustrated book of humorous poems will guarantee giggles! (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Frazee, Marla. The Farmer and the Clown**
Whimsical and touching images tell the story of an unexpected friendship and the revelations it inspires in this moving, wordless picture book from two-time Caldecott Honor medalist Marla Frazee. (simonandschuster.com)

**Himmelman, John. Tales of Bunjitsu Bunny**
Introducing Isabel, aka Bunjitsu Bunny! She is the BEST bunjitsu artist in her school, and she can throw farther, kick higher, and hit harder than anyone else! But she never hurts another creature... unless she has to. (us.macmillan.com)

**Janeczko, Paul B.. Firefly July: A Year of Very Short Poems**
Celebrated poet and anthologist Paul B. Janeczko pairs with Caldecott Honoree Melissa Sweet for a collection of short poems to sample and savor. (candlewick.com)

Here is a poetic ode to the beauty of the natural world as expressed by the movement and moods of water on Earth. (leeandlowbooks.com)

**Morales, Yuyi. Viva Frida**
Distinguished author/illustrator Yuyi Morales illuminates Frida’s life and work in this elegant and fascinating book. (us.macmillan.com)
Myers, Christopher. *My Pen*
My pen rides dinosaurs and hides an elephant in a teacup. What can your pen do? Acclaimed author and illustrator Christopher Myers uses rich black-and-white illustrations to bring a sketchbook to life, showing that with a simple pen, a kid can do anything! (books.disney.com)

Peña, Matt De La. *Last Stop on Market Street*
This energetic ride through a bustling city highlights the wonderful perspective only grandparent and grandchild can share, and comes to life through Matt de la Pena’s vibrant text and Christian Robinson’s radiant illustrations. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Pizzoli, Greg. *Tricky Vic: The Impossibly True Story of the Man Who Sold the Eiffel Tower*
In the early 1900s, Robert Miller, a.k.a. “Count Victor Lustig,” moved to Paris hoping to be an artist. A con artist, that is. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Samworth, Kate. *Aviary Wonders Inc. Spring Catalog and Instruction Manual*
What can you do when all the birds are gone? Build your own! This comic environmental fable offers a businessman’s dollars-and-sense solution to the drastic effects of deforestation. (hmhco.com)

Schatz, Kate. *Rad American Women A-Z: Rebels, Trailblazers, and Visionaries who Shaped Our History . . . and Our Future!*
American history was made by countless rad—and often radical—women. By offering a fresh and diverse array of female role models, we can remind readers that there are many places to find inspiration, and that being smart and strong and brave is rad. (citylights.com)
Spires, Ashley. *The Most Magnificent Thing*
Award-winning author and illustrator Ashley Spires has created a charming picture book about an unnamed girl and her very best friend, who happens to be a dog. (kidscanpress.com)

Willems, Mo. *Waiting Is Not Easy!*
The newest book in the Elephant & Piggie series! (Ms. Bock)
Realistic Stories

Alexander, Kwame, *The Crossover*

With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I’m delivering, announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he’s got mad beats, too, that tell his family’s story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood from Kwame Alexander. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story’s heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family. (scholastic.com)

Anderson, Laurie Halse, *Fever 1793*

During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Then the fever breaks out. Disease sweeps the streets, destroying everything in its path and turning Mattie’s world upside down. At her feverish mother’s insistence, Mattie flees the city with her grandfather. But she soon discovers that the sickness is everywhere, and Mattie must learn quickly how to survive in a city turned frantic with disease. (simonsays.com)

Angleberger, Tom, *The Strange Case of Origami Yoda*

In this funny, uncannily wise portrait of the dynamics of a sixth-grade class and of the greatness that sometimes comes in unlikely packages, Dwight, a loser, talks to his classmates via an origami finger puppet of Yoda. If that weren’t strange enough, the puppet is uncannily wise and prescient. Origami Yoda predicts the date of a pop quiz, guesses who stole the classroom Shakespeare bust, and saves a classmate from popularity-crushing embarrassment with some well-timed advice. Dwight’s classmate Tommy wonders how Yoda can be so smart when Dwight himself is so clueless. With contributions from his puzzled classmates, he assembles the case file that forms this novel. (abramsbooks.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.
Applegate, Katherine, *The One and Only Ivan*

Inspired by the true story of a captive gorilla known as Ivan, this illustrated novel is told from the point-of-view of Ivan himself. Having spent 27 years behind the glass walls of his enclosure in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. Instead, Ivan occupies himself with television, his friends Stella and Bob, and painting. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he is forced to see their home, and his art, through new eyes. (harpercollins.com)

Auch, M. J., *One-Handed Catch*

What would it be like to go through life with only one hand? That’s exactly what eleven-year-old Norm finds out when he loses his left hand in an accident at his family’s store. It’s July 4, 1946. World War II has ended, and life is getting back to normal. But for Norm, the pressing question now is whether he will ever be able to play baseball again. And what about his dreams of becoming an artist? Norm can’t even figure out how to tie his shoes anymore. How will he ever learn how to pitch or catch or swing a bat with no left hand? It’s up to Norm to find the strength to get beyond this roadblock and move on with his life. (us.macmillan.com)

Avi, *Iron Thunder*

When his father is killed fighting for the Union in the War Between the States, thirteen-year-old Tom Carroll must take a job to help support his family. He manages to find work at a bustling ironworks in his hometown of Brooklyn, New York, where dozens of men are frantically pounding together the strangest ship Tom has ever seen. A ship made of iron. Tom becomes assistant to the ship’s inventor, a gruff, boastful man named Captain John Ericsson. He soon learns that the Union army has very important plans for this iron ship called the Monitor. It is supposed to fight the Confederate ‘sea monster’—another ironclad—the Merrimac. But Ericsson is practically the only person who believes the Monitor will float. Everyone else calls it ‘Ericsson’s Folly’ or ‘the iron coffin.’ Meanwhile, Tom’s position as Ericsson’s assistant has made him a target of Confederate spies, who offer him money for information about the ship. Tom finds himself caught between two
certain dangers: an encounter with murderous spies and a battle at sea in an iron coffin. hyperionbooks.com

Avi, Poppy

At the very edge of Dimwood Forest stood an old charred oak where, silhouetted by the moon, a great horned owl sat waiting. The owl’s name was Mr. Ocax, and he looked like death himself. With his piercing gaze, he surveyed the lands he called his own, watching for the creatures he considered his subjects. Not one of them ever dared to cross his path... until the terrible night when two little mice went dancing in the moonlight... (harpercollins.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

Bajoria, Paul, The Printer’s Devil

Convicts, murderers and the shady inhabitants of the London underworld are part of daily life for 12-year-old printer’s devil, Mog Winter - after all, Mog prints their WANTED posters...But a face to face encounter with a real crook - a prison escapee - leads to Mog becoming enmeshed in an ingenious theft, a series of mistaken identities and a murder hunt...all connected to a recently docked ship from the Indian subcontinent, and Mog's own mysterious past. (hatchettbookgroup.com) The sequel to this book is The God of Mischief.

Baskin, Nora Raleigh, Anything But Typical

Jason Blake is an autistic 12-year-old living in a neurotypical world. Most days it’s just a matter of time before something goes wrong. But Jason finds a glimmer of understanding when he comes across PhoenixBird, who posts stories to the same online site as he does. Jason can be himself when he writes and he thinks that PhoenixBird-her name is Rebecca-could be his first real friend. But as desperate as Jason is to meet her, he’s terrified that if they do meet, Rebecca will only see his autism and not who Jason really is. (simonandschuster.net)

Baskin, Nora Raleigh, Basketball (or Something Like It)

Basketball clinics, a revolving door of coaches, incensed parents, and the importance of the right sneakers—is that what the game is about? Told from the perspective of four unlikely friends, Nora Raleigh
Baskin’s poignant novel focuses on the action, drama, and fun of playing ball and explores what it takes to be a winner of the game—both on the court and off. (harpercollins.com)

**Bateson, Catherine, Being Bee**

Bee can’t understand what her father sees in Jazzi. Ever since Bee’s mom died, she, her dad, and her two guinea pigs, Fifi and Lulu, have been getting along just fine. Now Bee is supposed to welcome Jazzi, with her bangled skirts and her rock-hard scones and her new way of looking at everything. Imagine how Bee feels when her dad invites Jazzi to move in! Life certainly gets more complicated, especially after Bee discovers that there is something big that Jazzi has not told Dad. Yet knowing the secret makes Bee see another side of Jazzi, one that oddly enough makes Bee more comfortable. Full of warmth and humor, this novel looks at loss, trust, and acceptance from the viewpoint of a young girl. (holidayhouse.com)

**Bell, Cece, El Deafo**

Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers! In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful—and very awkward—hearing aid. The Phonic Ear gives Cece the ability to hear—sometimes things she shouldn’t—but also isolates her from her classmates. She really just wants to fit in and find a true friend, someone who appreciates her as she is. After some trouble, she is finally able to harness the power of the Phonic Ear and become “El Deafo, Listener for All.” And more importantly, declare a place for herself in the world and find the friend she’s longed for. (abramsbooks.com) This is a graphic novel.

**Birdsall, Jeanne, The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy**

This summer the Penderwick sisters have a wonderful surprise: a holiday on the grounds of a beautiful estate called Arundel. Soon they are busy discovering the summertime magic of Arundel’s sprawling gardens, treasure-filled attic, tame rabbits, and the cook who makes the best gingerbread in Massachusetts. But the
best discovery of all is Jeffrey Tifton, son of Arundel’s owner, who quickly proves to be the perfect companion for their adventures. The icy-hearted Mrs. Tifton is not as pleased with the Penderwicks as Jeffrey is, though, and warns the new friends to stay out of trouble. Which, of course, they will—won’t they? One thing’s for sure: it will be a summer the Penderwicks will never forget. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first in the series. They are best read in order. If you enjoy the Penderwicks, try books by Noel Streatfeild or Edward Eager.

Black, Holly, *Doll Bones*  
Zach, Poppy, and Alice have been friends forever. And for almost as long, they’ve been playing one continuous, ever-changing game of pirates and thieves, mermaids and warriors. Ruling over all is the Great Queen, a bone-china doll cursing those who displease her. But they are in middle school now. Zach’s father pushes him to give up make-believe, and Zach quits the game. Their friendship might be over, until Poppy declares she’s been having dreams about the Queen—and the ghost of a girl who will not rest until the bone-china doll is buried in her empty grave. Zach and Alice and Poppy set off on one last adventure to lay the Queen’s ghost to rest. But nothing goes according to plan, and as their adventure turns into an epic journey, creepy things begin to happen. Is the doll just a doll or something more sinister? And if there really is a ghost, will it let them go now that it has them in its clutches? (simonandschuster.com)

Bloor, Edward, *Tangerine*  
Paul Fisher sees the world from behind glasses so thick he looks like a bug-eyed alien. But he’s not so blind that he can’t see there are some very unusual things about his family’s new home in Tangerine County, Florida. Where else does a sinkhole swallow the local school, fire burn underground for years, and lightning strike at the same time every day? The chaos is compounded by constant harassment from his football-star brother, and adjusting to life in Tangerine isn’t easy for Paul—until he joins the soccer team at his middle school. With the help of his new teammates, Paul begins to discover what lies beneath the surface of his strange new hometown. And he also gains the courage to face up to some secrets his family has been keeping.
from him for far too long. In Tangerine, it seems, anything is possible. (hmhco.com)

**Booth, Coe, Kinda Like Brothers**
Jarrett doesn’t trust Kevon. But he’s got to share a room with him anyway. It was one thing when Jarrett’s mom took care of foster babies who needed help. But this time it’s different. This time the baby who needs help has an older brother — a kid Jarrett’s age named Kevon. Everyone thinks Jarrett and Kevon should be friends — but that’s not gonna happen. Not when Kevon’s acting like he’s better than Jarrett — and not when Jarrett finds out Kevon’s keeping some major secrets. Jarrett doesn’t think it’s fair that he has to share his room, his friends, and his life with some stranger. He’s gotta do something about it — but what? (scholastic.com)

**Boyce, Frank Cottrell, Framed**
A few things to know about Dylan: He is the only boy in his entire town. His best friends are two pet chickens. Criminal instincts run in his family. And one more small thing about nine-year-old Dylan—the crime of the century has just fallen into his lap. (harpercollins.com)

**Boyce, Frank Cottrell, Millions**
It was a one-in-a-million chance. A bag crammed with cash comes tumbling out of the air and lands right at Damian’s feet. Suddenly the Cunningham brothers are rich. Very rich. They can buy anything they want. There’s just one problem -- they have only seventeen days to spend all the money before it becomes worthless. And the crooks who stole the cash in the first place are closing in -- fast. (harpercollins.com)

**Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker, The War that Saved My Life**
Nine-year-old Ada has never left her one-room apartment. Her mother is too humiliated by Ada’s twisted foot to let her outside. So when her little brother Jamie is shipped out of London to escape the war, Ada doesn’t waste a minute—she sneaks out to join him. So begins a new adventure of Ada, and for Susan Smith, the woman who is forced to take the two kids in. As Ada teaches herself to ride a pony, learns to read, and watches for German spies, she begins to trust Susan—and Susan
begins to love Ada and Jamie. But in the end, will their bond be enough to hold them together through wartime? Or will Ada and her brother fall back into the cruel hands of their mother? (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Britt, Fanny, *Jane, the Fox, and Me*  
Hélène has been inexplicably ostracized by the girls who were once her friends. Her school life is full of whispers and lies - Hélène weighs 216; she smells like BO. Her loving mother is too tired to be any help. Fortunately, Hélène has one consolation, Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. Hélène identifies strongly with Jane's tribulations, and when she is lost in the pages of this wonderful book, she is able to ignore her tormentors. But when Hélène is humiliated on a class trip in front of her entire grade, she needs more than a fictional character to see herself as a person deserving of laughter and friendship. Leaving the outcasts' tent one night, Hélène encounters a fox, a beautiful creature with whom she shares a moment of connection. But when Suzanne Lipsky frightens the fox away, insisting that it must be rabid, Hélène’s despair becomes even more pronounced: now she believes that only a diseased and dangerous creature would ever voluntarily approach her. But then a new girl joins the outcasts' circle, Géraldine, who does not even appear to notice that she is in danger of becoming an outcast herself. And before long Hélène realizes that the less time she spends worrying about what the other girls say is wrong with her, the more able she is to believe that there is nothing wrong at all. (houseofanansi.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

Brown, Don, *The Notorious Izzy Fink*  
Sam Glodsky lives among the rough-and-tumble gangs on the streets of New York's Lower East Side. When 13-year-old Sam falls in with fearsome gangster Monk Eastman, he joins an outrageous scheme to rescue Eastman's prize racing-pigeon from a cholera-ridden steamship quarantined in the harbor. The caper Monk hatches to snatch the bird pairs Sam with his archenemy, the notorious Izzy Fink. (books.google.com)

Bruchac, Joseph, *Arrow over the Door*  
For young Samuel Russell, the summer of 1777 is a time of fear. The British Army is approaching, and the Indians in the area seem ready to attack. To Stands Straight, a young Abenaki Indian
scouting for King George, Americans are dangerous enemies who threaten his family and home. When Stands Straight’s party enters the Quaker Meetinghouse where Samuel worships, the two boys share an encounter that neither will ever forget. Told in alternating viewpoints, The Arrow over the Door is based on a true story. (penguin.com)

Buckley-Archer, Linda, *The Time Travelers*

The year is 1763. Gideon Seymour, thief and gentleman, is hiding from the villainous Tar Man. Suddenly the sky peels away like fabric, and from the gaping hole fall two curious-looking children. Peter Schock and Kate Dyer have fallen straight from the twenty-first century, thanks to a faulty experiment with an antigravity machine. Before Gideon and the children have a chance to gather their wits, the Tar Man takes off with the machine—and Peter and Kate’s only chance of getting home. Soon Gideon, Peter, and Kate are swept into a journey through the dangerous underworld of eighteenth-century London, traveling the routes of notorious highwaymen and even entering King George’s palace. And along they way they form a bond that, they hope, will stand strong in the face of unfathomable treachery. Filled with adventure, intrigue, and plenty of twists and turns, this start to a trilogy is written by a history scholar and wordsmith who makes the extraordinary believable, and will keep you on the edge of your seat. (simonandschuster.com) This is the first book in the Gideon Trilogy, and they are best read in order. This book was originally published as Gideon the Cutpurse.

Burnford, Sheila, *The Incredible Journey*

Instinct told them that the way home lay to the west. And so the doughty young Labrador retriever, the roguish bull terrier and the indomitable Siamese set out through the Canadian wilderness. Separately, they would soon have died. But, together, the three house pets faced starvation, exposure, and wild forest animals to make their way home to the family they love. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Buyea, Rob, *Because of Mr. Terupt*

It’s the start of fifth grade for seven kids at Snow Hill School. There’s . . . Jessica, the new girl, smart and perceptive, who’s having a hard time fitting in; Alexia, a bully, your friend one second, your
enemy the next; Peter, class prankster and troublemaker; Luke, the brain; Danielle, who never stands up for herself; shy Anna, whose home situation makes her an outcast; and Jeffrey, who hates school. Only Mr. Terupt, their new and energetic teacher, seems to know how to deal with them all. He makes the classroom a fun place, even if he doesn’t let them get away with much . . . until the snowy winter day when an accident changes everything—and everyone. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Cali, Davide, The Enemy
After watching an enemy for a very long time during an endless war, a soldier finally creeps out into the night to the other man’s hole and is surprised by what he finds there. (books.google.com)

Child, Lauren, Utterly Me, Clarice Bean
It’s not easy to concentrate at school when mysterious things are happening all around you. In fact, Clarice Bean is starting to feel just like her favorite heroine: Ruby Redfort, schoolgirl detective. Clarice and her utterly best friend, Betty Moody, are planning to ace their book project about Ruby and win the class prize, until Betty disappears into thin air, and horrible teacher Mrs. Wilberton teams Clarice up with the naughtiest boy in school. Will her new partner ruin everything? Will Betty ever come back? And what on earth happened to the silver trophy everyone’s hoping to win? Lauren Child brings her trademark wacky wit and eccentric visual energy to a full-length, fastpaced Clarice Bean episode that will charm even the most capricious reader. (candlewick.com)
(This is the first book in the series about Clarice Bean. There are also picture books about her.)

Cleary, Beverly, Dear Mr. Henshaw
After his parents separate, Leigh Botts moves to a new town with his mother. Struggling to make friends and deal with his anger toward his absent father, Leigh loses himself in a class assignment in which he must write to his favorite author. When Mr. Henshaw responds, the two form an unexpected friendship that will change Leigh’s life forever. (harpercollins.com)
Clements, Andrew, Books
Every once in a while, I pick up a new book by Andrew Clements and I am surprised by how much I like it. And then I remember that I always love his books and I really shouldn’t be surprised. Andrew Clements was a teacher before he was a writer and you can tell- most of his stories happen in school and he is really good at capturing how kids interact in a classroom. His characters are interesting and realistic, and the stories are often about kids fighting against ineffective grownups. His most famous book is probably Frindle, about a boy who comes up with a new word for pen that catches on, even though his teacher hates it. I think my favorite book by him is The Landry News because you learn about newspapers and censorship while you read a great story. (Ms. Bock)

Couloumbis, Audrey, Getting Near to Baby
After their baby sister dies, Willa Jo and Little Sister’s family falls apart. Their mother sinks deep into an unshakable depression, so the two older girls are sent to live with their strict Aunt Patty and her husband. Since Little Sister refuses to talk, Willa Jo has to try and make things right in their new home, but she can’t stop missing her mother or the life the four of them had before Baby died. Aunt Patty is trying as hard as she can, but she doesn’t really understand what Willa Jo and Little Sister are trying to deal with—until the morning the two girls climb up to the roof of her house, and stay there. (us.penguin.com)

Coy, John, Top of the Order
Jackson’s parents are divorced and his mother has started dating. Gig’s dad is in the National Guard and has been called up to serve in the Middle East. Isaac’s dad wants him to go to a different middle school than all his friends. Diego is the new kid in school, a power-hitter who works with his family on the weekends and can’t make every team practice. These four friends
lead different lives, but on the baseball field, they're a strong team, the top of the order. In this crucial last year of elementary school, they're faced with preparing for middle school and dealing with a new member of their team—a girl! (us.macmillan.com)

Creech, Sharon, Books
Sharon Creech writes some of the most wonderful realistic fiction stories. They are usually about friendship, family, and kids trying to find their place in the world. Recently, she has been writing books that have a bit of magic in them. Her most famous book is Walk Two Moons, which won a Newbery Award. It's about a girl named Sal whose only wish is to be reunited with her mother. While on a road trip with her grandparents, she tells the story of her classmate, Phoebe, whose mother mysteriously disappeared. My favorite book by this author is Bloomability. I think it's the best book about friendship I've ever read. Dinnie is "kidnapped" and sent to a boarding school in Switzerland. While she's there, she struggles with homesickness, worry that her family will forget her, and trying to fit in. If you like realistic fiction, you simply must read some of Sharon Creech's books. You can find a complete list and other goodies at sharoncreech.com. (Ms. Bock)

Curtis, Christopher Paul, Bud, Not Buddy
It's 1936, in Flint, Michigan. Ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but he's on a mission. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: posters of Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression! Bud's got an idea that those posters will lead to his father. Once he decides to hit the road and find this mystery man, nothing can stop him. Bud, Not Buddy is full of laugh-out-loud humor and wonderful characters, hitting the high notes of jazz and sounding the deeper tones of the Great Depression. (scholastic.com)
Curtis, Christopher Paul, *Elijah Of Buxton*

The first child born into freedom in Buxton, Canada, a settlement of runaway slaves just over the border from Detroit, Elijah is best known in his hometown as the boy who threw up on Frederick Douglass. (Not on purpose, of course — he was just a baby then!) But things change when a former slave calling himself the Right Reverend Zephariah W. Connerly the Third steals money from Elijah’s friend Mr. Leroy, who has been saving to buy his family out of captivity in the south. Elijah joins Mr. Leroy on a dangerous journey to America in pursuit of the disreputable preacher, and he discovers firsthand the unimaginable horrors of the life his parents fled — a life from which he’ll always be free, if he can find the courage to go back home. (scholastic.com)

Cushman, Karen, *The Loud Silence of Francine Green*

Francine lives down the street from a Hollywood film studio, adores screen dreamboat Montgomery Clift, and sometimes sees her home life as a scene from a movie: Dinner at the Greens. She wishes she were a movie star, brave and glamorous and always ready to say the right thing. In reality, she’s a “pink and freckled” thirteen-year-old, and she doesn’t speak up because she’s afraid she’ll get in trouble. She’s comfortable following her father’s advice: “Don’t get involved.” That is, until Sophie Bowman transfers into her class at All Saints School for Girls. Fearless, articulate, and passionate, Sophie questions authority and protests injustice. She not only doesn’t care about getting in trouble, she actually seems to be looking for it. And she’s happy to be Francine’s best friend. The nuns think Sophie is a bad influence on Francine. Francine thinks just the opposite. Because of Sophie, Francine finds herself worrying about things that never bothered her before—the atom bomb, free speech, Communists, the blacklist . . . and deciding, for the first time, that she wants to be heard. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Dauvillier, Loic, *Hidden: A Child’s Story of the Holocaust*

In this gentle, poetic young graphic novel, Dounia, a grandmother, tells her granddaughter the story even her son has never heard: how, as a young Jewish girl in Paris, she was hidden away from the Nazis by a series of neighbors and friends who risked their lives to keep her alive when her parents had been taken to
concentration camps. Hidden ends on a tender note, with Dounia and her mother rediscovering each other as World War II ends... and a young girl in present-day France becoming closer to her grandmother, who can finally, after all those years, tell her story. With words by Loïc Dauvillier and art by Marc Lizano and Greg Salsedo, this picture book-style comic for young readers is a touching read. (us.macmillan.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

**DiCamillo, Kate, Because of Winn-Dixie**
Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni’s mother walked out on her seven years ago, and she's been asking about her ever since — so that she won’t forget her mom. But when she moves to Naomi, Florida, and befriends a lively stray dog, the canine helps her meet some unusual characters who teach her about love, life, and forgiveness. (scholastic.com)

**Dorris, Michael, Sees Behind Trees**
No matter how hard he tries, Walnut doesn’t see as well as others do. So when he and the other boys of his tribe must prove they’re ready to be adults by the accuracy of their arrow shooting, Walnut’s worried. With practiced use of his other senses, Walnut earns the respect of his people, as well as his adult name: Sees Behind Trees. (scholastic.com)

**Dowd, Siobhan, The London Eye Mystery**
Ted and Kat watched their cousin Salim board the London Eye, but after half an hour it landed and everyone trooped off—except Salim. Where could he have gone? How on earth could he have disappeared into thin air? Ted and his older sister, Kat, become sleuthing partners, since the police are having no luck. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. And ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain works in its own very unique way, to find the key to the mystery. (randomhouse.com)

**Dowell, Frances O’Roark, Shooting the Moon**
When twelve-year-old Jamie Dexter's brother joins the Army and is sent to Vietnam, Jamie is plum thrilled. She can’t wait to get letters from the front lines describing the excitement of real-life combat: the sound of helicopters, the smell of gunpowder, the exhilaration
of being right in the thick of it. After all, they've both dreamed of following in the footsteps of their father, the Colonel. But TJ's first letter isn't a letter at all. It's a roll of undeveloped film, the first of many. What Jamie sees when she develops TJ's photographs reveals a whole new side of the war. Slowly the shine begins to fade off of Army life - and the Colonel. How can someone she's worshipped her entire life be just as helpless to save her brother as she is? (books.simonandschuster.com)

Dowell, Frances O'Roark, *The Secret Language of Girls*

In the old days, when Kate had no interest in romance, she never cared what other people thought. Now, it appeared, love was turning her into a rotten human being. Eleven-year-old Kate Faber wishes she could talk to her best friend, Marylin, about this. But Marylin is no longer her best friend. Or is she? Kate and Marylin were always the kind of best friends who lived on the same block for their entire lives, and who agreed on what kinds of boys were worth kissing and who should be invited to their sleepover. The kind of best friends who didn't need words to talk, but who always just knew. But lately Marylin has started to think that Kate can be a bit babyish. And Kate thinks Marylin is acting like a big snob. Somehow nothing is the same, but secretly Kate and Marylin both wish it could be... (books.simonandschuster.com)

Draanen, Wendelin Van, *Flipped*

The first time she saw him, she flipped. The first time he saw her, he ran. That was the second grade, but not much has changed by the seventh. She says: “My Bryce. Still walking around with my first kiss.” He says: “It’s been six years of strategic avoidance and social discomfort.” But in the eighth grade everything gets turned upside down. And just as he’s thinking there’s more to her than meets the eye, she’s thinking that he’s not quite all he seemed. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Ehrlich, Esther, *Nest*

In 1972 home is a cozy nest on Cape Cod for eleven-year-old Naomi “Chirp” Orenstein, her older sister, Rachel; her psychiatrist father; and her dancer mother. But then Chirp’s mom develops symptoms of a serious disease, and everything changes. Chirp finds
comfort in watching her beloved wild birds. She also finds a true friend in Joey, the mysterious boy who lives across the street. Together they create their own private world and come up with the perfect plan: Escape. Adventure. Discovery. Nest is Esther Ehrlich’s stunning debut novel. Her lyrical writing is honest, humorous, and deeply affecting. Chirp and Joey will steal your heart. (randomhouse.com)

Ellis, Deborah, Breadwinner

Eleven-year-old Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan’s capital city. Parvana’s father — a history teacher until his school was bombed and his health destroyed — works from a blanket on the ground in the marketplace, reading letters for people who cannot read or write. One day, he is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education, and the family is left without someone who can earn money or even shop for food. As conditions for the family grow desperate, only one solution emerges. Forbidden to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy, and become the breadwinner. (houseofanansi.com)

Engle, Margarita, The Lightning Dreamer: Cuba’s Greatest Abolitionist

Opposing slavery in Cuba in the nineteenth century was dangerous. The most daring abolitionists were poets who veiled their work in metaphor. Of these, the boldest was Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, nicknamed Tula. In passionate, accessible verses of her own, Engle evokes the voice of this book-loving feminist and abolitionist who bravely resisted an arranged marriage at the age of fourteen, and was ultimately courageous enough to fight against injustice. Historical notes, excerpts, and source notes round out this exceptional tribute. (margaritaengle.com)

Federle, Tim, Better Nate Than Ever

Nate Foster has big dreams. His whole life, he’s wanted to star in a Broadway show. ( Heck, he’d settle for seeing a Broadway show.) But how is Nate supposed to make his dreams come true when he’s stuck in Jankburg, Pennsylvania, where no one (except his best pal Libby) appreciates a good show
tune? With Libby’s help, Nate plans a daring overnight escape to New York. There’s an open casting call for E.T.: The Musical, and Nate knows this could be the difference between small-town blues and big-time stardom. (simonandschuster.com) There is a sequel to this book called Five, Six, Seven Nate!

Feinstein, John, Last Shot
When Stevie wins a writing contest for aspiring sports journalists, his prize is a press pass to the Final Four in New Orleans. While exploring the Superdome, he overhears a plot to throw the championship game. With the help of fellow contest winner Susan Carol, Stevie has just 48 hours to figure out who is blackmailing one of the star players... and why. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Ferrari, Michael, Born to Fly
Ever since she can remember, Bird has loved flying in small propeller airplanes with her mechanic dad. When the local airstrip is turned into a military flight school, Bird is in heaven—and she manages to turn one young airman’s interest in her older sister into some personal flight lessons. Then a young Japanese American student named Kenji Fujita joins Bird’s class, and the entire school seems to be convinced that he’s a spy, a secret agent, or at the very least, that he and his uncle want the Japs to win. But through a class project, Bird and Kenji befriend each other and accidentally discover real spy activity in the area. So begins an adventure that will shake the town and may even change the future of the United States. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

FitzGerald, Dawn, Soccer Chick Rules
Tess’s love in life is soccer. When she finds out that all sports at her school will be cut unless the community votes for a tax levy, Tess will do anything to rally votes. She’s even joining forces with a cheerleader to help spread the word and raise funds. Throughout the campaign to save soccer, Tess is playing her heart out on the soccer field and struggling to make passing grades in her classes. But if the levy doesn’t pass, will it all have been for nothing? (us.macmillan.com)
Fitzhugh, Louise, *Harriet the Spy*  
Harriet M. Welsch is a spy. In her notebook, she writes down everything she knows about everyone, even her classmates and her best friends. Then Harriet loses track of her notebook, and it ends up in the wrong hands. Before she can stop them, her friends have read the always truthful, sometimes awful things she’s written about each of them. Will Harriet find a way to put her life and her friendships back together? (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Fleischman, Paul, *Bull Run*  
Newbery Medalist Paul Fleischman’s fictional treatment of this Civil War battle is an intimate and sweeping portrait of this period in human history. Northerners, Southerners, generals, couriers, dreaming boys, and worried sisters describe the glory, the horror, the thrill, and the disillusionment of the first battle of the Civil War. (harpercollins.com)

Forbes, Esther, *Johnny Tremain*  
A story filled with danger and excitement, Johnny Tremain tells of the turbulent passionate times in Boston just after the Revolutionary War. Johnny, a young apprentice silversmith, is caught up in a dramatic involvement with James Otis, John Hancock, and John and Samuel Adams in the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Lexington; and finally, a touching resolution of Johnny’s personal life. (randomhouse.com)

French, S. Terrell, *Operation Redwood*  
Clandestine e-mail exchanges, secret trips, fake press releases, and a tree-house standoff are among the clever stunts and pranks the kid heroes pull off in this exciting ecological adventure. ‘Sibley Carter is a moron and a world-class jerk!’ When Julian Carter-Li intercepts an angry e-mail message meant for his high-powered uncle, it sets him on the course to stop an environmental crime! His uncle’s company plans to cut down some of the oldest and last California redwood trees, and its up to Julian, and a ragtag group of friends, to figure out a way to stop them. This action-packed debut novel shows the power of determined individuals, no matter what their age, to stand up to environmental wrongdoing. (abramsbooks.com)
Frost, Helen, **Diamond Willow**

There’s more to me than most people see. Twelve-year-old Willow would rather blend in than stick out. But she still wants to be seen for who she is. She wants her parents to notice that she is growing up. She wants her best friend to like her better than she likes a certain boy. She wants, more than anything, to mush the dogs out to her grandparents' house, by herself, with Roxy in the lead. But sometimes when it’s just you, one mistake can have frightening consequences . . . And when Willow stumbles, it takes a surprising group of friends to help her make things right again. Using diamond-shaped poems inspired by forms found in polished diamond willow sticks, Helen Frost tells the moving story of Willow and her family. Hidden messages within each diamond carry the reader further, into feelings Willow doesn’t reveal even to herself. (us.macmillan.com)

Frost, Helen, **Salt: A Story of Friendship in a Time of War**

Anikwa and James, twelve years old in 1812, spend their days fishing, trapping, and exploring together in the forests of the Indiana Territory. To Anikwa and his family, members of the Miami tribe, this land has been home for centuries. As traders, James's family has ties to the Miami community as well as to the American soldiers in the fort. Now tensions are rising--the British and American armies prepare to meet at Fort Wayne for a crucial battle, and Native Americans from surrounding tribes gather in Kekionga to protect their homeland. After trading stops and precious commodities, like salt, are withheld, the fort comes under siege, and war ravages the land. James and Anikwa, like everyone around them, must decide where their deepest loyalties lie. Can their families--and their friendship--survive? (us.macmillan.com)

Gantos, Jack, **Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key**

Joey Pigza can't sit still. He can't pay attention, he can't follow the rules, and he can't help it -- especially when his meds aren't working. Joey’s had problems ever since he was born, problems just like his dad and grandma have. And whether he's wreaking havoc on a class trip or swallowing his house key, Joey's problems are getting worse. In fact, his behavior is so off the wall that his teachers are threatening to send him to the special-ed center downtown. Joey knows he's really a good kid, but no matter how hard he tries to do the right thing, something
always seems to go wrong. Will he ever get anything right? (harpercollins.com)

Garza, Xavier, Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel: A Bilingual Lucha Libre Thriller
Maximillian is just another 11 year-old lucha libre fan. He goes to the matches, watches the movies and collects the masks of his favorite wrestlers, especially the Guardian Angel. But when he tumbles over the railing at a lucha libre match in San Antonio Max makes a connection to the world of Mexican wrestling that will ultimately link him—maybe by blood!—to the greatest hero of all time: the Guardian Angel. What was shaping up to be one boring summer before 6th grade now seems like a story straight out of Max's beloved lucha libre movies! (cincopuntos.com)

George, Jean Craighead, Books
Jean Craighead George is the author of many realistic fiction stories that have something to do with nature. She often writes about kids who help to save the environment or survive in extreme places. She spent much of her life outdoors and used her careful observations of nature to inform her writing. Her books are full of beautiful descriptions of wilderness. Her most famous book (and my favorite) is probably My Side of the Mountain. You might also enjoy The Tarantula in My Purse: and 172 Other Wild Pets. You can find out more about her extraordinary life at jeancraigheadgeorge.com. Her family had a creek running through the middle of of their house, and a pet crow that took the kids to the bus stop every morning! (Ms. Bock)

Giff, Patricia Reilly, Nory Ryan’s Song
Nory Ryan’s family has lived on Maidin Bay on the west coast of Ireland for generations, raising a pig and a few chickens, planting potatoes, getting by. Every year Nory’s father goes away on a fishing boat and returns with the rent money for the English lord
who owns their cottage and fields, the English lord bent upon forcing the Irish from their land so he can tumble the cottages and clear the fields for grazing. Times are never easy on Maidin Bay, but this year, a terrible blight attacks the potatoes. No crop means starvation. Twelve-year-old Nory must summon the courage and ingenuity to find food, to find hope, to find a way to help her family survive. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Giff, Patricia Reilly, **Pictures of Hollis Woods

Hollis Woods has been in so many foster homes she can hardly remember them all. She even runs away from the Regans, the one family who offers her a home. When Hollis is sent to Josie, an elderly artist who is quirky and affectionate, she wants to stay. But Josie is growing more forgetful every day. If Social Services finds out, they'll take Hollis away and move Josie into a home. Well, Hollis Woods won't let anyone separate them. She's escaped the system before; this time, she plans to take Josie with her. Yet behind all her plans, Hollis longs for her life with the Regans, fixing each moment of her time with them in pictures she'll never forget. (books.google.com)

**Gownley, Jimmy, **The Whole World's Crazy

Meet Amelia Louise McBride. She's been forced to move out of Manhattan after her parents decided to get divorced, and is now living in a small town (who cares which one) with her mom and her aunt, Tanner. Not to mention the fact that she’s dealing with being the new kid in school, many trips to the principal's office, first kisses, etc. But you know what? She’s got her friends Reggie, Rhonda, and Pajamaman, and everything’s going to be okay. Except, of course, when it isn't. This first volume in the hit series sees Amelia and her friends taking on bullies, barely surviving gym class, learning the truth about Santa, and the dubious merits of the elusive Sneeze Barf. (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is the first book in the Amelia Rules series. It is a graphic novel.)

**Graff, Lisa, **Umbrella Summer

Annie Richards knows there are a million things to look out for—bicycle accidents, food poisoning, chicken pox, smallpox, typhoid fever, runaway zoo animals, and poison oak. That's why being careful is so important, even if it does mean giving up some of her
favorite things, like bike races with her best friend, Rebecca, and hot dogs on the Fourth of July. Everyone keeps telling Annie not to worry so much, that she’s just fine. But they thought her brother, Jared, was just fine too, and Jared died. It takes a new neighbor, who looks as plain as a box of toothpicks but has some surprising secrets of her own, to make Annie realize that her plans for being careful aren’t working out as well as she had hoped. And with a lot of help from those around her—and a book about a pig, too—Annie just may find a way to close her umbrella of sadness and step back into the sunshine.

(.harpercollins.com)

Gratz, Alan M., The Brooklyn Nine

1845: Felix Schneider, an immigrant from Germany, cheers the New York Knickerbockers as they play Three-Out, All-Out. 1908: Walter Snider, batboy for the Brooklyn Superbas, arranges a team tryout for a black pitcher by pretending he is Cuban. 1945: Kat Snider of Brooklyn plays for the Grand Rapids Chicks in the All-American Girls Baseball League. 1981: Michael Flint finds himself pitching a perfect game during the Little League season at Prospect Park. And there are five more Schneiders to meet. In nine innings, this novel tells the stories of nine successive Schneider kids and their connection to Brooklyn and baseball. As in all family histories and all baseball games, there is glory and heartache, triumph and sacrifice. And it ain't over till it's over. (us.penguingroup.com)

Green, Tim, Baseball Great

Josh feels like he’s starting to make it big! Jaden, the school reporter, says he’s going to take the baseball team to number one. Then his dad pulls him off the field and signs him up with Coach Rocky Valentine’s youth championship team, the Titans. He says Josh has what it takes to be a baseball great—and the Titans will help him get there. Now Josh is gulping down Rocky’s 'Super Stax' milkshakes to build muscle and trying to fit in with his new teammates—older, tougher kids who can suddenly become violent. All Josh really wants to do is play ball, but as he gets in deeper with the Titans, there are questions he’s just got to ask. As Josh and his new friend Jaden investigate their suspicions, they find themselves in a dangerous struggle with a desperate
man who doesn’t want them to expose the nasty secrets they uncover. (harpercollins.com)

Green, Tim, *Football Genius*

Troy White has a phenomenal gift. He can predict football plays before they happen. Any position. Any player. Any team. When Troy’s single mom gets a job working in public relations for the Atlanta Falcons, Troy figures it’s his chance to prove what he can do. But first he has to get to the Falcons—and with tight security and a notoriously mean coach, even his mom’s field passes aren’t much help. Then Troy and his best friends devise a plan to get the attention of star linebacker Seth Halloway. With Seth’s playing and Troy’s genius, the Falcons could be unstoppable—if they’ll only listen. (harpercollins.com)

Hale, Nathan, *One Dead Spy*

Nathan Hale, the author’s historical namesake, was America’s first spy, a Revolutionary War hero who famously said “I regret that I have but one life to give for my country” before being hanged by the British. In the Nathan Hale’s Hazardous Tales series, author Nathan Hale channels his namesake to present history’s roughest, toughest, and craziest stories in the graphic novel format. One Dead Spy tackles the story of Hale himself, who was an officer and spy for the American rebels during the Revolutionary War. Author Hale highlights the unusual, gruesome, and just plain unbelievable truth of historical Nathan Hale—from his early unlucky days at Yale to his later unlucky days as an officer—and America during the Revolutionary War. (abramsbooks.com) This book is the first in a series. You can read them in any order.

Hannigan, Katherine, *Ida B: . . . and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World*

Ida has always been homeschooled. She went to Kindergarten for one day, and it was so awful that her parents agreed to let her learn at home. But now her family is going through some hard times and she has to go back to the public school. Ida feels completely betrayed by her parents. One of the things that I love about this book is that even though it’s told from Ida’s
point of view, you can also see her dad’s perspective, even though Ida herself can’t. I think that takes a masterful writer. (Ms. Bock)

**Henry, Marguerite, Misty of Chincoteague**

Nobody could capture the Phantom. She was the wildest mare on Assateague Island. They said she was like the wind, that the white "map" on her shoulders was her mark of freedom. Paul and Maureen Beebe had their hearts set on owning her. They were itching to buy and tame her, and worked hard to earn the money that she would cost. But the roundup men had tried to capture her and for two years she had escaped them.... Pony Penning Day holds a surprise for everyone, for Paul not only brings in the Phantom, but her newborn colt as well. Can Paul and Maureen possibly earn enough to buy them both? (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is the first book in the series.)

**Hesse, Karen, Out Of The Dust**

A poem cycle that reads as a novel, Out of the Dust tells the story of a girl named Billie Jo, who struggles to help her family survive the dust-bowl years of the Depression. Fighting against the elements on her Oklahoma farm, Billie Jo takes on even more responsibilities when her mother dies in a tragic accident. (scholastic.com)

**Hiaasen, Carl, Flush**

Noah’s dad has a little problem with anger control. He tried to stop the Coral Queen casino boat’s illegal dumping... by sinking the boat. But his bold protest fizzles: within days the casino is back in business, and Noah’s dad is behind bars and out of action. Now Noah is determined to succeed where his father failed. But even though pumping raw sewage into the waters of the Florida Keys is both gross and against the law, turns out it’s near impossible to catch the flusher—especially when he’s already bamboozled the prosecutors, the local press, and even the Coast Guard. But Noah’s got a few allies. There’s his little sister, Abbey, an unreformed childhood biter; Lice Peeking, a half-soused ex-mate of the Coral Queen who is willing to testify... for a price; and Shelly, a bighearted bartender with even bigger biceps. Okay, so the odds aren’t good. But Noah has an ace up his sleeve—a plan so crazy it just might stop the polluting, save the
beaches, and prove to the world that it's the owner of the Coral Queen, and not his dad, who is full of... crud. (penguinrandomhouse.com) If you enjoy this book, you should look for Carl Hiaasen's other books for kids. He also writes for adults, though, so use your head when choosing other books by him.

Hodgman, Ann, *The House of a Million Pets*

Ann Hodgman's basement is home to three guinea pigs, a cage full of birds, a big gray rabbit, a prairie dog, a bulbul (look it up), two little rabbits, a hamster, and twenty-six pygmy mice. And that's just the basement. Would your parents ever let you have that many pets at once? If Ann Hodgman were your parents, she'd let you. Here is the true story of what it's like to live in her barnyard--er, house--with more animals than you'll be able to keep track of. Any kid (or adult) who has ever owned or wanted a pet will love these furry, feathered, slimy, and scaly stories. (us.macmillan.com)

Holm, Jennifer L., *Books*

You may know her as the author of the fabulous Babymouse series. Jennifer Holm also writes really great historical and realistic fiction for older readers. Her stories often feature girls who are trying to figure out changes in their families or solve problems in their community. These books are funny and full of lots of small adventures. She has won three Newbery Honor medals. Her most famous book (besides Babymouse) is probably Turtle in Paradise. You can find out more about all of her books at jenniferholm.com. (Ms. Bock)

Holmes, Sara Lewis, *Operation Yes*

Plan A  Bo is going to behave for his new teacher. His father, an Air Force colonel, says so. Gari is going to live peacefully with her cousin. Her mother, an Army nurse, says so. Miss Loupe is going to teach her class language arts, social studies, math, and science.
What’s supposed to say secret: the theater lessons – and her tattoo. Plan B Bo stages a food fight. His father isn’t pleased. Gari stages a protest. The Army isn’t pleased. And when something happens that none of them could plan for… they lose Miss Loupe too. And what comes out of that is… Plan C It involves misbehaving – and working together. Protests, fighting – and making something amazing. For everyone’s parents. Everyone’s families. It’s a plan so big, so daring, so life-changing, that it can only be called: OPERATION YES (arthuralevinebooks.com)

Howe, James, The Misfits

Kids who get called the worst names oftentimes find each other. That’s how it was with us. Skeeze Tookis and Addie Carle and Joe Bunch and me. We call ourselves the Gang of Five, but there are only four of us. We do it to keep people on their toes. Make ‘em wonder. Or maybe we do it because we figure that there’s one more kid out there who’s going to need a gang to be a part of. A misfit, like us. Skeeze, Addie, Joe, and Bobby -- they’ve been friends forever. They laugh together, have lunch together, and get together once a week at the Candy Kitchen to eat ice cream and talk about important issues. Life isn’t always fair, but at least they have each other -- and all they really want to do is survive the seventh grade. That turns out to be more of a challenge than any of them had anticipated. Starting with Addie’s refusal to say the Pledge of Allegiance and her insistence on creating a new political party to run for student council, the Gang of Five is in for the ride of their lives. Along the way they will learn about politics and popularity, love and loss, and what it means to be a misfit. After years of getting by, they are given the chance to stand up and be seen -- not as the one-word jokes their classmates have tried to reduce them to, but as the full, complicated human beings they are just beginning to discover they truly are. (books.simonandschuster.com) This is the first book in the series. The others are (in order): Totally Joe, Addie on the Inside, and Also Known As Elvis.

Hunt, Lynda Mullaly, Fish in a Tree

“Everybody is smart in different ways. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its life believing it is stupid.” Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by
creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there’s a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don’t always think alike. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Jamieson, Victoria, Roller Girl**

For most of her twelve years, Astrid has done everything with her best friend Nicole. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. And so begins the most difficult summer of Astrid’s life as she struggles to keep up with the older girls at camp, hang on to the friend she feels slipping away, and cautiously embark on a new friendship. As the end of summer nears and her first roller derby bout (and junior high!) draws closer, Astrid realizes that maybe she is strong enough to handle the bout, a lost friendship, and middle school... in short, strong enough to be a roller girl. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Johnson, Varian, The Great Greene Heist**

Jackson Greene has reformed. No, really he has. He became famous for the Shakedown at Shimmering Hills, and everyone still talks about the Blitz at the Fitz.... But after the disaster of the Mid-Day PDA, he swore off scheming and conning for good. Then Keith Sinclair -- loser of the Blitz -- announces he’s running for school president, against Jackson’s former best friend Gaby de la Cruz. Gaby hasn’t talked to Jackson since the PDA, and he knows she won’t welcome his involvement. But he also knows Keith has "connections" to the principal, which could win him the election whatever the vote count. So Jackson assembles a crack team to ensure the election is done right: Hashemi Larijani, tech genius. Victor Cho, bankroll. Megan Feldman, science goddess and cheerleader. Charlie de la Cruz, point man. Together they devise a plan that will bring Keith down once and for all. Yet as Jackson draws closer to Gaby again, he realizes the election isn’t the only thing he wants to win. (arthuralevinebooks.com)
Kelly, Jacqueline, *The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate*

Calpurnia Virginia Tate is eleven years old in 1899 when she wonders why the yellow grasshoppers in her Texas backyard are so much bigger than the green ones. With a little help from her notoriously cantankerous grandfather, an avid naturalist, she figures out that the green grasshoppers are easier to see against the yellow grass, so they are eaten before they can get any larger. As Callie explores the natural world around her, she develops a close relationship with her grandfather, navigates the dangers of living with six brothers, and comes up against just what it means to be a girl at the turn of the century. (us.macmillan.com)

Kennedy, Marlane, *Me and the Pumpkin Queen*

It’s just something she has to do. Mildred has always dreamed of growing a one-thousand-pound pumpkin to enter in her town’s Pumpkin Show. Her aunt Arlene thinks she’s obsessed, but Mildred prefers to think of herself as focused. And growing giant pumpkins is way more interesting than boys or clothes or the other girly things Aunt Arlene wants her to like. She’s been trying for four long growing seasons—ever since her mama died—and every one has ended in disaster. It’s not easy, especially with dogs who don’t realize how delicate seedlings are, and tornadoes that could destroy months of work, and most people thinking that an eleven-year-old doesn’t stand a chance. But Daddy believes in Mildred, and so does her best friend, Jacob. Maybe this will finally be her year. (harpercollins.com)

Klages, Ellen, *The Green Glass Sea*

It’s 1943, and eleven-year-old Dewey Kerrigan is en route to New Mexico to live with her mathematician father. Soon she arrives at a town that, officially, doesn’t exist. It is called Los Alamos, and it is abuzz with activity, as scientists and mathematicians from all over America and Europe work on the biggest secret of all—“the gadget.” None of them—not J. Robert Oppenheimer, the director of the Manhattan Project; not the mathematicians and scientists; and least of all, Dewey—know how much “the gadget” is about to change their lives. (penguinrandomhouse.com)
Knowles, Jo, See You at Harry’s

Twelve-year-old Fern feels invisible. It seems as though everyone in her family has better things to do than pay attention to her: Mom (when she’s not meditating) helps Dad run the family restaurant; Sarah is taking a gap year after high school; and Holden pretends that Mom and Dad and everyone else doesn’t know he’s gay, even as he fend off bullies at school. Then there’s Charlie: three years old, a “surprise” baby, the center of everyone’s world. He’s devoted to Fern, but he’s annoying, too, always getting his way, always dirty, always commanding attention. If it wasn’t for Ran, Fern’s calm and positive best friend, there’d be nowhere to turn. Ran’s mantra, “All will be well,” is soothing in a way that nothing else seems to be. And when Ran says it, Fern can almost believe it’s true. But then tragedy strikes- and Fern feels not only more alone than ever, but also responsible for the accident that has wrenched her family apart. All will not be well. Or at least all will never be the same. (candlewick.com)

Konigsburg, E. L., The View from Saturday

How had Mrs. Olinski chosen her sixth-grade Academic Bowl team? She had a number of answers. But were any of them true? How had she really chosen Noah and Nadia and Ethan and Julian? And why did they make such a good team? It was a surprise to a lot of people when Mrs. Olinski’s team won the sixth-grade Academic Bowl contest at Epiphany Middle School. It was an even bigger surprise when they beat the seventh grade and the eighth grade, too. And when they went on to even greater victories, everyone began to ask: How did it happen? It happened at least partly because Noah had been the best man (quite by accident) at the wedding of Ethan’s grandmother and Nadia’s grandfather. It happened because Nadia discovered that she could not let a lot of baby turtles die. It happened when Ethan could not let Julian face disaster alone. And it happened because Julian valued something important in himself and saw in the other three something he also valued. Mrs. Olinski, returning to teaching after having been injured in an automobile accident, found that her Academic Bowl team became her answer to finding confidence and success. What she did not know, at least at first, was that her team knew more than she did the answer to why they had been chosen. This is a tale about a team, a class, a school, a series of contests and, set in the midst of this, four jewel-
LaFave, A., *Worth*

Before the accident Nathaniel's life seemed pretty good. His help around the farm made his father proud. But now, with a busted leg, Nathaniel can't do farmwork anymore, so his father adopts another son through the Orphan Train. Feeling replaced and useless, Nathaniel attends school for the first time. Meanwhile, sturdy and strong John is able to do the work that earns Pa's attention. But the truth is, John Worth has his own set of troubles. He is treated more like a servant than a son. Kept awake at night by nightmares of his family's death, he remembers having a pa who took pride in him. But now he has no one, until a community battle and a special book reveal a potential friend -- and a chance for understanding.

Lai, Thanhha, *Inside Out and Back Again*

For all the ten years of her life, Hà has only known Saigon: the thrills of its markets, the joy of its traditions, and the warmth of her friends close by. But now the Vietnam War has reached her home. Hà and her family are forced to flee as Saigon falls, and they board a ship headed toward hope. In America, Hà discovers the foreign world of Alabama: the coldness of its strangers, the dullness of its food . . . and the strength of her very own family.

Lewis, J. Patrick, *Harlem Hellfighters*

In 1919, the 369th infantry regiment marched home triumphantly from World War I. They had spent more time in combat than any other American unit, never losing a foot of ground to the enemy, or a man to capture, and winning countless decorations. Though they returned as heroes, this African American unit faced tremendous discrimination, even from their own government. The Harlem Hellfighters, as the Germans called them, fought courageously on—and off—the battlefield to make Europe, and America, safe for democracy.
**Lord, Cynthia, *Half a Chance***

When Lucy’s family moves to an old house on a lake, Lucy tries to see her new home through her camera’s lens, as her father has taught her — he’s a famous photographer, away on a shoot. Will her photos ever meet his high standards? When she discovers that he’s judging a photo contest, Lucy decides to enter anonymously. She wants to find out if her eye for photography is really special -- or only good enough. As she seeks out subjects for her photos, Lucy gets to know Nate, the boy next door. But slowly the camera reveals what Nate doesn’t want to see: his grandmother’s memory is slipping away, and with it much of what he cherishes about his summers on the lake. This summer, Nate will learn about the power of art to show truth. And Lucy will learn how beauty can change lives . . . including her own. (scholastic.com)

**Lord, Cynthia, *Touch Blue***

Touch Blue and your wish will come true. "Why take chances?" says eleven-year-old Tess Brooks. "Especially when it’s so easy to let the universe know what you want by touching blue or turning around three times or crossing your fingers." But Tess is coming to know that it’s not always that simple. The state of Maine plans to shut down her island’s schoolhouse, which would force Tess’s family to move to the mainland — and Tess to leave the only home she has ever known. Fortunately, the islanders have a plan, too: increase the numbers of students by having several families take in foster children. So now Tess and her family are taking a chance on Aaron, a thirteen-year-old trumpet player who has been bounced from home to home. And Tess needs a plan of her own — and all the luck she can muster. Will Tess’s wish come true or will her luck run out? (scholastic.com)

**Lowry, Lois, *Anastasia Krupnik***

To Anastasia Krupnik, being ten is very confusing. For one thing, she has this awful teacher who can’t understand why Anastasia doesn’t capitalize or punctuate her poems. Then, there’s Washburn Cummings, a very interesting sixth-grade boy who doesn’t even know she is alive. Even her parents have become difficult. They insist she visit her 92-year-old grandmother who can never remember Anastasia’s name. On top of that, they’re going to have a baby — at their age! It’s enough
to make a kid want to do something terrible. Anastasia knows that if she didn’t have her secret green notebook to write in, she would never make it to her eleventh birthday. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

Lupica, Mike, *Books*

Do you like stories about sports and kids who play them? Then Mike Lupica is an author that you should get to know. He is a well-respected sports writer for newspapers and ESPN, so he always gets the sports action just right. His books are more than simple "sports stories," though. He writes about kids who are trying to fit in, find their place, or deal with challenges in school or their family. He explores sportsmanship and what it means to be team player both on and off the field. You can find out more about Mike Lupica and his books at mikelupica.com. Some of his books are for high school students, so some discretion is advised. (Ms. Bock)

Lyon, Annabel, *All-Season Edie*

What a difference a year makes. Eleven-year-old Edie Jasmine Snow has a "perfect" thirteen-year-old sister, two loving parents, and a cat named Dusty. She also has a grandmother she suspects is a witch and a grandfather who insists on calling her Albert. Framed by family summer vacations at the lake, *All-Season Edie* follows Edie through a tumultuous year in which her beloved grandfather becomes ill. In the face of family tragedy, Edie tries to practice witchcraft, learns to dance the flamenco, meets the Greek god Zeus doing his Christmas shopping at the mall, ruins the most important party of her sister's life and realizes that her family is both completely strange and absolutely normal. (us.orcabook.com)

Margolis, Leslie, *Boys Are Dogs*

When Annabelle returns from summer camp, her life is totally different. She’s moving to a new house with her mom’s new
boyfriend, and that means starting sixth grade at a brand-new school. Birchwood Middle School is very different from her old all-girls elementary—the boys practically run wild in the hallways. And at home, Annabelle’s new puppy is taking over the house and chewing on her clothes. But the puppy came with a training manual, so Annabelle might be able to get one thing under control. Unless . . . can you train a boy the way you train a dog? (bloomsbury.com)

**Martin, Ann M., *Rain Reign***

Rose Howard is obsessed with homonyms. She’s thrilled that her own name is a homonym, and she purposely gave her dog Rain a name with two homonyms (Reign, Rein), which, according to Rose’s rules of homonyms, is very special. Not everyone understands Rose’s obsessions, her rules, and the other things that make her different—not her teachers, not other kids, and not her single father. When a storm hits their rural town, rivers overflow, the roads are flooded, and Rain goes missing. Rose’s father shouldn’t have let Rain out. Now Rose has to find her dog, even if it means leaving her routines and safe places to search. Hearts will break and spirits will soar for this powerful story, brilliantly told from Rose’s point of view. (us.macmillan.com)

**McKay, Hilary, *Dog Friday***

Ten-year-old Robin Brogan knows his life will never be the same when a new family with four children moves in next door. The Robinson kids are fun to have around, but Robin, who once landed in the hospital after an encounter with a vicious dog, can’t lose his fear of Old Blanket, the Robinson’s dog. Then Robin finds a starving, abandoned dog on the beach. Can his new neighbors help him overcome his fears to save an animal that needs him desperately? (books.google.com)

**McKay, Hilary, *Saffy's Angel***

The four Casson children, whose mother, Eve, is a fine-arts painter, have all been given the names of paint colors. Cadmium (Caddy), is the eldest; then Saffron (Saffy); Indigo, the only boy; and Rose, the youngest. When Saffy discovers quite by accident that she has been adopted, she is deeply upset, though the others assure her that it makes no difference at all. Saffy is the
daughter of Eve's twin sister, who lived in Siena, Italy, and died in a car crash. Grandad brought Saffy, as a very small child, back from Siena. At Grandad's death he leaves something to each of the children. To Saffy, it is "her angel," although no one knows its identity. How Saffy discovers what her angel is, with the help of an energetic new friend, lies at the heart of this enchanting story. Unforgettable characters come alive in often deeply humorous and always absorbing events to be treasured for a long, long time. (simonandschuster.com) The other books about the Casson Family are (in order): Indigo’s Star, Permanent Rose, Caddy Ever After, Forever Rose, and Caddy’s World (a prequel).

Montgomery, L. M., Anne of Green Gables
Matthew Cuthbert, an elderly bachelor, and his spinster sister, Marilla, want to adopt a sturdy little boy to help with chores on their Prince Edward Island farm. The orphanage mistakenly sends a girl. Anne Shirley is a romantic, mischievous redhead desperate for a home and a family. She is also afflicted with an exhausting habit: she cannot stop talking. Her vivid imagination causes her to encounter one mishap after another. Loyal and kindhearted, however, Anne is soon accepted as a "kindred spirit" to Matthew and Marilla and grows up a spirited and intelligent young woman. (books.google.com)

Morpurgo, Michael, Amazing Story Of Adolphus Tips
It's 1943, and twelve-year-old Lily Tregenza lives on a farm in an idyllic seaside village in England. Apart from her father being away and the 'townie' evacuees at school, her life is scarcely touched by the war . . . until Lily and her family, along with 3,000 other villagers, are ordered to evacuate their homes to allow the Allied forces to practice their landings for D-day. It's a dangerous operation--guns firing and bombs exploding--and the whole area is off-limits. But Adolphus Tips, Lily's adored cat, has other ideas--barbed wire and 'Keep out!' signs mean nothing to her. (scholastic.com)

Morris, Jennifer, Come, Llamas
It's spring time on the Kinnaman Ranch in Alaska, and nine-year-old JT is sure it will be the best one yet. This season he’s determined to become a pitcher on his school’s baseball team and to raise his very own llama, just like Grandad promised. When baby llama Elmo is born, JT has all kinds of plans for the first of his herd. Every
night after baseball practice, JT trains Elmo. And every morning, the small llama seems to be growing stronger—even as Grandad’s persistent cough gets worse and worse. Then a bear charges through their property, and JT doesn’t see how their family will manage. Half their llamas are gone, Elmo’s leg is broken, and it’s not long before Grandad needs to be rushed to the clinic. But everything’s always growing and changing on a llama ranch, and JT will find a way to keep on keeping on and make Grandad proud.

(penguinrandomhouse.com)

Myracle, Lauren, Eleven

Winnie knows that change isn’t all it’s cracked up to be, especially when it means her best friend, Amanda, might be dropping her for someone else. Throw in a grumpy teenage sister, a cat who gets trapped in the wall, and a crush who has pinkeye, and you’ve got one big mess—one that Winnie’s not going to clean up! Winnie’s decided that she’s going to remain exactly the same, no matter what the rest of the world does. But every month brings crazy adventures. A lot can change in a year . . . maybe even Winnie. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in a series; they are best read in order. Lauren Myracle also writes for older teens. Discretion is advised when choosing books written by her.

Myracle, Lauren, Luv Ya Bunches

What do Katie-Rose, Yasaman, Milla, and Violet all have in common? Other than being named after flowers, practically nothing. Katie-Rose is a film director in training. Yasaman is a computer whiz. Milla is third in command of the A list. And Violet is the new girl in school. They’re fab girls, all of them, but they sure aren’t friends. And if evil queen bee Medusa—’scuse me, Modessa—has her way, they never will be. But this is the beginning of a new school year, when anything can happen and social worlds can collide... (abramsbooks.com) (This is the first book in the series.)

Napoli, Donna Jo, Three Days

While driving in the Italian countryside, eleven-year-old Jackie’s father suddenly collapses at the wheel. Fear for her father’s life quickly turns to terror when two Italian men kidnap her and drive
to their remote home in the countryside. Jackie soon discovers that her captors are actually a family, plagued by a mysterious secret. Award-winning novelist Donna Jo Napoli has created a haunting thriller that gives life to Jackie’s utter desperation and determination to escape. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Nicholls, Sally, *Ways To Live Forever*
1. My name is Sam. 2. I am eleven years old. 3. I collect stories and fantastic facts. 4. I have leukemia. 5. By the time you read this, I will probably be dead. Living through the final stages of leukemia, Sam collects stories, questions, lists, and pictures that create a profoundly moving portrait of how a boy lives when he knows his time is almost up. (arthurlevinebooks.com)

O’Connor, Barbara, *The Small Adventure of Popeye and Elvis*
Nothing ever happens in Fayette, South Carolina. That’s what Popeye thinks, anyway. His whole life, everything has just been boring, boring, boring. But things start to look up when the Jewells’ Holiday Rambler makes a wrong turn and gets stuck in the mud, trapping Elvis and his five rowdy siblings in Fayette for who knows how long. Then things get even better when something curious comes floating down the creek—a series of boats with secret messages—and Popeye and Elvis set out on a small adventure. Who could possibly be sending the notes and what do they mean? (us.macmillan.com)

Palacio, R. J., *Wonder*
August Pullman was born with a facial difference that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can’t get past Auggie’s extraordinary face. WONDER, now a #1 New York Times bestseller and included on the Texas Bluebonnet Award master list, begins from Auggie’s point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community’s struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance. (randomhousekids.com)
Park, Linda Sue, *Project Mulberry*

Julia Song and her friend Patrick want to team up to win a blue ribbon at the state fair, but they can’t agree on the perfect project. Then Julia’s mother suggests they raise silkworms as she did years ago in Korea. The optimistic twosome quickly realizes that raising silkworms is a lot tougher than they thought. And Julia never suspected that she’d be discussing the fate of her and Patrick’s project with Ms. Park, the author of this book! (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Parry, Rosanne, *Heart of a Shepherd*

When Brother’s dad is shipped off to Iraq, along with the rest of his reserve unit, Brother must help his grandparents keep the ranch going. He’s determined to maintain it just as his father left it, in the hope that doing so will ensure his father’s safe return. The hardships Brother faces will not only change the ranch, but also reveal his true calling.

(penguinrandomhouse.com)

Paterson, Katherine, *Books*

Katherine Paterson is one of the most important realistic fiction authors in American history. She has often written about topics that were considered too “adult” for young people, such as death and jealousy. Many of her characters are outcasts or feel like they don’t fit in. She has won almost every award that a children’s or young adult author can possibly win. Her most famous book is probably *Bridge to Terabithia*, which was very controversial when it was published. *Lyddie* is widely read in classes that are studying the Industrial Revolution. I think my favorite is *Jacob Have I Loved*, which, despite the title, is not a romance story; it’s the story of a girl who struggles with her twin sister, who is prettier, more talented, and more well-liked than herself. The title comes from a Bible verse about brothers: “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” (Ms. Bock)
Paulsen, Gary, Books
Gary Paulsen ran away to join a carnival when he was 14 and hasn’t stopped having adventures since. This shows in his books—they are mostly wilderness survival stories in which boys have to survive impossible odds on their own. His most famous book is Hatchet, about a boy who is the only survivor of a plane crash in the Canadian forest. If you enjoy historical fiction, you might also like the Mr. Tucket series, which is set on the Oregon Trail. If you prefer more humor in your stories, try Lawn Boy. There really is a Gary Paulsen book for everyone! (Ms. Bock)

Peck, Richard, A Long Way From Chicago (Puffin Modern Classics)
What happens when Joey and his sister, Mary Alice—two city slickers from Chicago—make their annual summer visits to Grandma Dowdel’s seemingly sleepy Illinois town? August 1929: They see their first corpse, and he isn’t resting easy. August 1930: The Cowgill boys terrorize the town, and Grandma fights back with a dead mouse and a bottle of milk. August 1931: Joey and Mary Alice help Grandma to trespass, pinch property, poach, catch the sheriff in his underwear, and feed the hungry—all in one day. And there’s more—much more—as Joey and Mary Alice make seven summer trips to Grandma’s, each one funnier and more surprising than the year before. (scholastic.com) There is a sequel (of a sort) to this book called A Year Down Under, in which Mary Alice goes to live with Grandma Dowdel for a year.

Peck, Richard, The Teacher’s Funeral : A Comedy in Three Parts
If your teacher has to die, August isn’t a bad time of year for it,” begins Richard Peck’s latest novel, a book full of his signature wit and sass. Russell Culver is fifteen in 1904, and he’s raring to leave his tiny Indiana farm town for the endless sky of the Dakotas. To him, school has been nothing but a chain holding him back from
his dreams. Maybe now that his teacher has passed on, they’ll shut the school down entirely and leave him free to roam. No such luck. Russell has a particularly eventful season of schooling ahead of him, led by a teacher he never could have predicted—perhaps the only teacher equipped to control the likes of him: his sister Tansy. Despite stolen supplies, a privy fire, and more than any classroom’s share of snakes, Tansy will manage to keep that school alive and maybe, just maybe, set her brother on a new, wiser course. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Perkins, Lynne Rae, *All Alone in the Universe*

Before last summer Maureen and I were best friends....At least I think we were. I don't know what happened exactly. As some people who get hit by trucks sometimes say, 'I didn't see anything coming.' When her best friend since the third grade starts acting as though Debbie doesn't exist, Debbie finds out the hard way that life can be a lonesome place. But in the end the heroine of this wryly funny coming-of-age story—a girl who lives in a house covered with stuff that is supposed to look like bricks but is just a fake brick pattern—discovers that even the hourly tragedies of junior high school can have silver linings, just as a house covered with Insul-Brick can protect a real home. This first novel shines—fun, engrossing, bittersweet, and wonderfully unpredictable. (harpercollins.com)

Perkins, Mitali, *Rickshaw Girl*

Naima is a talented painter of traditional alpana patterns, which Bangladeshi women and girls paint on their houses for special celebrations. When Naima’s rash effort to raise money puts her family deeper in debt, she draws on her talents to save the day. (perfectionlearning.com)

Phelan, Matt, *Bluffton: My Summers with Buster Keaton*

In the summer of 1908, in Muskegon, Michigan, a visiting troupe of vaudeville performers is about the most exciting thing since baseball. They’re summering in nearby Bluffton, so Henry has a few months to ogle the elephant and the zebra, the tightrope walkers and — lo and behold — a slapstick actor his own age named Buster Keaton. The show folk say Buster is indestructible; his father throws him around as part of the act and the audience roars, while Buster never cracks a smile. Henry longs to learn to
take a fall like Buster, “the human mop,” but Buster just wants to play ball with Henry and his friends. With signature nostalgia, Scott O'Dell Award–winning graphic novelist Matt Phelan visualizes a bygone era with lustrous color, dynamic lines, and flawless dramatic pacing. (candlewick.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

**Phelan, Matt, *The Storm in the Barn***

In Kansas in the year 1937, eleven-year-old Jack Clark faces his share of ordinary challenges: local bullies, his father’s failed expectations, a little sister with an eye for trouble. But he also has to deal with the effects of the Dust Bowl, including rising tensions in his small town and the spread of a shadowy illness. Certainly a case of “dust dementia” would explain who (or what) Jack has glimpsed in the Talbot’s abandoned barn -- a sinister figure with a face like rain. In a land where it never rains, it’s hard to trust what you see with your own eyes -- and harder still to take heart and be a hero when the time comes. With phenomenal pacing, sensitivity, and a sure command of suspense, Matt Phelan ushers us into a world where desperation is transformed by unexpected courage. (candlewick.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

**Pinkney, Andrea Davis, *The Red Pencil***

Finally, Amira is twelve. Old enough to wear a toob, old enough for new responsibilities. And maybe old enough to go to school in Nyala-- Amira’s one true dream. But life in her peaceful Sudanese village is shattered when the Janjaweed arrive. The terrifying attackers ravage the town and unleash unspeakable horrors. After she loses nearly everything, Amira needs to dig deep within herself to find the strength to make the long journey-- on foot-- to safety at a refugee camp. Her days are tough at the camp, until the gift of a simple red pencil opens her mind-- and all kinds of possibilities. (hachettebookgroup.com)

**Ray, Delia, *Singing Hands***

As one of three hearing daughters of deaf parents, 12-year-old Gussie Davis is expected to be a proper representative of Saint Jude’s Church for the Deaf in Birmingham, Alabama, which is run by her father. So when Gussie starts to hum through signed services in the summer of 1948, Reverend Davis assumes she merely wants to sing out loud and sends her to a regular church downtown. But Gussie’s behavior worsens, and she
is not allowed to go on a much-anticipated trip; instead, she must help her father at the Alabama School for the Deaf. Rebelling against the strict rules of the school, Gussie finally confronts the difficulties and prejudices encountered by the deaf community, all while still trying to find her own identity in the worlds of both the hearing and the deaf. Drawing on firsthand accounts of her mother’s own childhood with deaf parents, Delia Ray provides an inside look at the South in the 1940s. Lively humor, unforgettable characters, and meticulous research combine to make this a standout novel that offers keen insight into what it means to be hearing in a deaf world. (scholastic.com)

**Rhodes, Jewell Parker, Ninth Ward**

Twelve-year-old Lanesha lives in a tight-knit community in New Orleans' Ninth Ward. She doesn't have a fancy house like her uptown family or lots of friends like the other kids on her street. But what she does have is Mama Ya-Ya, her fiercely loving caretaker, wise in the ways of the world and able to predict the future. So when Mama Ya-Ya's visions show a powerful hurricane—Katrina—fast approaching, it's up to Lanesha to call upon the hope and strength Mama Ya-Ya has given her to help them both survive the storm. (hatchettebookgroup.com)

**Rodman, Mary Ann, Jimmy's Stars**

It’s September 1943, and eleven-year-old Ellie McKelvey’s older brother, Jimmy, has just been drafted. Jimmy has a joyful heart and a kind word for everyone, and he’s the only person who thinks Ellie is smart and funny and as beautiful as Lana Turner, the movie star. Ellie can hardly stand to see him go. With Jimmy gone, Aunt Toots moves into his bedroom, Ellie’s mother takes a war job at a factory, and everything in Ellie’s life seems upside down. But she figures that the war will be over and Jimmy home by Christmas, so as much as she misses him, she keeps her spirits up. Even as families in the neighborhood begin to receive telegrams informing them that their boys are wounded or worse, Ellie never stops believing in Jimmy. In her second work of historical fiction, Mary Ann Rodman captures all the authentic details of life on the homefront during World War II, as well as the fierce love a sister has for her beloved big brother. (us.macmillan.com)
Rose, Caroline Starr, *May B.*

May is helping out on a neighbor's Kansas prairie homestead—just until Christmas, says Pa. She wants to contribute, but it's hard to be separated from her family by 15 long, unfamiliar miles. Then the unthinkable happens: May is abandoned. Trapped in a tiny snow-covered sod house, isolated from family and neighbors, May must prepare for the oncoming winter. While fighting to survive, May's memories of her struggles with reading at school come back to haunt her. But she's determined to find her way home again. Caroline Starr Rose's fast-paced novel, written in beautiful and riveting verse, gives readers a strong new heroine to love. (randomhousekids.com)

Rumford, James, *Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad*

When bombs begin to fall, Ali drowns out the sound of war with a pen. Like other children living in Baghdad, Ali loves soccer, music and dancing, but most of all, he loves the ancient art of calligraphy. When bombs begin to fall on his city, Ali turns to his pen, writing sweeping and gliding words to the silent music that drowns out the war all around him. Gorgeously illustrated with collage, pencil and charcoal drawings and, of course, exquisite calligraphy, this timely and yet universal story celebrates art and history but also offers young children a way to understand all they see and hear on the news. (us.macmillan.com)

Ryan, Pam Munoz, *Becoming Naomi Leon*

Naomi Soledad Leon Outlaw has had a lot to contend with in her young life, her name for one. Then there are her clothes (sewn in polyester by Gram), her difficulty speaking up, and her status at school as "nobody special." But according to Gram, most problems can be overcome with positive thinking. And with Gram and her little brother, Owen, life at Avocado Acres Trailer Rancho in California is happy and peaceful...until their mother reappears after seven years of being gone, stirring up all sorts of questions and challenging Naomi to discover and proclaim who she really is. (scholastic.com)

Rylant, Cynthia, *Missing May*

When May dies suddenly while gardening, Summer assumes she'll never see her beloved aunt again. But then Summer's Uncle Ob claims that May is on her way
back — she has sent a sign from the spirit world. Summer isn’t sure she believes in the spirit world, but her quirky classmate Cletus Underwood — who befriends Ob during his time of mourning — does. So at Cletus’ suggestion, Ob and Summer (with Cletus in tow) set off in search of Miriam B. Young, Small Medium at Large, whom they hope will explain May’s departure and confirm her possible return. (scholastic.com)

**Scaletta, Kurtis, Mudville**

Welcome to Moundville, where it’s been raining for longer than Roy McGuire has been alive. Most people say the town is cursed—right in the middle of their big baseball game against rival town Sinister Bend, black clouds crept across the sky and it started to rain. That was 22 years ago . . . and it’s still pouring. Baseball camp is over, and Roy knows he’s in for a dreary, soggy summer. But when he returns home, he finds a foster kid named Sturgis sprawled out on his couch. As if this isn’t weird enough, just a few days after Sturgis’s arrival, the sun comes out. No one can explain why the rain has finally stopped, but as far as Roy’s concerned, it’s time to play some baseball. It’s time to get a Moundville team together and finish what was started 22 years ago. It’s time for a rematch. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Schlitz, Laura Amy, A Drowned Maiden’s Hair: A Melodrama**

Maud Flynn is known at the orphanage for her impertinence, so when the charming Miss Hyacinth and her sister choose Maud to take home with them, the girl is as baffled as anyone. It seems the sisters need Maud to help stage elaborate séances for bereaved, wealthy patrons. As Maud is drawn deeper into the deception, playing her role as a “secret child,” she is torn between her need to please and her growing conscience -- until a shocking betrayal makes clear just how heartless her so-called guardians are. Filled with tantalizing details of turn-of-the-century spiritualism and page-turning suspense, this lively historical novel features a winning heroine whom readers will not soon forget. (candlewick.com)

**Schlitz, Laura Amy, Splendors and Glooms**

The master puppeteer, Gaspare Grisini, is so expert at manipulating his stringed puppets that they appear alive. Clara Wintermute, the only child of a wealthy doctor, is spellbound by Grisini’s act and invites him to
entertain at her birthday party. Seeing his chance to make a fortune, Grisini accepts and makes a splendidly gaudy entrance with caravan, puppets, and his two orphaned assistants. Lizzie Rose and Parsefall are dazzled by the Winternute home. Clara seems to have everything they lack — adoring parents, warmth, and plenty to eat. In fact, Clara’s life is shadowed by grief, guilt, and secrets. When Clara vanishes that night, suspicion of kidnapping falls upon the puppeteer and, by association, Lizzie Rose and Parsefall. As they seek to puzzle out Clara’s whereabouts, Lizzie and Parse uncover Grisini’s criminal past and wake up to his evil intentions. Fleeing London, they find themselves caught in a trap set by Grisini’s ancient rival, a witch with a deadly inheritance to shed before it’s too late. (candlewick.com)

**Schmidt, Gary D., The Wednesday Wars**

Holling Hoodhood, a seventh-grader at Camillo Junior High, must spend Wednesday afternoons with his teacher, Mrs. Baker, while the rest of the class has religious instruction. Mrs. Baker doesn’t like Holling—he’s sure of it. Why else would she make him read the plays of William Shakespeare outside class? But everyone has bigger things to worry about, like Vietnam. As fate sneaks up on him again and again, Holling finds Motivation—the Big M—in the most unexpected places and musters up the courage to embrace his destiny, in spite of himself. (hmhco.com)

**Selznick, Brian, Wonderstruck**

Ben and Rose secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother's room and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing. Set fifty years apart, these two independent stories — Ben’s told in words, Rose’s in pictures — weave back and forth with mesmerizing symmetry. How they unfold and ultimately intertwine will surprise you, challenge you, and leave you breathless with wonder. Rich, complex, affecting, and beautiful — with over 460 pages of original artwork — Wonderstruck is a stunning achievement from a uniquely gifted artist and visionary. (scholastic.com) This book has its own website at
This book is not a graphic novel, but a significant part of it is told in pictures.

**Smith Jr., Charles R., Winning Words: Sports Stories and Photographs**

Brian can’t get a hit at bat until Coach reminds him to turn off his brain and get into the zone. Gillian loses her nerve on the high beam after hearing the crunch of another gymnast’s fall, until the girls cheer her on, and she handsprings away from the sound in her head. From saving a disastrous football season to sharing the glory on the girls’ soccer field, from a solo punch in karate to thrilling teamwork on the basketball court, these riveting stories and inspirational quotes capture a striving for personal best — and the exhilaration of mastering your fears. (books.google.com)

**Sorensen, Virginia, Miracles on Maple Hill**

Marly’s father came back from the war a different man. Something inside him seems as cold and dead as the winter world outside. But when the family moves to Grandma’s old house on Maple Hill, miracles begin to happen. The sap in the trees begins to rise, the leaves begin to turn, and Marly’s father starts to bloom again, like the world around them. (harcourtbooks.com)

**Spinelli, Jerry, Loser**

Just like other kids, Zinkoff rides his bike, hopes for snow days, and wants to be like his dad when he grows up. But Zinkoff also raises his hand with all the wrong answers, trips over his own feet, and falls down with laughter over a word like "Jabip." Other kids have their own word to describe him, but Zinkoff is too busy to hear it. He doesn’t know he’s not like everyone else. And one winter night, Zinkoff’s differences show that any name can someday become "hero." (harpercollins.com)

**Spinelli, Jerry, Wringer**

Palmer LaRue is running out of birthdays. For as long as he can remember, he’s dreaded the day he turns ten - - the day he’ll take his place beside all the other ten-year-old boys in town, the day he’ll be a wringer. But Palmer doesn’t want to be a wringer. It’s one of the first things he learned about himself and it’s one of the biggest things he has to hide. In Palmer’s town being a
wring is an honor, a tradition passed down from father to son. Palmer can’t stop himself from being a wringer just like he can’t stop himself from growing one year older, just like he can’t stand up to a whole town -- right? (harpercollins.com)

Springstubb, Tricia, What Happened on Fox Street
Mo lives on Fox Street with her dad and little sister, the Wild Child. Their house is in the middle of the block—right where a heart would be, if the street were a person. Fox Street has everything: a piano player, a fix-it man, the city’s best burrito makers, a woman who cuts Mo’s hair just right, not to mention a certain boy who wants to teach her how to skateboard. There’s even a mean, spooky old lady, if ringing doorbells and running away, or leaving dead mice in mailboxes, is your idea of fun. Summers are Mo’s favorite time, because her best friend, Mercedes, comes to stay. Most important, though, Fox Street is where all Mo’s memories of her mother live. The idea of anything changing on Fox Street is unimaginable—until it isn’t. This is the story of one unforgettable summer—a summer of alarming letters, mysterious errands, and surprising revelations—and how a tuft of bright red fur gives Mo the courage she needs. (harpercollins.com)

Antoine, Sara St., Three Bird Summer
For as long as he can remember, Adam and his parents have spent their summers at his grandmother’s rustic cabin on Three Bird Lake. But this year will be different. There will be no rowdy cousins running around tormenting Adam. There will be no Uncle John or Aunt Jean. And there’ll be no Dad to fight with Mom. This year, the lake will belong just to Adam. But then Adam meets Alice, the girl next door, who seems to want to become friends. Alice looks just like the aloof, popular girls back home—what could he and she possibly have in common? Turns out, Alice isn’t like the girls back home. She’s frank, funny, and eager for adventure. And when Adam’s grandma starts to leave strange notes in his room—notes that hint at a hidden treasure somewhere at the lake and a love from long ago—Alice is the one person he can rely on to help solve the mysteries of Three Bird Lake. (candlewick.com)
Stead, Rebecca, *Liar & Spy*

Seventh grader Georges moves into a Brooklyn apartment building and meets Safer, a twelve-year-old self-appointed spy. Georges becomes Safer’s first spy recruit. His assignment? Tracking the mysterious Mr. X, who lives in the apartment upstairs. But as Safer becomes more demanding, Georges starts to wonder: what is a lie, and what is a game? How far is too far to go for your only friend?  (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Stone, Phoebe, *The Romeo and Juliet Code*

Felicity’s glamorous parents don’t tell her anything when they drop her off at the Bathburn house in Maine. They don’t tell her why Uncle Gideon acts so strangely. They don’t tell her why Derek, the only other kid in the house, refuses to come out of his room. Worst of all, Felicity’s parents don’t tell her where they are going, and won’t say when they’ll return. And then the letters start coming, in slim blue Air Mail envelopes. Felicity is sure they’re from her parents, but if so, why are they in code? Will Felicity discover just what the Bathburns are hiding? Can one person heal an entire family -- all while in the throes of her first big crush? It’s a tall order for a small girl, but Felicity is determined to crack the Romeo and Juliet code. (arthurlevinebooks.com)

Tarshis, Lauren, *Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree*

Emma-Jean Lazarus is the smartest and strangest girl at William Gladstone Middle School. Her classmates don’t understand her, but that’s okay because Emma-Jean doesn’t quite get them either. But one afternoon, all that changes when she sees Colleen Pomerantz crying in the girl’s room. It is through Colleen that Emma-Jean gets a glimpse into what it is really like to be a seventh grader. And what she finds will send her tumbling out of a tree and questioning why she ever got involved in the first place. (us.penguingroup.com)

Telgemeier, Raina, *Smile*

Raina just wants to be a normal sixth grader. But one night after Girl Scouts she trips and falls, severely injuring her two front teeth, and what follows is a long and frustrating journey with on-again, off-again braces, surgery, embarrassing headgear, and even a retainer with fake teeth attached. And on top of all...
that, there's still more to deal with: a major earthquake, boy confusion, and friends who turn out to be not so friendly. (scholastic.com) (This is a graphic novel.) The sequel to this book is Sisters. This author also writes for more mature readers; discretion is advised.

**Thor, Annika, A Faraway Island**

It’s the summer of 1939. Two Jewish sisters from Vienna—12-year-old Stephie Steiner and seven-year-old Nellie—are sent to Sweden to escape the Nazis. They expect to stay there six months, until their parents can flee to Amsterdam; then all four will go to America. But as the world war intensifies, the girls remain, each with her own host family, on a rugged island off the western coast of Sweden. Nellie quickly settles in to her new surroundings. Not so for Stephie, who finds it hard to adapt; she feels stranded at the end of the world, with a foster mother who’s as unforgiving as the island itself. It’s no wonder Stephie doesn’t let on that the most popular girl at school becomes her bitter enemy, or that she endures the wounding slights of certain villagers. Her main worry, though, is her parents—and whether she will ever see them again. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Trueman, Terry, Hurricane: A Novel**

outside, the wind is howling. it is a monster shrieking to get inside. outside, the rain is a solid wall of water. everything is dark. everything is destroyed. everything is gone.... Everything except for the desperate courage of those who survive that terrifying night. After hours of cowering in the dark with no lights, no warmth, and the terrible noises of the rain and wind pounding on the walls, José walks out his front door and steps into a nightmare. But his nightmare has only begun as he and the few who are left in his small village start to pull their lives back together. Based on Hurricane Mitch’s devastation of Honduras in 1998, Terry Trueman’s powerful story is about a young boy’s fear and courage in the face of a force of nature too huge to even imagine. (books.google.com)

**Tunis, John R., The Kid from Tomkinsville**

As the newest addition to the Brooklyn Dodgers, young Roy Tucker's pitching helps pull the team out of a slump; but, when a freak accident ends his career
as a pitcher, he must try to find another place for himself on the team. (scholastic.com)

Turnage, Sheila, *Three Times Lucky*
This is the story of quirky characters in a tiny town with a mystery. The main character is Moses LoBeau, who is determined to save her makeshift family before any of them get blamed for a murder. There is a ton of humor in this book. Mo is a bit like Ramona and a bit like Clementine and a bit like Anne Shirley, and a bit like Opal from Because of Winn-Dixie. In fact, this book reminded me a lot of that book, but funnier. There is a sequel, Ghosts of Tupelo Landing, which I also enjoyed very much. (Ms. Bock)

Urban, Linda, *A Crooked Kind of Perfect*
If you’re looking for a quick read, try a book by Linda Urban. 10-Year-old Zoe has decided that she wants to be a piano-playing superstar. Her parents agree to let her take lessons, but when her father goes out to buy her a piano, he ends up getting an organ. An organ is not the same as a piano. Plus, the weird boy from school is hanging around too much, and her best friend isn’t hanging out at all. This is a wonderful story of how Zoe gets it all (mostly) figured out. I love all of Linda Urban’s books, but this was her first and my favorite. (Ms. Bock)

Vawter, Vince, *Paperboy*
Little Man throws the meanest fastball in town. But talking is a whole different ball game. He can barely say a word without stuttering—not even his own name. So when he takes over his best friend’s paper route for the month of July, he’s not exactly looking forward to interacting with the customers. But it’s the neighborhood junkman, a bully and thief, who stirs up real trouble in Little Man’s life. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Watkins, Yoko Kawashima, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*
In the final days of World War II, Koreans were determined to take back control of their country from the Japanese and end the suffering caused by the Japanese occupation. As an eleven-year-old girl living with her Japanese family in northern Korea, Yoko is
suddenly fleeing for her life with her mother and older sister, Ko, trying to escape to Japan, a country Yoko hardly knows. Their journey is terrifying—and remarkable. It's a true story of courage and survival that highlights the plight of individual people in wartime. In the midst of suffering, acts of kindness, as exemplified by a family of Koreans who risk their own lives to help Yoko's brother, are inspiring reminders of the strength and resilience of the human spirit. (harpercollins.com)

Wiles, Deborah, Countdown
It's 1962, and it seems everyone is living in fear. Eleven-year-old Franny Chapman lives with her family in Washington, D.C., and can feel the fear of the nation in the days surrounding the Cuban Missile Crisis. Amid the pervading threat of nuclear war, Franny must face the tension between herself and her younger brother, figure out where she fits in with her family, and look beyond outward appearances. For Franny, as for all Americans, it's going to be a life-changing week. (scholastic.com) This book has been called a "documentary novel" because it uses real photographs and pictures of artifacts from the 1960s to help tell the story. You can find out more about this book, how it was made, and a links to all the songs mentioned in the story at deborahwiles.com/site/resources-for-educators/the-sixties-trilogy.

Wiles, Deborah, Each Little Bird That Sings
Ten-year-old Comfort Snowberger has attended 247 funerals--her family owns the local funeral home, after all. And even though Great-uncle Edisto keeled over with a heart attack and Great-great-aunt Florentine dropped dead--just like that--six months later, Comfort knows how to deal with loss, or so she thinks. She's more concerned with avoiding her crazy cousin Peach and trying to figure out why her best friend, Declaration, suddenly won't talk to her. But life is full of surprises. And the biggest one of all is learning what it takes to handle them. (hmhco.com)

Williams-Garcia, Rita, One Crazy Summer
Eleven-year-old Delphine is like a mother to her two younger sisters, Vonetta and Fern. She's had to be, ever since their mother, Cecile, left them seven years ago for a radical new life in California. When they arrive from Brooklyn to spend the summer with her, Cecile is nothing like they imagined. While the girls
hope to go to Disneyland and meet Tinker Bell, their mother sends them to a day camp run by the Black Panthers. Unexpectedly, Delphine, Vonetta, and Fern learn much about their family, their country, and themselves during one truly crazy summer. (harpercollins.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

**Wolff, Virginia Euwer, Bat 6**

Bat 6. That’s the softball game played every year between the sixth-grade girls of Barlow and Bear Creek Ridge. All the girls — Beautiful Hair Hallie, Manzanita, the twins Lola and Lila, Tootie, Shadéan — have been waiting for their turn at Bat 6 since they could first toss a ball. This time there’s a newcomer on each team: Aki, at first base for the Ridgers, who just returned with her family from a place she’s too embarrassed to talk about. And Shazam, center field for Barlow, who’s been shunted around by her mother since her father was killed on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The adults of the two towns would rather not speak about why Aki’s family had to go away. They can’t quite admit just how different Shazam is. And that is why the two girls are on a collision course that explodes catastrophically on the morning of Bat 6, the day they’ve been preparing for all their lives. Along the way, they learn that the lessons of war do not end when a peace treaty is signed. (scholastic.com)

**Woodson, Jacqueline, Brown Girl Dreaming (Newbery Honor Book)**

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each poem is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child’s soul as she searches for her place in the world. Woodson’s eloquent poetry also reflects the joy of finding her voice through writing stories, despite the fact that she struggled with reading as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. (penguin.com)

**Woodson, Jacqueline, Locomotion**

When Lonnie was seven years old, his parents died in a fire. Now he’s eleven, and he still misses them terribly. And he misses his little
sister, Lili, who was put into a different foster home because “not a lot of people want boys—not foster boys that ain’t babies.” But Lonnie hasn’t given up. His foster mother, Miss Edna, is growing on him. She’s already raised two sons and she seems to know what makes them tick. And his teacher, Ms. Marcus, is showing him ways to put his jumbled feelings on paper. Told entirely through Lonnie’s poetry, we see his heartbreak over his lost family, his thoughtful perspective on the world around him, and most of all his love for Lili and his determination to one day put at least half of their family back together. Jacqueline Woodson’s poignant story of love, loss, and hope is lyrically written and enormously accessible. (penguinrandomhouse.com) The sequel is called Peace, Locomotion.

Yee, Lisa. Stanford Wong Flunks Big-Time
Stanford Wong is having a bad summer. If he flunks his summer-school English class, he won’t pass sixth grade. If that happens, he won’t start on the A-team. If that happens, his friends will abandon him and Emily Ebers won’t like him anymore. And if that happens, his life will be over. Then his parents are fighting, his grandmother Yin-Yin hates her new nursing home, he’s being “tutored” by the world’s biggest nerdball Millicent Min, and he’s not sure his ballpoint “Emily” tattoo is ever going to wash off. (scholastic.com)

Yep, Laurence, The Dragon’s Child: A Story of Angel Island
Did you want to go to America? Pop: Sure. I didn’t have a choice. My father said I had to go. So I went. Were you sad when you left your village? Pop: Maybe a little... well, maybe a lot. Ten-year-old Gim Lew Yep knows that he must leave his home in China and travel to America with the father who is a stranger to him. Gim Lew doesn’t want to leave behind everything that he’s ever known. But he is even more scared of disappointing his father. He uses his left hand, rather than the “correct” right hand; he stutters; and most of all, he worries about not passing the strict immigration test administered at Angel Island. The Dragon’s Child is a touching portrait of a father and son and their unforgettable journey from China to the land of the Golden Mountain. It is based on actual conversations between two-time Newbery Honor author Laurence Yep and his father and on
research on his family’s immigration history by his niece, Dr. Kathleen Yep. (harpercollins.com)
Unlikely Stories

Aiken, Joan, *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase (The Wolves Chronicles)*

Wicked wolves and a grim governess threaten Bonnie and her cousin Sylvia when Bonnie’s parents leave Willoughby Chase for a sea voyage. Left in the care of the cruel Miss Slighcarp, the girls can hardly believe what is happening to their once happy home. The servants are dismissed, the furniture is sold, and Bonnie and Sylvia are sent to a prison-like orphan school. It seems as if the endless hours of drudgery will never cease. With the help of Simon the gooseboy and his flock, they escape. But how will they ever get Willoughby Chase free from the clutches of the evil Miss Slighcarp? (randomhousekids.com)

Almond, David, *Kit’s Wilderness*

The Watson family moves to Stoneygate, an old coal-mining town, to care for Kit’s recently widowed grandfather. When Kit meets John Askew, another boy whose family had both worked and died in the mines, Askew invites Kit to join him in playing a game called Death. Kit’s association with Askew takes him into the mines where the boys look to find the childhood ghosts of their long-gone ancestors. (randomhouse.com)

Almond, David, *Skelligi*

Michael was looking forward to moving into a new house. But now his baby sister is ill, his parents are frantic, and Doctor Death has come to call. Michael feels helpless. Then he steps into the crumbling garage and encounters a strange being who changes his world forever. (randomhouse.com)

Appelt, Kathi, *Keeper*

Keeper was born in the ocean, and she believes she is part mermaid. So when she accidentally sets off a series of disasters, she goes out looking for her mother—an unpredictable and uncommonly gorgeous woman who swam away when Keeper was three. Keeper heads right for the ocean, right for the sandbar where mermaids are known to gather on full
moon nights. But her boat is too small for the surf—and much too small for the storm that is brewing on the horizon. (books.simonandschuster.com)

Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*

The Seahawk looms against a darkening sky, black and sinister. Manned by an angry, motley crew at the mercy of a ruthless captain, the rat-infested ship reeks of squalor, despair ... and mutiny! It is no place for the lone passenger, thirteen-year-old Charlotte Doyle, yet for her there is no turning back. At first a trapped and powerless young girl, Charlotte dares to become the center of a daring and deadly voyage that will challenge her courage, her loyalties, and her very will to survive! Alone on the brig Seahawk with a mutinous crew and a ruthless, mad captain, thirteen-year-old Charlotte bravely survives a dangerous high-sea voyage—but not before she is wrongfully accused of murder, tried, and sentenced to hang! (harpercollins.com) This book can be a bit slow in the beginning. Don’t give up on it! (Ms. Bock)

Babbitt, Natalie, *The Eyes of the Amaryllis*

When the brig Amaryllis was swallowed in a hurricane, the captain and all the crew were swallowed, too. For thirty years the captain’s widow, Geneva Reade, has waited, certain that her husband will send her a message from the bottom of the sea. But someone else is waiting, too, and watching her, a man called Seward. Into this haunted situation comes Jenny, the widow’s granddaughter. The three of them, Gran, Jenny, and Seward, are drawn into a kind of deadly game with one another and with the sea, a game that only the sea knows how to win. (us.macmillan.com)

Babbitt, Natalie, *Tuck Everlasting*

Blessed with—or doomed to—eternal life after drinking from a magic spring, the Tuck family wanders about trying to live as inconspicuously and comfortably as they can. When ten-year-old Winnie Foster stumbles on their secret, the Tucks take her home and explain why living forever at one age is less of a blessing than it might seem. Complications arise when Winnie is followed by a stranger who wants to market the spring water for a fortune. (us.macmillan.com)
Balliett, Blue, *Chasing Vermeer*
When a book of unexplainable occurrences brings Petra and Calder together, strange things start to happen: Seemingly unrelated events connect; an eccentric old woman seeks their company; an invaluable Vermeer painting disappears. Before they know it, the two find themselves at the center of an international art scandal, where no one is spared from suspicion. As Petra and Calder are drawn clue by clue into a mysterious labyrinth, they must draw on their powers of intuition, their problem solving skills, and their knowledge of Vermeer. Can they decipher a crime that has stumped even the FBI? (scholastic.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

Bell, Michael D., *The Red Blazer Girls: The Ring of Rocamadour*
It all began with The Scream. And ended with . . . well, if we told you that, it wouldn’t be a mystery! But in between The Scream and The Very Surprising Ending, three friends find themselves on a scavenger hunt set up for a girl they never met, in search of a legendary ring reputed to grant wishes. Are these sleuths in school uniforms modern-day equivalents of Nancy, Harriet, or Scooby? Not really, they’re just three nice girls who decide to help out a weird lady, and end up hiding under tables, tackling word puzzles and geometry equations, and searching rather moldy storage rooms for “the stuff that dreams are made of” (that’s from an old detective movie). Oh, and there’s A Boy, who complicates things. As boys often do. (randomhouse.com)

Broach, Elise, *Shakespeare’s Secret*
Starting sixth grade at a new school is never easy, especially when your name is Hero. Named after a character in a Shakespeare play, Hero isn’t at all interested in this literary connection. But when she’s told by an eccentric neighbor that there might be a million dollar diamond hidden in her new house and that it could reveal something about Shakespeare’s true identity, Hero is determined to live up to her name and uncover the mystery. (us.macmillan.com)

Cammuso, Frank, *Knights of the Lunch Table*
Artie King just wants to ease into life at Camelot Middle School. He’s got new lunch buddies, Percy and Wayne, and his science
teacher, Mr. Merlyn, is pretty cool. But then there's scary Principal Dager and big bad Joe and The Horde, a bunch of brawny bullies who rule the school. The real trouble starts when Artie opens a funky old locker that no one, not even Joe, has ever been able to open — and finds it full of mysterious, but useful stuff. Percy and Wayne are high-fiving, Joe is fuming, and the next think you know a challenge is laid down: a do-or-die dodgeball game — The Horde Vs. The Knights of the Lunch Table. Losers get creamed! (scholastic.com) (This is a graphic novel, and it is the first book in the Dodgeball Chronicles series.)

**Cassedy, Sylvia, *Behind the Attic Wall***

They were watching...and waiting... At twelve, Maggie had been thrown out of more boarding schools than she cared to remember. "Impossible to handle," they said -- nasty, mean, disobedient, rebellious, thieving -- anything they could say to explain why she must be removed from the school. Maggie was thin and pale, with shabby clothes and stringy hair, when she arrived at her new home. "It was a mistake to bring her here," said Maggie's great-aunts, whose huge stone house looked like another boarding school -- or a prison. But they took her in anyway. After all, aside from Uncle Morris, they were Maggie's only living relatives. But from behind the closet door in the great and gloomy house, Maggie hears the faint whisperings, the beckoning voices. And in the forbidding house of her ancestors, Maggie finds magic...the kind that lets her, for the first time, love and be loved. (books.google.com)

**Cooper, Susan, *King of Shadows***

Only in the world of the theater can Nat Field find an escape from the tragedies that have shadowed his young life. So he is thrilled when he is chosen to join an American drama troupe traveling to London to perform A Midsummer Night's Dream in a new replica of the famous Globe theater. Shortly after arriving in England, Nat goes to bed ill and awakens transported back in time four hundred years -- to another London, and another production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Amid the bustle and excitement of an Elizabethan theatrical production, Nat finds the warm, nurturing father figure missing from his life -- in none other than William Shakespeare himself. Does Nat have to remain
trapped in the past forever, or give up the friendship he's so longed for in his own time? (books.simonandschuster.com)

Dahl, Roald, Books
Roald Dahl is one of the most famous children’s authors of all time. His stories are set in our world, but usually have some sort of magic or unexplainable events. They are always funny. Many of his stories are about kids or small creatures standing up to greedy adults. His most famous book is probably Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. My personal favorite is Danny, the Champion of the World. You can find all of his books, plus extra goodies, at roalddahl.com. (Ms. Bock)

Doyle, Roddy, Wilderness
Gráinne stands at the airport with her fists clenched, and watches and waits. Her stepmother and half brothers are off on an adventure vacation in Finland, and Gráinne’s birth mother is visiting for the first time since she was little. Now Gráinne wonders: Will meeting this woman heal or hurt? In the icy north, the boys are having a wild time. Even as the ice stings their cheeks and the trees whip past, every minute in the wilderness is a thrill. Until their mother's sled doesn't make it back to the lodge one night. Until they realize that she's lost out in the vast, frozen north with a rogue dog, and it's up to them to rescue her. (arthuralevinebooks.com)

DuPrau, Jeanne, The City of Ember
This is book that's hard to describe because there's a lot that I don’t want to give away. Lina and Doon live in a city called Ember, designed to be totally self-sufficient and not need anything from the outside world. They have just received their assignments for the jobs they will have as adults, but the city isn’t working as well as it used to. Then they make a discovery that changes their view of the world forever. They make
a plan to save their city, but will anyone listen to them? Will it be too late? If you liked The Giver, or Among the Hidden, you should read this book. (Ms. Bock)

Farmer, Nancy, Girl Named Disaster
Nhamo is a Shona girl living in Mozambique in 1981. After the death of her mother, Nhiamo is left a virtual slave in her small African village. Upon learning that before her 12th birthday she must marry a cruel man with three other wives, Nhiamo desperately decides to run away. What was supposed to have been a short boat trip across the border into Zimbabwe, where she hoped to find her father, turns into an adventure filled with challenges and danger that lasts a year. (scholastic.com)

Farmer, Nancy, The House of the Scorpion
Matteo Alacrán was not born; he was harvested. His DNA came from El Patrón, lord of a country called Opium—a strip of poppy fields lying between the United States and what was once called Mexico. Matt’s first cell split and divided inside a petri dish. Then he was placed in the womb of a cow, where he continued the miraculous journey from embryo to fetus to baby. He is a boy now, but most consider him a monster—except for El Patrón. El Patrón loves Matt as he loves himself, because Matt is himself. As Matt struggles to understand his existence, he is threatened by a sinister cast of characters, including El Patrón’s power-hungry family, and he is surrounded by a dangerous army of bodyguards. Escape is the only chance Matt has to survive. But escape from the Alacrán Estate is no guarantee of freedom, because Matt is marked by his difference in ways he doesn’t even suspect. (simonandschuster.com) The sequel to this book is The Lord of Opium.

Fitzgerald, Laura Marx, Under the Egg
When Theodora Tenpenny spills a bottle of rubbing alcohol on her late grandfather’s painting, she discovers what seems to be an old Renaissance masterpiece underneath. That’s great news for Theo, who’s struggling to hang onto her family’s two-hundred-year-old townhouse and support her unstable mother on her grandfather’s legacy of $463. There’s just one problem: Theo’s grandfather was a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and she worries the painting...
may be stolen. With the help of some unusual new friends, Theo’s search for answers takes her all around Manhattan, and introduces her to a side of the city—and her grandfather—that she never knew. To solve the mystery, she’ll have to abandon her hard-won self-reliance and build a community, one serendipitous friendship at a time. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Funke, Cornelia, *The Thief Lord*

This is the first book by this author that was published in the United States, and it’s my favorite. Two orphaned brothers run away to Venice, Italy because their aunt wants to adopt the younger, cute one, but not the older. There, they meet a gang of kids who live in an abandoned movie theater and sell items stolen by the “Thief Lord,” a mysterious older boy. The boys’ aunt is not easily discouraged and hires a detective to find the boys. This story is told from many different perspectives, has a vivid setting, and just a hint of magic. (Ms. Bock)

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, *Running Out of Time*

Jessie lives with her family in the frontier village of Clifton, Indiana, in 1840—or so she believes. When diphtheria strikes the village and the children of Clifton start dying, Jessie’s mother reveals a shocking secret—it’s actually 1996, and they are living in a reconstructed village that serves as a tourist site. In the world outside, medicine exists that can cure the dread disease, and Jessie’s mother is sending her on a dangerous mission to bring back help. But beyond the walls of Clifton, Jessie discovers a world even more alien and threatening than she could have imagined, and soon she finds her own life in jeopardy. Can she get help before the children of Clifton, and Jessie herself, run out of time? (books.simonandschuster.com)

Hahn, Mary Downing, *All the Lovely Bad Ones*

Travis and his sister, Corey, can’t resist a good trick—so when they learn that their grandmother’s sleepy Vermont inn has a history of ghost sightings, they decide to do a little “haunting” of their own. Scaring the guests proves to be great fun, and before long, the inn is filled with tourists and ghost hunters eager for a glimpse of the supernatural. But Travis and Corey soon find out that they aren’t the only ghosts at Fox Hill Inn. Their thoughtless games have awakened something dangerous,
something that should have stayed asleep. Restless, spiteful spirits swarm the inn, while a dark and terrifying presence stalks the halls and the old oak grove on the inn’s grounds. To lay the ghosts to rest, Travis and Corey must first discover the dark history of Fox Hill and the horrors visited on its inhabitants years earlier. (hmhco.com)

If you like this book, you should definitely read others by this author. I also really liked Wait 'Till Helen Comes. (Ms. Bock)

**Hesse, Karen, *The Music of Dolphins***

They call her Mila, from the Spanish word for "miracle." Lost after a plane crash when she was small, Mila has been cared for ever since by dolphins. When she is eventually spotted on an unpopulated island off Cuba, she is an adolescent and seems hardly human to her rescuers. Mila is taken to a child study center in Boston. Eager to please, she makes rapid progress in language and social skills. With her recorder, Mila finds she can even make music like the dolphin songs she yearningly remembers. But the more Mila discovers about what it means to be human — the locked doors, the rules, the betrayals — the more she longs for her watery home and gentle dolphin family. (scholastic.com)

**Higson, Charlie, *Silverfin***

What does it take to become the greatest secret agent the world has ever known? In this thrilling prequel to the James Bond series, readers meet a thirteen-year-old schoolboy whose inquisitive mind and determination set him on a path that will one day take him all over the world, in pursuit of the most dangerous criminals known to man. When we’re first introduced to young James, he’s just started boarding school at Eton in the 1930s. His first adventure is set in the Highlands of Scotland, where James spends a holiday at a remote castle. Mysterious things start to happen -- someone has disappeared; then James discovers that the dark waters around the castle contain a sinister secret and he becomes aware that a very dangerous mind is at work. SilverFin is the story of Young Bond's first mission to thwart a deadly foe. (hyperionbooks.com)

**Hoffman, Alice, *Aquamarine***

Hailey and Claire are spending their last summer together when they discover something at the bottom of the murky pool at the Capri Beach Club. There in the depths is a mysterious and beautiful
creature with a sharp tongue and a broken heart: a mermaid named Aquamarine who has left her six sisters to search for love on land. Now, as this mythological yet very real being starts to fade in the burning August sun, a rescue is begun. On the edge of growing up, during a summer that is the hottest on record, Hailey and Claire learn that life can take an unpredictable course, that friendship is forever, and that magic can be found in the most unexpected places. (scholastic.com)

Horowitz, Anthony, Stormbreaker
They said his uncle Ian died in a car accident. Alex Rider knows that’s a lie, and the bullet holes in his uncle’s car confirm the truth. But nothing can prepare him for the news that the uncle he always thought he knew was really a spy for Britain’s top-secret intelligence agency. Enlisted to find his uncle’s killers and complete Ian’s final mission, Alex suddenly finds himself caught in a deadly game of cat and mouse, with no way out. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in the Alex Rider series. They are slightly better read in order, but you don’t really have to. I suggest you read this one first, though, because it sets up the rest of the series. (Ms. Bock)

Kibuishi, Kazu, Explorer: The Mystery Boxes
Seven clever stories answer one simple question: what’s in the box? Funny, fantastic, spooky, and suspenseful, each of these unique and beautifully illustrated short graphic works revolves around a central theme: a mysterious box and the marvels—or mayhem—inside. Artists include middle school favorites Kazu Kibuishi, Raina Telgemeier (Smile), and Dave Roman (Astronaut Academy), as well as Jason Caffoe, Stuart Livingston, Johane Matte, Rad Sechrist (all contributors to the groundbreaking comics anthology series Flight), and upcoming artist Emily Carroll. (abramsbooks.com) This is a graphic novel.

Klise, Kate, Letters from Camp
Mom and Dad, You’ve got to get us out of here! When you get this letter, COME IMMEDIATELY! -- Charlie The brother-sister pairs who arrive for the summer at Camp Happy Harmony are almost too busy fighting with each other to notice how strange
the camp really is. Not only are the campers forced to wear 
bizarre uniforms, eat gross food, and do chores all day, but the 
members of the family that runs the camp fight constantly--with 
each other. Are the campers in danger? Or--in spite of sibling 
war--do they need to stick together to solve the mystery humming 
under the surface of Camp Happy Harmony? (harpercollins.com)

**Klise, Kate, Trial by Journal**

Get ready for a trial unlike any Tyle County has ever 
seen. Sixth-grader Perry Keet is missing, and Bob White, 
his co-worker at Tyle Park Zoo, will stand trial for the 
alleged murder. But Keet's disappearance is only the 
beginning of this legal thriller. The "real" story is told by 
twelve-year-old Lily Watson, a classmate of Keet's. 
Watson was selected to White's jury because of a new 
law requiring a juvenile juror to serve if the case involves a child 
victim. Part of Watson's duty will be to listen objectively to the 
testimony of Tyleville's wealthiest citizen, Rhett Tyle. His testimony is 
expected to be the key to White's conviction. White's fate now 
rests in the hands of Watson and fellow jurors Fawn Papillon, Anna 
Conda, and other Tyleville locals, as they try to uncover the truth 
before it's too late! (books.google.com)

**Legrand, Claire, The Cavendish Home for Boys and Girls**

Victoria hates nonsense. There is no need for it when 
your life is perfect. The only smudge on her pristine life 
is her best friend Lawrence. He is a disaster—lazy and 
dreamy, shirt always untucked, obsessed with his silly 
piano. Victoria often wonders why she ever bothered 
being his friend. (Lawrence does, too.) But then 
Lawrence goes missing. And he's not the only one. 
Victoria soon discovers that The Cavendish Home for Boys and 
Girls is not what it appears to be. Kids go in but come 
out...different. Or they don't come out at all. If anyone can sort 
this out, it's Victoria—even if it means getting a little messy. 
(simonandsch 獵整 □⇒˘吊縵Ⅳ)

**Lowry, Lois, The Willoughbys**

Abandoned by their ill-humored parents to the care of 
an odious nanny, Tim, the twins, Barnaby A and 
Barnaby B, and their sister, Jane, attempt to fulfill their 
roles as good old-fashioned children. Following the 
models set in lauded tales from A Christmas Carol to
Mary Poppins, the four Willoughbys hope to attain their proscribed happy ending too, or at least a satisfyingly maudlin one. However, it is an unquestionably ruthless act that sets in motion the transformations that lead to their salvation and to happy endings for not only the four children, but their nanny, an abandoned baby, a candy magnate, and his long-lost son too. (hmhco.com)

**Mass, Wendy, Books**

Wendy Mass writes great realistic fiction. Well, it’s *almost* realistic. Her stories often have just a tiny twist of magic or impossibility. Her characters are usually girls and boys who are trying to figure out changing friendships, or find their place in a changing world. Her most famous books are probably the Willow Falls series, which starts with *The Last Present*, and which you don’t have to read in order, but you might want to. You can find out more about all of her books, and other goodies, at wendymass.com. (Ms. Bock)

**Merrill, Jean, The Pushcart War**

Do you know the history of the pushcart war? The REAL history? It’s a story of how regular people banded together and, armed with little more than their brains and good aim defeated a mighty foe. Not long ago the streets of New York City were smelly, smoggy, sooty, and loud. There were so many trucks making deliveries that it might take an hour for a car to travel a few blocks. People blamed the truck owners and the truck owners blamed the little wooden pushcarts that traveled the city selling everything from flowers to hot dogs. Behind closed doors the truck owners declared war on the pushcart peddlers. Carts were smashed from Chinatown to Chelsea. The peddlers didn’t have money or the mayor on their side, but that didn’t stop them from fighting back. They used pea shooters to blow tacks into the tires of trucks, they outwitted the police, and they marched right up to the grilles of those giant trucks and dared them to drive down their streets. Today, thanks to the ingenuity of the pushcart
peddlers, the streets belong to the people—and to the pushcarts. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**O'Dell, Scott, Island of the Blue Dolphins**

In the Pacific there is an island that looks like a big fish sunning itself in the sea. Around it, blue dolphins swim, otters play, and sea elephants and sea birds abound. Once, Indians also lived on the island. And when they left and sailed to the east, one young girl was left behind. This is the story of Karana, the Indian girl who lived alone for years on the Island of the Blue Dolphins. Year after year, she watched one season pass into another and waited for a ship to take her away. But while she waited, she kept herself alive by building a shelter, making weapons, finding food, and fighting her enemies, the wild dogs. It is not only an unusual adventure of survival, but also a tale of natural beauty and personal discovery. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Philbrick, Rodman, Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg**

With the lighthearted voice yet serious content of Mark Twain's best fiction, master storyteller Rodman Philbrick takes readers on a colorful journey as young Homer P. Figg, an orphan, sets off to follow his only brother into the thick of the Civil War. Through a series of fascinating events, Homer's older brother has been illegally sold to the Union army. It is up to Homer to find him and save him. Along the way, he encounters many strange but real people of that era who will engage and educate young readers about our nation's past in one of the most decisive moments of American history. In Homer's inspiring fight to track down his brother, Philbrick brings us another groundbreaking novel that is both entertaining and profound. (scholastic.com)

**Pinkwater, Daniel, 5 Novels**

If you liked Captain Underpants when you were younger, you should get to know Daniel Pinkwater's books. They are hilarious adventures with all sorts of strange characters. He frequently writes about people who don't feel like they fit in with the rest of the world. This particular book contains five of his most famous novels: Alan Mendelsohn, the Boy from Mars; Slaves of Spiegel; The Last Guru; Young Adult Novel; The Snarkout Boys and the Avocado of Death. (Ms. Bock)
Pinkwater, Daniel Manus, *Lizard Music*

Things Victor loves: pizza with anchovies, grape soda, B movies aired at midnight, the evening news. And with his parents off at a resort and his older sister shirking her babysitting duties, Victor has plenty of time to indulge himself and to try a few things he’s been curious about. Exploring the nearby city of Hogboro, he runs into a curious character known as the Chicken Man (a reference to his companion, an intelligent hen named Claudia who lives under his hat). The Chicken Man speaks brilliant nonsense, but he seems to be hip to the lizard musicians (real lizards, not men in lizard suits) who’ve begun appearing on Victor’s television after the broadcast of the late-late movie. Are the lizards from outer space? From “other space”? Together Victor and the Chicken Man, guided by the able Claudia, journey to the lizards’ floating island, a strange and fantastic place that operates with an inspired logic of its own. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Potter, Ellen, *Olivia Kidney*

Olivia Kidney has just moved to another new apartment building, and Olivia’s the new kid in school, again. Olivia thinks she’s fed up with new places... until she gets a look at her building! Sure, it looks normal from the outside, but inside things are crazy. There are talking lizards crawling everywhere. An exiled princess haunts the hallways, and Olivia finds one apartment made entirely of glass! She’s meeting fantastical characters and seeing wondrous sights that make Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland seem tame. But among all the ghosts and pirates and princesses, can Olivia find a friend? (penguinrandomhouse.com)

There is a sequel to this book called Olivia Kidney Stops for No One, which was originally published as Olivia Kidney and the Exit Academy. I have no idea why they changed the title. There are two more books in the series after that. They are best read in order.

Pullman, Philip, *The Ruby in the Smoke*

“Beware the seven blessings . . .” When she first utters these words, 16-year-old Sally Lockhart doesn’t know their meaning. But when an employee of her late father hears them, he dies of fear. Thus begins Sally’s terrifying journey into the seamy underworld of Victorian London, in search of clues to her father’s mysterious death. (penguinrandomhouse.com)
Raskin, Ellen, *The Westing Game*

A bizarre chain of events begins when sixteen unlikely people gather for the reading of Samuel W. Westing’s will. And though no one knows why the eccentric, game-loving millionaire has chosen a virtual stranger—and a possible murderer—to inherit his vast fortune, on things for sure: Sam Westing may be dead…but that won’t stop him from playing one last game! (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is possibly the best mystery you will ever read. There are a lot of characters to keep track of; use post-its or index cards if you need to, but don’t give up! (Ms. Bock)

Rodgers, Mary, *Freaky Friday*

Annabel Andrews is tired of her mother telling her on what to do. She’s tired of being told to do her homework, clean up her room, and be nice to her little brother, Ape Face. If she were an adult, she could do anything she wanted, like watch TV all day and eat marshmallows for breakfast. One Friday morning, Annabel's wish comes true when she wakes up and realizes she’s turned into her mother! But after a major washing machine mishap, losing Ape Face, and a terrible teacher conference, Annabel starts to suspect that being an adult is not as much fun as it seems. One thing’s for certain -- this is one freaky Friday she'll never forget! (harpercollins.com)

Rundell, Katherine, *Rooftoppers*

Everyone thinks that Sophie is an orphan. True, there were no other recorded female survivors from the shipwreck that left baby Sophie floating in the English Channel in a cello case, but Sophie remembers seeing her mother wave for help. Her guardian tells her it is almost impossible that her mother is still alive—but “almost impossible” means “still possible.” And you should never ignore a possible. So when the Welfare Agency writes to her guardian, threatening to send Sophie to an orphanage, they takes matters into their own hands and flee to Paris to look for Sophie’s mother, starting with the only clue they have—the address of the cello maker. Evading the French authorities, she meets Matteo and his network of rooftoppers—urchins who live in the hidden spaces above the city. Together they scour the city in a search for Sophie’s mother—but can they find her before Sophie
is caught and sent back to London? Or, more importantly, before she loses hope? (books.simonandschuster.com)

**Ruth, Greg, *The Lost Boy***

Some mysteries are too dangerous to leave alone... Nate’s not happy about his family moving to a new house in a new town. After all, nobody asked him if he wanted to move in the first place. But when he discovers a tape recorder and note addressed to him under the floorboards of his bedroom, Nate is thrust into a dark mystery about a boy who went missing many, many years ago. Now, as strange happenings and weird creatures begin to track Nate, he must partner with Tabitha, a local girl, to find out what they want with him. But time is running out, for a powerful force is gathering strength in the woods at the edge of town, and before long Nate and Tabitha will be forced to confront a terrifying foe, and uncover the truth about the Lost Boy. (scholastic.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

**Ryan, Pam Munoz, *Echo***

Lost and alone in the forbidden Black Forest, Otto meets three mysterious sisters and suddenly finds himself entwined in a puzzling quest involving a prophecy, a promise, and a harmonica. Decades later, Friedrich in Germany, Mike in Pennsylvania, and Ivy in California each become interwoven when the very same harmonica lands in their lives, binding them by an invisible thread of destiny. All the children face daunting challenges: rescuing a father, protecting a brother, holding a family together. How their suspenseful solo stories converge in an orchestral crescendo will resound in your heart long after the last note has been struck. (scholastic.com)

**Rylant, Cynthia, *The Islander***

When Daniel’s parents die, he goes to live with his grandfather on a remote gray island off British Columbia. Together they live a lonely life, hardly talking to anyone. But the loneliness lifts from Daniel when he meets a mermaid. He returns to the shore hoping to find her again, but instead sees a sea otter, which tosses him a shell. Daniel discovers a very old key inside the shell and is certain it’s a gift from the mermaid. What will this magical key unlock? (scholastic.com)
Sachar, Louis, *Holes*  
This winner of the Newbery Medal and the National Book Award features Stanley Yelnats, a kid who is under a curse. A curse that began with his no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather and has since followed generations of Yelnats. Now Stanley has been unjustly sent to a boys' detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the warden makes the boys "build character" by spending all day, every day, digging holes five feet wide and five feet deep. It doesn't take long for Stanley to realize there's more than character improvement going on at Camp Green Lake: the warden is looking for something. Stanley tries to dig up the truth in this inventive and darkly humorous tale of crime and punishment — and redemption. (scholastic.com)

Schooley, Bob, *Liar of Kudzu*  
Everybody calls me Liar. They don't mean no harm by it, it's just a plain fact that I am the finest truth bender in all of Dixon County. And not little weeny white lies. Big fat whopper ones that make people forget the question they asked in the first place. When a new girl, Justine, moves to town, Pete Larson -- better known as Liar -- is smitten. He gets his chance to impress her after a strange spacecraft crashes in the woods. Along with the class science geek, Bobby Ray Dobbs, they discover that the crashed UFO holds an amazing key to the future. But who's going to believe a kid named Liar? (books.simonandschuster.com)

Scieszka, Jon, *Guys Write for Guys Read*  
This fast-paced, high-energy collection of short works features today's most popular writers and illustrators writing about what it means to be a guy. Contributors include Chris Crutcher, Stephen King, Matt Groening, Daniel Pinkwater, Neil Gaiman, and many more. (penguinrandomhouse.com) You can find out more about the Guys Read movement at guysread.com.

Snyder, Zilpha Keatley, *The Egypt Game*  
The first time Melanie Ross meets April Hall, she's not sure they'll have anything in common. But she soon discovers that they both love anything to do with ancient Egypt. When they stumble upon a deserted storage yard behind the A-Z Antiques and Curio Shop,
Melanie and April decide it's the perfect spot for Egypt Game. Before long there are six Egyptians instead of two. After school and on weekends they all meet to wear costumes, hold ceremonies, and work on their secret code. Everyone thinks it's just a game, until strange things begin happening to the players. Has the Egypt Game gone too far? (scholastic.com)

**Spinelli, Jerry, Maniac Magee**
Jeffrey Lionel "Maniac" Magee might have lived a normal life if a freak accident hadn't made him an orphan. After living with his unhappy and uptight aunt and uncle for eight years, he decides to run--and not just run away, but run. This is where the myth of Maniac Magee begins, as he changes the lives of a racially divided small town with his amazing and legendary feats. (hachettebookgroup.com)

**Stead, Rebecca, When You Reach Me**
By sixth grade, Miranda and her best friend, Sal, know how to navigate their New York City neighborhood. They know where it’s safe to go, and they know who to avoid. Like the crazy guy on the corner. But things start to unravel. Sal gets punched by a kid on the street for what seems like no reason, and he shuts Miranda out of his life. The apartment key that Miranda’s mom keeps hidden for emergencies is stolen. And then a mysterious note arrives, scrawled on a tiny slip of paper. The notes keep coming, and Miranda slowly realizes that whoever is leaving them knows things no one should know. Each message brings her closer to believing that only she can prevent a tragic death. Until the final note makes her think she’s too late. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Stewart, Trenton Lee, The Mysterious Benedict Society**
Dozens of children respond to this peculiar ad in the newspaper and are then put through a series of mind-bending tests, which readers take along with them. Only four children—two boys and two girls—succeed. Their challenge: to go on a secret mission that only the most intelligent and inventive children could complete. To accomplish it they will have to go undercover at the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, where the only rule is that there are no rules. But what they’ll find in the hidden underground tunnels of the school is more than your
average school supplies. So, if you’re gifted, creative, or happen to know Morse Code, they could probably use your help. (hachettebookgroup.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

**Update, Eleanor, Montmorency: Thief, Liar, Gentleman**

When a petty thief falls through a glass roof while fleeing from the police, it should have been the death of him. Instead, it marks the beginning of a whole new life. Soon he has become the most successful -- and elusive -- burglar in Victorian London, plotting daring raids and using London's new sewer system to escape. He adopts a dual existence to fit his new lifestyle, taking on the roles of a respectable, wealthy gentleman named Montmorency and his corrupt servant, Scarper. (books.google.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

**Varon, Sara, Robot Dreams**

This moving, charming graphic novel about a dog and a robot shows us in poignant detail how powerful and fragile relationships are. After a Labor Day jaunt to the beach leaves the robot rusted, immobilized in the sand, the dog must return alone to the life they shared. But the memory of their friendship lingers, and as the seasons pass, the dog tries to fill the emotional void left by the loss of his closest friend, making and losing a series of friends, from a melting snowman to epicurean anteaters. But for the robot, lying rusting on the beach, the only relief from loneliness is in dreams. (us.macmillan.com)

**Velmans, Hester, Isabel of the Whales**

Eleven-year-old Isabel is a “plain old” girl living in Provincetown, Massachusetts, who believes that she is destined to accomplish something special. She is destined to live among the whales long enough to learn their ways, and teach them about the human world. Living among her pod is fun, at first, but Isabel has an important mission. She will change the whales' future forever, and learn a lot about herself in the process. (penguinrandomhouse.com)
Fantasy Stories

Alexander, Lloyd, *The Book of Three*
Since *The Book of Three* was first published in 1964, young readers have been enthralled by the adventures of Taran the Assistant Pig-Keeper and his quest to become a hero. Taran is joined by an engaging cast of characters that includes Eilonwy, the strong-willed and sharp-tongued princess; Fflewddur Fflam, the hyperbole-prone bard; the ever-faithful Gurgi; and the curmudgeonly Doli—all of whom have become involved in an epic struggle between good and evil that shapes the fate of the legendary land of Prydain. (us.macmillan.com) This is the first book in the Chronicles of Prydain. They are best read in order.

Alexander, Lloyd, *Time Cat*
Gareth's definitely no ordinary cat. For one thing, he can talk. For another, he's got the power to travel through time. And the instant he tells this to Jason, the two of them are in ancient Egypt, on the first of nine amazing adventures that Jason will never forget. (us.penguingroup.com)

Allison, Jennifer, *Gilda Joyce, Psychic Investigator*
Ever since her father died, quirky Gilda Joyce has been working hard to sharpen her psychic skills. She's determined to communicate with spirits from the Other Side and become a crack investigator of spooky, twisted mysteries. After wrangling an invitation to visit relatives in San Francisco, Gilda discovers that her dreary, tight-lipped uncle and his strange, delicate daughter need her help to uncover the terrible family secret that has a tortured ghost stalking their home. From poignant to hair-raising and hilarious, this is a behind-the-scenes, tell-all account of the very first case in the illustrious career of Gilda Joyce, Psychic Investigator. This is the first book in the Gilda Joyce series. You can read them in any order. (us.penguingroup.com)

Barnhill, Kelly, *The Witch's Boy*
When Ned and his identical twin brother tumble from their raft into a raging, bewitched river, only Ned survives. Villagers are convinced the wrong boy lived. Sure enough, Ned grows up weak
and slow, and stays as much as possible within the safe boundaries of his family’s cottage and yard. But when a Bandit King comes to steal the magic that Ned’s mother, a witch, is meant to protect, it’s Ned who safeguards the magic and summons the strength to protect his family and community. In the meantime, in another kingdom across the forest that borders Ned’s village lives Áine, the resourceful and pragmatic daughter of the Bandit King. She is haunted by her mother’s last words to her: “The wrong boy will save your life and you will save his.” But when Áine and Ned’s paths cross, can they trust each other long enough to make their way through the treacherous woods and stop the war about to boil over? (algonquinyoungreaders.com)

Barron, T. A., *The Lost Years of Merlin*

Spat out by the sea, the boy lay on the rocks, as still as death. Even if he survived the day, he had no home. No memory. And no name. So begins the tale of the strange young boy, who having washed up on the shores of ancient Wales, is determined to find his real home and his true name. One day he will become the greatest wizard of all time, but he knows nothing of this now. At the knee of the mysterious Branwen, who claims to be his mother, the boy learns lore of the Celts, Druids, and people even more ancient. Yet the secret of his identity seems always to escape him. To discover the truth, and the secret of his own powers, he runs away, voyaging to the mist-shrouded side of Fincayra, an enchanted land between earth and sky that is being destroyed by blight. It is there he discovers that the fate of this land and his quest are strangely entwined. Combining all the passion, power, and spiritual depth that are T. A. Barron’s hallmarks, this book adds a thrilling new dimension to the legend of Merlin. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.

Barrows, Annie, *The Magic Half*

Miri is the non-twin child in a family with two sets of them—older brothers and younger sisters. The family has just moved to an old farmhouse in a new town, where the only good thing seems to be Miri’s ten-sided attic bedroom. But when Miri gets sent to her room after accidentally bashing her big brother on the head with a shovel, she finds herself in the same room . . . only
not quite. Without meaning to, she has found a way to travel back in time to 1935 where she discovers Molly, a girl her own age very much in need of a loving family. A highly satisfying classic-in-the-making full of spine-tingling moments, this is a delightful time-travel novel for the whole family. (bloomsbury.com)

**Baum, L. Frank, The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**

Follow the adventures of young Dorothy Gale and her dog, Toto, as their Kansas house is swept away by a cyclone and they find themselves in a strange land called Oz. Here she meets the Munchkins and joins the Scarecrow, Tin Woodman, and the Cowardly Lion on an unforgettable journey to the Emerald City, where lives the all-powered Wizard of Oz. (scholastic.com) You may think you know this story, but the book is very different from the movie. Give it a try! This is the first book in the series.

**Bellairs, John, The Letter, the Witch, and the Ring**

Rose Rita wishes she could go to camp like her best friend, Lewis. She’s sure that boys get to have all the fun—until Mrs. Zimmermann offers her an adventure of her own. Mrs. Zimmermann’s cousin Oley has left her his farm, as well as a ring that he thinks is magic. But when the two arrive at the deserted farm, the ring has mysteriously vanished. What power does it have? And will the person who took it use the ring to do evil? (penguinrandomhouse.com) All of John Bellairs’s books are recommended. You can read them in any order.

**Billingsley, Franny, The Folk Keeper**

She doesn’t really know who she is or what she wants. Corinna is a Folk Keeper. Her job is to keep the mysterious Folk who live beneath the ground at bay. But Corinna has a secret that even she doesn’t fully comprehend, until she agrees to serve as Folk Keeper at Marblehaugh Park, a wealthy family’s seaside manor. There her hidden powers burst into full force, and Corinna’s life changes forever... (books.simonandschuster.com)

**Bruchac, James, The Girl Who Helped Thunder and Other Native American Folktales**

Engaging, inspirational, and above all entertaining, these legends come from Native American peoples across the U.S. Richly
illustrated with original art, they capture a wide range of belief systems and wisdom from the Cherokee, Cheyenne, Hopi, Lenape, Maidu, Seminole, Seneca, and other tribes. The beautifully retold tales, all with informative introductions, range from creation myths to animal fables to stirring accounts of bravery and sacrifice. Find out how stories first came to be, and how the People came to the upper world. Meet Rabbit, the clever and irresistible Creek trickster. See how the buffalo saved the Lakota people, and why the Pawnee continue to do the Bear Dance to this very day. Stefano Vitale’s art showcases a stunning array of animal figures, masks, totems, and Navajo-style rug patterns, all done in nature’s palette of brilliant turquoises, earth browns, shimmering sun-yellow, vivid fire-orange, and the deep blues of a dark night. (us.macmillan.com)

**Bruchac, Joseph, Skeleton Man**

Ever since the morning Molly woke up to find that her parents had vanished, her life has become filled with terrible questions. Where have her parents gone? Who is this spooky old man who’s taken her to live with him, claiming to be her great-uncle? Why does he never eat, and why does he lock her in her room at night? What are her dreams of the Skeleton Man trying to tell her? There’s one thing Molly does know. She needs to find some answers before it’s too late. (harpercollins.com)

**Camper, Cathy, Lowriders in Space**

Lupe Impala, El Chavo Flapjack, and Elirio Malaria love working with cars. You name it, they can fix it. But the team’s favorite cars of all are lowriders—cars that hip and hop, dip and drop, go low and slow, bajito y suavecito. The stars align when a contest for the best car around offers a prize of a trunkful of cash—just what the team needs to open their own shop! ¡Ay chihuahua! What will it take to transform a junker into the best car in the universe? Striking, unparalleled art from debut illustrator Raul the Third recalls ballpoint-pen-and-Sharpie desk-drawn doodles, while the story is sketched with Spanish, inked with science facts, and colored with true friendship. With a glossary at the back to provide definitions for Spanish and science terms, this delightful book will educate and entertain in equal measure. (chroniclebooks.com) (This is a graphic novel.)
Colfer, Eoin, *Artemis Fowl*

Twelve-year-old Artemis Fowl is a millionaire, a genius—and, above all, a criminal mastermind. But even Artemis doesn’t know what he’s taken on when he kidnaps a fairy, Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon Unit. These aren’t the fairies of bedtime stories; these fairies are armed and dangerous. Artemis thinks he has them right where he wants them…but then they stop playing by the rules. (books.disney.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order. The first four books have been adapted into graphic novels.

Coombs, Kate, *The Runaway Princess*

“A dragon darkens our dells. A witch haunts our woods. Bandits roam our moors” . . . King Stromgard swept on. “In the tradition of so many monarchs, I offer my daughter’s hand in marriage and half my kingdom to the prince who can rid us of these evils, restoring peace and prosperity to our realm.” And so the contest in the Kingdom of Greeve begins. But Princess Margaret is not your traditional princess. Meg firmly objects to her parents’ giving her away, and she certainly has no intention of remaining in the tower where she is sequestered. Instead, she sets out to win the contest herself by enlisting the help of her good friend, her loyal maid, an eager guardsman, a young wizard, and a tenacious witch. Does Meg find her distinct place in the kingdom, or is she doomed to fulfill her royal duties? (us.macmillan.com)

Cooper, Susan, *Green Boy*

On their idyllic Bahamian island, Trey’s little brother, Lou, is different. He doesn’t speak and suffers from frightening seizures. But when he and Trey find themselves mysteriously transported to Pangaia, an Otherworld where pollution and over-development have all but destroyed nature, a militant environmental group greets Lou as the prophesied hero who will save their world. But to realize this prophecy, Lou must take Trey on a terrifying and dangerous mission, with much more at stake than the fate of Pangaia—and it’s not all in the future. Does Lou have the power to save his present-day island home from developers who will turn it into their own version of Pangaia? (books.simonandschuster.com)
Coville, Bruce, *The Monsters of Morley Manor: A Madcap Adventure*  
What do you get when you mix together—werewolves, vampires, mad scientists, wizards, aliens, alternate dimensions, tiny people, Transylvania, ancient curses, giant frogs, evil clones, ghosts, lawyers, shape-changers, fallen angels, journeys through hell, zombie warriors, body snatchers, and two clever kids in whose hands rests the fate of Earth? -- The craziest adventure-comedy-fantasy-mystery from bestselling novelist Bruce Coville, that's what. (hmhco.com)

D'Lacey, Chris, *The Fire Within*  
When David moves in with Liz and Lucy, he discovers a collection of hand-crafted, clay dragons that come to life and have magical powers. David's personalized dragon, Gadzooks, can forecast the future, and inspires him to write a story which reveals the truth behind an unsolved mystery close to home. The story has an unhappy ending, and when David realizes the consequences of it he is angry. Then David finds Gadzooks crying and near death, and he discovers that these special dragons die when they are not loved. Soon David is forced to save his friend and unlock the powers of the fire within.

Dahl, *The Book That Dripped Blood*  
A fur-covered book entitled Claws is loose in the city, and only the Librarian can stop it from claiming more victims. (capstonepub.com) This is the first book in the Library of Doom series, which is best read in order. These books are published especially for schools and libraries, so check there first. They are very short, so you might want to get two or three at a time.

Dann, Colin, *The Animals of Farthing Wood*  
A group of forest animals unite to help each other to safety in this classic tale of tolerance, cooperation, survival, and friendship. When bulldozers enter Farthing Wood, the animals must escape before their homes are destroyed. They promise to stick together and protect each other—but then they get caught in a fire and nearly drown crossing a river. Will their pact hold? (books.google.com) (This is the first book in the series.)
Dembicki, Matt, *Trickster: Native American Tales: A Graphic Collection*

All cultures have tales of the trickster—a crafty creature or being who uses cunning to get food, steal precious possessions, or simply cause mischief. He disrupts the order of things, often humiliating others and sometimes himself. In Native American traditions, the trickster takes many forms, from coyote or rabbit to raccoon or raven. The first graphic anthology of Native American trickster tales, *Trickster* brings together Native American folklore and the world of comics. In *Trickster*, more than twenty Native American tales are cleverly adapted into comic form. Each story is written by a different Native American storyteller who worked closely with a selected illustrator, a combination that gives each tale a unique and powerful voice and look. Ranging from serious and dramatic to funny and sometimes downright fiendish, these tales bring tricksters back into popular culture in a very vivid form. From an ego-driven social misstep in "Coyote and the Pebbles" to the hijinks of "How Wildcat Caught a Turkey" and the hilarity of "Rabbit's Choctaw Tail Tale," *Trickster* provides entertainment for readers of all ages and backgrounds. (fulcrum-books.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

Divakaruni, Chitra Banerjee, *The Conch Bearer*

In a dingy shack in the less-than-desirable Indian neighborhood he calls home, twelve-year-old Anand is entrusted with a conch shell that possesses mystical powers. His task is to return the shell to its rightful home many hundreds of miles away. Accompanying him are Nisha, a headstrong but resourceful child of the streets, and a mysterious man of indeterminate age and surprising resources named Abadhyatta. His quest will take him farther from home than he's ever been and will teach him more than he ever imagined -- and it will force him to make a poignant decision that will change him forever. (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is the first book in the Brotherhood of the Conch series.)

Duane, Diane, *So You Want to Be a Wizard*

Thirteen-year-old Nita, tormented by a gang of bullies because she won't fight back, finds the help she needs in a library book on wizardry which guides her into another dimension. (books.google.com) This is the first book in the Young Wizards series. They are best read in order.
Elish, Dan, *The Attack of the Frozen Woodchucks*

Frozen woodchucks are attacking the galaxy! But they're no match for Jimmy and his crew of space travelers... or are they? Meet our heroes: Jimmy Weathers: An average fifth grader living in New York City who never suspected that the fate of the world would be resting squarely on his ten-year-old shoulders. William H. Taft V: Jimmy’s best friend—the great-great-great-great-nephew of the fattest man who was ever president. Janice Claytooth: A ten-year-old rocket scientist whose bestselling book Light Speed and You has sold only one copy on earth but millions throughout the galaxy. Imogene Weathers: A feisty two-year-old inventor with a penchant for turning the ordinary into the extraordinary. Will this unlikely quartet discover the mastermind behind the frozen woodchuck attacks before it's too late? (harpercollins.com)

Ende, Michael, *The Neverending Story*

Bastian embarks on a wild adventure when he enters the magical world of Fantastica, a doomed land filled with dragons, giants, and monsters, and risks his life to save Fantastica by going on a very dangerous quest. (penguinrandomhouse.com) Read the book that inspired the classic movie!

Enzensberger, Hans Magnus, *The Number Devil: A Mathematical Adventure*

In twelve dreams, Robert, a boy who hates math, meets a Number Devil, who leads him to discover the amazing world of numbers: infinite numbers, prime numbers, Fibonacci numbers, numbers that magically appear in triangles, and numbers that expand without. As we dream with him, we are taken further and further into mathematical theory, where ideas eventually take flight, until everyone—from those who fumble over fractions to those who solve complex equations in their heads—winds up marveling at what numbers can do. (us.macmillan.com)

Farmer, Nancy, *The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm: A Novel*

The year is 2194, and Tendai, Rita, and Kuda are the children of Zimbabwe’s wealthy and powerful chief of security. They’ve escaped from their father's estate to explore the dangerous city of Harare—and promptly disappear. Their parents call in the Ear, the
Eye, and the Arm, detectives whose exposure to nuclear waste has given them special powers. Together they must save the children from the evils of the past, the technology of the future, and criminals with plans much more sinister than anyone could have imagined. (scholastic.com)

Feiffer, Jules, *A Barrel of Laughs, A Vale of Tears*
Prince Roger sets out eagerly on a quest and finds a few adventures, a lot of friends, a damsel or two in distress (not!) and himself, in the end. A ‘carrier of joy’ whose mere presence causes everyone to laugh uncontrollably, Roger finds cruelty and kindness equally amusing, and expects his quest to be a lark. It’s anything but: As Roger passes through the Forever Forest, nearly starves at the Dastardly Divide, sees people at their worst in the Valley of Vengeance, and temporarily despair in the Mountains of Malice, he sober up, learns to care for others, becomes an expert peacemaker, does Good Deeds, and falls in love with Lady Sadie, who says what she thinks as she repeatedly saves his bacon. (harpercollins.com) (This is not a graphic novel, but it has tons of illustrations.)

Flanagan, John, *The Ruins of Gorlan*
They have always scared him in the past—the Rangers, with their dark cloaks and shadowy ways. The villagers believe the Rangers practice magic that makes them invisible to ordinary people. And now 15-year-old Will, always small for his age, has been chosen as a Ranger’s apprentice. What he doesn’t yet realize is that the Rangers are the protectors of the kingdom. Highly trained in the skills of battle and surveillance, they fight the battles before the battles reach the people. And as Will is about to learn, there is a large battle brewing. The exiled Morgarath, Lord of the Mountains of Rain and Night, is gathering his forces for an attack on the kingdom. This time, he will not be denied... (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in The Ranger’s Apprentice series. They are best read in order.

Flanagan, John A., *The Outcasts*
They are outcasts. Hal, Stig, and the others— they are the boys the others want no part of. Skandians, as any reader of Ranger’s Apprentice could tell you, are known for their size and strength. Not these boys. Yet that doesn’t mean they don’t have skills. And
courage – which they will need every ounce of to do battle at sea against the other bands, the Wolves and the Sharks, in the ultimate race. The icy waters make for a treacherous playing field . . . especially when not everyone thinks of it as playing. John Flanagan, author of the international phenomenon Ranger’s Apprentice, creates a new cast of characters to populate his world of Skandians and Araluens, a world millions of young readers around the world have come to know and admire. Full of seafaring adventures and epic battles, Book 1 of The Brotherband Chronicles is sure to thrill readers of Ranger’s Apprentice while enticing a whole new generation just now discovering the books. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in the Brotherband Chronicles. They are best read in order.

Funke, Cornelia, *Inkheart*

Meggie lives a quiet life alone with her father, a bookbinder. But her father has a deep secret — he possesses an extraordinary magical power. One day a mysterious stranger arrives who seems linked to her father's past. Who is this sinister character and what does he want? Suddenly Meggie is involved in a breathless game of escape and intrigue as her father's life is put in danger. Will she be able to save him in time? (scholastic.com) This is the first book in a trilogy. They are best read in order.

Gaiman, Neil, *Coraline*

In this Newbery Medal-winning novel, Bod is an unusual boy who inhabits an unusual place—he’s the only living resident of a graveyard. Raised from infancy by the ghosts, werewolves, and other cemetery denizens, Bod has learned the antiquated customs of his guardians' time as well as their ghostly teachings—such as the ability to Fade so mere mortals cannot see him. Can a boy raised by ghosts face the wonders and terrors of the worlds of both the living and the dead? And then there are being such as ghouls that aren’t really one thing or the other. (harpercollins.com) (There is also a graphic novel version of this book, illustrated by P. Craig Russell)

Gaiman, Neil, *The Graveyard Book*

In this Newbery Medal-winning novel, Bod is an unusual boy who inhabits an unusual place—he’s the only living resident of a graveyard. Raised from infancy by the ghosts, werewolves, and
other cemetery denizens, Bod has learned the antiquated customs of his guardians' time as well as their ghostly teachings—such as the ability to Fade so mere mortals cannot see him. Can a boy raised by ghosts face the wonders and terrors of the worlds of both the living and the dead? And then there are being such as ghouls that aren’t really one thing or the other. (harpercollins.com) (There is also a graphic novel version of this book, illustrated by P. Craig Russell)

**Gardner, Sally, *I, Coriander***

In this exceptionally well-crafted tale, Coriander tells the story of her childhood in seventeenth-century London and of her discovery that she has inherited magical powers from her mother, who was a fairy princess. But her mother's sudden death brings on a dark time for Coriander. And after mourning her beloved mother and dealing with the disappearance of her father and the wrath of her evil stepmother, Coriander finds herself locked in a chest with no hope of escape and no will to survive. But when a bright light beckons to her, it is then that Coriander’s journey truly begins. (us.penguin.com)

**George, Jessica Day, *Dragon Slippers***

Poor Creel. She can’t believe her aunt wants to sacrifice her to the local dragon. It’s a ploy to lure a heroic knight so that he will fight the dragon, marry Creel out of chivalrous obligation, and lift the entire family out of poverty. Creel isn’t worried. After all, nobody has seen a dragon in centuries. But when the beast actually appears, Creel not only bargains with him for her life, she also ends up with a rare bit of treasure from his hoard, not gold or jewels, but a pair of simple blue slippers—so she thinks. It's not until later that Creel learns a shocking truth: She possesses not just any pair of shoes, but ones that could be used to save her kingdom, which is on the verge of war, or destroy it. (bloomsbury.com)

**Gerstein, Mordicai, *The Old Country***

From the winner of the 2004 Caldecott Medal comes a memorable new work, a novel of singular insight and imagination that transports readers to the Old Country, where 'all the fairy tales come from, where there was magic -- and there was war.' There, Gisella stares a moment too long into the eyes of a fox, and she
and the fox exchange shapes. Gisella’s quest to get her girl-body back takes her on a journey across a war-ravaged country that has lost its shape. She encounters magic, bloodshed, and questions of power and justice -- until finally, looking into the eyes of the fox once more, she faces a strange and startling choice about her own nature. Part adventure story and part fable; exciting, beautifully told, rich in humor and wisdom, The Old Country is the work of an artist and storyteller at the height of his powers. (us.macmillan.com)

Gliori, Debi, *Pure Dead Magic*

Things are not right at the Strega-Borgia castle. Signor Luciano Strega-Borgia has been kidnapped. Signora Baci Strega-Borgia is struggling with her spells at the Advanced Witchcraft Institute. Titus and Pandora don’t like their suspiciously cheerful and fearless new nanny. Baby Damp has been accidentally shrinked, e-mailed, and lost on the World Wide Web. And to top it off, there’s a gangster in a bunny suit lurking about... (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first in the series. You can read them in any order.

Grahame, Kenneth, *The Wind in the Willows*

When Mole and Rat visit Badger in the Wild Wood, they tell Badger about Toad’s problem with buying and smashing up cars. After Badger decides the friends must lock Toad in his room, an adventure begins for Toad that should change his ways for sure. This beloved classic of literature has touched the hearts of young readers for over three generations. First published in 1908, this book began as a series of bedtime stories written especially for the author’s son. Four friends — Toad, Mole, Rat, and Badger — are always having exciting adventures. While each has their own distinctive personality — Mole is cautious, Rat is sweet, Toad is a braggart, and Badger can’t stand society — their friendship is only enhanced by their differences. (scholastic.com)

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, *Among the Hidden*

Luke has never been to school. He’s never had a birthday party, or gone to a friend’s house for an overnight. In fact, Luke has never had a friend. Luke is one of the shadow children, a third child forbidden by the Population Police. He’s lived his entire life in
hiding, and now, with a new housing development replacing the woods next to his family’s farm, he is no longer even allowed to go outside. Then, one day Luke sees a girl’s face in the window of a house where he knows two other children already live. Finally, he’s met a shadow child like himself. Jen is willing to risk everything to come out of the shadows -- does Luke dare to become involved in her dangerous plan? Can he afford not to? (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is the first book in the Shadow Children series. You should read them in order.)

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, Found
One night a plane appeared out of nowhere, the only passengers aboard: thirty-six babies. As soon as they were taken off the plane, it vanished. Now, thirteen years later, two of those children are receiving sinister messages, and they begin to investigate their past. Their quest to discover where they really came from leads them to a conspiracy that reaches from the far past to the distant future—and will take them hurtling through time. (simonandschuster.com) This is the first book in The Missing series. They are best read in order. This first book is mostly realistic, but it sets up the rest of the series, which have more fantasy.

Haddix, Margaret Peterson, Just Ella
Ella dreams of going to the royal ball and marrying Prince Charming, just like every commoner in the kingdom of Fridesia. But after she is chosen to marry the prince—no magic involved—life with the royal family is not the happily ever after that Ella imagined. Pitiless and cold, the royals try to mold her into their vision of a princess. Ella’s life becomes a meaningless schedule of protocol, which she fears she will never grasp. And Prince Charming’s beautiful face hides a vacant soul. Even as her life turns to misery, stories persist that Ella’s fairy godmother sent her to the ball: How else could the poor girl wear a beautiful gown, arrive in a coach, and dance in those glass slippers? But Ella got herself into the castle on her own—and that’s the only way she’s going to get out. (simonandschuster.com)

Hale, Shannon, Princess Academy
Fourteen-year-old Miri dreams of working at the quarry like the rest of the villagers, despite her small size. Then a royal decree arrives that changes life in quiet Mount
Eskel. The king has decided that all eligible girls will study at an academy to train them in a noble education, and one girl will be chosen as the prince's bride. Can Miri, a mountain girl with dreams as big as her heart, become a princess? (scholastic.com)

Hale, Shannon, Rapunzel's Revenge

Rapunzel escapes her tower-prison all on her own, only to discover a world beyond what she'd ever known before. Determined to rescue her real mother and to seek revenge on her kidnapper would-be mother, Rapunzel and her very long braids team up with Jack (of Giant killing fame) and together they preform daring deeds and rescues all over the western landscape, eventually winning the justice they so well deserve. (bloomsbury.com) This is a graphic novel.

Hale, Shannon, The Goose Girl

Anidori-Kiladra Talianna Isilee, Crown Princess of Kildenree, spends the first years of her life listening to her aunt's stories and learning the language of the birds, especially the swans. As she grows up Ani develops the skills of animal speech, but is never comfortable speaking with people, so when her silver-tongued lady in waiting leads a mutiny during Ani's journey to be married in a foreign land, Ani is helpless and cannot persuade anyone to help her. She becomes a goose girl and must use her own special, nearly magical powers to find her way to her true destiny. From the Grimm's fairy tale of the princess who became a goose girl before she could become queen, Shannon Hale has woven an incredible and original tale of a girl who must find her own unusual talents before she can lead the people she has made her own. (bloomsbury.com) (This is the first book in the Books of Bayern series. You don't have to read them in order, but you might want to.)

Harrell, Rob, Monster on the Hill

In a fantastical 1860s England, every quiet little township is terrorized by a ferocious monster -- much to the townsfolk's delight! Each town's unique monster is a source of local pride, not to mention tourism. Each town, that is... except for one. Unfortunately for the people of Stoker-on-Avon, their monster isn't quite as impressive. In fact, he's a little down in the dumps. Can the morose Rayburn get a monstrous makeover and become a proper horror?
It's up to the eccentric Dr. Charles Wilkie and plucky street urchin Timothy to get him up to snuff, before a greater threat turns the whole town to kindling. Monsters of all ages are sure to enjoy this tale about life’s challenges, the power of friendship, and creative redemption, packed with epic battles and plenty of wild beasts! (topshelfcomix.com) This is a graphic novel.

**Hart, J. V., Capt. Hook: The Adventures of a Notorious Youth**

With his long black curls, a shadowy family tree, and an affinity for pet spiders, James Matthew bears little resemblance to his starched-collar, blue-blooded peers at Eton. Dubbed King Jas., he stops at nothing to become the most notorious underclassman in the prestigious school's history. For James, sword fighting, falling in love with an Ottoman Sultan, and challenging the Queen of England are all in a day's skullduggery. But when he sets sail on a ship with a mysterious mission, King Jas.' dream of discovering a magical island quickly turns into an unimaginable nightmare. (harpercollins.com)

**Hatke, Ben, Zita the Spacegirl**

Zita’s life took a cosmic left turn in the blink of an eye. When her best friend is abducted by an alien doomsday cult, Zita leaps to the rescue and finds herself a stranger on a strange planet. Humanoid chickens and neurotic robots are shocking enough as new experiences go, but Zita is even more surprised to find herself taking on the role of intergalactic hero. Before long, aliens in all shapes and sizes don’t even phase her. Neither do ancient prophecies, doomed planets, or even a friendly con man who takes a mysterious interest in Zita’s quest. Zita the Spacegirl is a fun, captivating tale of friendship and redemption from Flight veteran Ben Hatke. It also has more whimsical, eye-catching, Miyazaki-esque monsters than you can shake a stick at. (us.macmillan.com) (This is a graphic novel, and it is the first book in the series.)

**Hill, Stuart, The Cry of the Icemark**

After the death of her beloved father, headstrong princess Thirrin Freer Strong-In-The-Arm becomes warrior queen of her homeland, Icemark, defending it from a formidable invader. Despite Thirrin's bravery and the support of Oskan, the Witch's son, the task proves more difficult than Thirrin ever dreamed. She
must assemble a force to rival her opponent. And, in the chill winter of Icemark, she only has until spring to unite the strange beasts and frightening creatures who live just outside her country. Ultimately, it is Thirrin’s vision and determination that will see her through to victory. (scholastic.com)(This is the first book in The Chronicles of Icemark.)

**Hoobler, Dorothy, The Demon in the Teahouse**

The beautiful, mysterious women of Japan are being killed one by one. The famous samurai Judge Ooka knows he will need help to solve the crimes, so he turns to his newly adopted son, fourteen-year-old Seikei. Determined to prove his worth as a samurai, Seikei goes undercover as a tea-house attendant to gather information in the exotic ‘floating city’ of Yoshiwara, where demons lurk among the pleasure seekers and no one is safe- not even a samurai. (us.penguin.com)

**Hughes, Carol, Dirty Magic**

After a night of particularly strange and vivid dreams, Joe is visited by a girl who seems to be all gray, from her hair to her eyes to her clothes. Wherever she steps, the world melts away, replaced by a land of mud and rain. Telling Joe he must come with her if he wants to save his younger sister, who is gravely ill, the girl leads Joe through to her gray world, which is in the midst of a twenty-year-old war. There Joe dodges bullets, fearsome motion-tracking tanks, and the secret police as he searches for his sister. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Ibbotson, Eva, Books**

Eva Ibbotson is one of the most famous and beloved fantasy authors in England. She has a knack for creating marvelous magical creatures, and her characters have fantastic adventures around the world and to imaginary lands. Her most famous book is probably Journey to the
River Sea, which actually has no magic in it! There was some controversy over The Secret of Platform 13, because the Harry Potter books are so similar to it. I think my favorite is Island of the Aunts, or maybe Which Witch. (Ms. Bock)

**Jinks, Catherine, *How to Catch a Bogle***  
Birdie McAdam, a ten-year-old orphan, is tougher than she looks. She's proud of her job as apprentice to Alfred the Bogler, a man who catches monsters for a living. Birdie lures the bogles out of their lairs with her sweet songs, and Alfred kills them before they kill her. On the mean streets of Victorian England, hunting bogles is actually less dangerous work than mudlarking for scraps along the vile river Thames. (See glossary!) Or so it seems—until the orphans of London start to disappear... (hmhco.com)

**Jonell, Lynne, *Emmy and the Incredible Shrinking Rat***  
Emmy was a good girl. At least she tried very hard to be good. She did her homework without being told. She ate all her vegetables, even the slimy ones. And she never talked back to her nanny, Miss Barmy, although it was almost impossible to keep quiet—some days. Honestly, Emmy really was a little too good. Which is why she liked to sit by the Rat. The Rat was not good at all... (us.macmillan.com) This is the first book in the series.

**Jones, Diana Wynne, *Books***  
If you like Harry Potter, you must read some books by Diana Wynne Jones. She has written some of the best fantasy adventures ever. Her books often use fantasy to make a point about our world and they way it is, or the way it should be. I think Diana Wynne Jones is particularly good at inventing magical creatures. Her most famous books are probably the Chrestomanci
Chronicles, which start with Charmed Life. If you’ve read Harry Potter, you’ll notice how J.K. Rowling was inspired by them. My favorite is The Power of Three, but it’s nearly impossible to find. My next favorite is the Dark Lord of Derkholm. In it, a fantasy town has to pretend to be full of evil wizards and creatures to satisfy tourists from our world. The people in the fantasy town get fed up with the tourists and start to revolt. There is a sequel called The Year of the Griffin. (Ms. Bock)

**Juster, Norton, The Phantom Tollbooth**

Milo is in a deep blue funk. Nothing and no one capture his interest. Boredom is Milo's middle name. The young boy is resigned to this state of affairs until he returns from school one day to find a package containing a giant toy tollbooth in his bedroom. When Milo puts the tollbooth together, and takes a ride on his toy car through the booth, a whimsical adventure begins. On this adventure, Milo visits Dictionpolis, the land of words, Digitopolis, the land of numbers, and meets an odd cast of characters along the way. The "watch" dog Tock, the Mathemagician, Officer Short Shift, and the Lethargarians are just some of Milo's new friends who show him how fascinating life can be. (scholastic.com)

**Katz, Welwyn Wilton, Time Ghost**

If all the time zones in the world meet at the North Pole, what time is it there? Is it no time, or all times at once? This tantalizing question sets the protagonists of Welwyn Wilton Katz's novel on an adventure that takes them across a continent and through time zones -- back to the last years of the twentieth century. In 2044 in an ecologically destroyed Canada, Sara and her friend Dani accompany Sara's grandmother to the still unspoiled North Pole and there begin an adventure in time that helps them understand the fragile world they inhabit. (books.google.com)

**Kerr, P. B., The Akhenaten Adventure**

Meet John and Philippa Gaunt, twelve-year-old twins who one day discover themselves to be descended from a long line of djinn. All of a sudden, they have the power to grant wishes, travel to extraordinary places, and make people and objects disappear. Luckily, the twins are introduced to their eccentric djinn-uncle
Nimrod, who will teach them how to harness their newly found power. And not a moment too soon, since John and Philippa are about to embark on a search to locate a monstrous pharaoh named Akhenaten and his eerie tomb. (scholastic.com) This is the first book in the series.

**Kessler, Liz, The Tail of Emily Windsnap**

For as long as she can remember, twelve-year-old Emily Windsnap has lived on a boat. And, oddly enough, for just as long, her mother has seemed anxious to keep Emily away from the water. But when Mom finally agrees to let her take swimming lessons, Emily makes a startling discovery -- about her own identity, the mysterious father she’s never met, and the thrilling possibilities and perils shimmering deep below the water’s surface. With a sure sense of suspense and richly imaginative details, first-time author Liz Kessler lures us into a glorious undersea world where mermaids study shipwrecks at school and Neptune rules with an iron trident -- an enchanting fantasy about family secrets, loyal friendship, and the convention-defying power of love. (candlewick.com) (This is the first book in the Emily Windsnap series. They are best read in order.)

**Kibuishi, Kazu, The Stonekeeper**

After the tragic death of their father, Emily and Navin move with their mother to the home of her deceased great-grandfather, but the strange house proves to be dangerous. Before long, a sinister creature lures the kids' mom through a door in the basement. Em and Navin, desperate not to lose her, follow her into an underground world inhabited by demons, robots, and talking animals. Eventually, they enlist the help of a small mechanical rabbit named Miskit. Together with Miskit, they face the most terrifying monster of all, and Em finally has the chance to save someone she loves. (books.google.com) This is the first book in The Amulet series. They are best read in order and they are graphic novels.

**Knudsen, Michelle, The Dragon of Trelian**

The hundred-year war with Kragnir is over, and Meg will soon be named the princess-heir of Trelian. But her connection to her dragon, Jakl, is making her parents’ subjects uneasy. Will they ever accept this dragon princess as their future queen? It doesn’t help that Meg is suffering horrible nightmares and sudden,
uncontrollable rages—and with the link joining them, Jakl is feeling the rages, too. Meg is desperate to talk to Calen, to see if he can help her figure out what is happening and how to stop it before she or her dragon does something terrible. Meanwhile, Calen is having troubles of his own. He’s far away, gone off with Mage Serek to receive his first true mage’s mark. But his marking ceremony is disrupted by a mysterious magical attack, and ominous prophecies predict a terrifying new danger. The Magistratum’s greatest enemy may soon reappear—and the other mages believe that Calen himself may have a hand in his return! (candlewick.com)

L’Engle, Madeleine, *A Wrinkle in Time*

It was a dark and stormy night; Meg Murry, her small brother Charles Wallace, and her mother had come down to the kitchen for a midnight snack when they were upset by the arrival of a most disturbing stranger. "Wild nights are my glory," the unearthly stranger told them. "I just got caught in a downdraft and blown off course. Let me sit down for a moment, and then I'll be on my way. Speaking of ways, by the way, there is such a thing as a tesseract." A tesseract (in case the reader doesn't know) is a wrinkle in time. To tell more would rob the reader of the enjoyment of Miss L’Engle’s unusual book. *A Wrinkle in Time*, winner of the Newbery Medal in 1963, is the story of the adventures in space and time of Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin O’Keefe (athlete, student, and one of the most popular boys in high school). They are in search of Meg's father, a scientist who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government on the tesseract problem. (us.macmillan.com) This book is the first in a series that is best read in order. It was probably the first science fiction book for kids! It was originally published as a novel, but there is also a wonderful graphic novel version by Raina Telgemeier.

Laurie, Victoria, *Oracles of Delphi Keep*

Along the southern coast of England, atop the White Cliffs of Dover, stands a castle. And at that castle’s old keep is an orphanage. Delphi Keep has seen many youngsters come and go through its gates, and Ian Wigby and his sister, Theodosia, are happy to call it home. Life has always been simple at the Keep, and the orphanage safe, until one day, Ian and Theo find a silver treasure box. And within the box, a prophesy. Three thousand
years ago a great Greek oracle wrote of a quest. A quest on which the fate of the world depends. A quest that names two children—Ian and Theodosia. Suddenly Delphi Keep is no longer safe. And Ian and Theo, along with a very special group of friends, realize they must unravel the meaning behind the scroll of Dover cavern before darkness falls on the world. And before an unfathomable evil catches up with them. (randomhouse.com)

Lee, Tanith, *Wolf Tower*

Cladi, a sixteen year old orphan, and handmaiden to a cruel royal family, is looking for a chance at freedom, and thinks she's found it when she helps a handsome and mysterious prisoner escape, but uncovers a conspiracy plot in the process, and must act quickly to avert it. (books.google.com) This is the first in the Claidi Journals series. They are best read in order.

Levine, Gail Carson, *Ella Enchanted*

At birth, Ella of Frell was given the gift of obedience by a fairy. Ella soon realizes that this gift is little better than a curse, for how can she truly be herself if at any time anyone can order her to hop on one foot, or cut off her hand, or betray her kingdom — and she'll have to obey? Spunky Ella does not tamely accept her fate and embarks on a quest to break this curse once and for all. (scholastic.com)

Levine, Gail Carson, *The Two Princesses of Bamarre*

The Two Princesses of Bamarre couldn't be more different. Princess Addie is fearful and shy. Her deepest wish is for safety. Princess Meryl is bold and brave. Her deepest wish is to save the kingdom of Bamarre. They are sisters, and they mean the world to each other. Then disaster strikes, and Addie -- terrified and unprepared -- sets out on a perilous quest. In her path are monsters of Bamarre: ogres, specters, gryphons, and dragons. Addie must battle them, but time is running out, and the sister's lives -- and Bamarre's fate -- hang in the balance. (harpercollins.com)

Lewis, C. S., *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

Air-raids over London during WWII compel four siblings — Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy — to be sent away from the city to the
house of a kindly, but remote Professor “who lived in the heart of the country.” There is much to discover in the country: woods, mountains, owls, eagles, maybe even hawks and snakes. But the children will soon discover that the Professor’s large house, staffed by three servants, holds even more mystery. It is a house filled with unexpected places, including a room which holds nothing but a large wardrobe, which Lucy opens one rainy day, never dreaming that the wardrobe is a passageway into Narnia. A once peaceful world inhabited by Fauns, Dwarves, Giants, and Talking Beasts, Narnia has been frozen into perpetual winter by the fiendish White Witch who rules over it. Before long, Edmund steps into the wardrobe, and, in spite of himself, into Narnia, where he has a chilling encounter with the seductive White Witch. Soon, all of the children become embroiled in an adventure that includes themes of betrayal, forgiveness, death, and rebirth. (scholastic.com) (This is either the first or the second book in the Chronicles of Narnia, depending on who you ask. It was published first, but the story in The Magician’s Nephew happens first. The author preferred The Magician’s Nephew to be first.)

Maihack, Mike, Target Practice
When a young Cleopatra (yes, THAT Cleopatra) finds a mysterious tablet that zaps her to the far, REALLY far future, she learns of an ancient prophecy that says she is destined to save the galaxy from the tyrannical rule of the evil Xaius Octavian. She enrolls in Yasiro Academy, a high-tech school with classes like algebra, biology, and alien languages (which Cleo could do without), and combat training (which is more Cleo’s style). With help from her teacher Khensu, Cleo learns what it takes to be a great leader, all while trying to figure out how she’s going to get her homework done, make friends, and avoid detention! (scholastic.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

McCranie, Stephen, Mal and Chad: the Biggest, Bestest Time Ever!
Mal is a super kid genius and Chad is a talking dog, but no one knows it. What’s it like to be so extraordinary and yet so invisible? Not even Megan, Mal’s secret crush, has any idea that Mal is anything more than a dork. Fortunately, Mal and Chad are best friends with a penchant for adventure... even if the time-traveling
does get them grounded by Mal’s mom. (penguin.com) This is a graphic novel.

McMann, Lisa, The Unwanteds

In The Unwanteds, 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. Necessaries keep the farms running. Unwanteds are set for elimination. But after being separated from his twin, Aaron, who is a Wanted, the Unwanted Alex discovers the magical haven of Artimé—and an astonishing secret that could alienate him from his brother forever. (books.simonandschuster.com)

Michael, Livi, City of Dogs

Sam has always wanted a dog, but Jenny is a dog like no other. She has come from another world—a parallel world of mythology, where the whims of the gods decide the course of Destiny. Jenny fled in terror after her attempt to save the life of her first beloved boy interrupted the gods” plans for a battle for control of the world. But now her escape threatens Sam”s world as well. So Jenny has to convince her motley pack of dog friends—tiny Pico, giant Gentleman Jim, slow-moving Boris, excitable Checkers, and nervous Flo—that it”s their destiny to restore the worlds to order before it”s too late. (us.penguingroup.com)

Miller, Kirsten, Kiki Strike: Inside the Shadow City

One of my favorite things about this book is that you really don’t know who is good and who is bad until the very end. Ananka Fishbein discovers a strange sinkhole near her New York City house. Even weirder is the creature she sees climbing out of it. Before she knows it, she’s on an adventure to save the world with a band of misfit Girl Scout rejects. There are now three books in the series. The other two are The Empress’s Tomb, and The Darkness Dwellers. You should read them in order. (Ms. Bock)

Moloney, James, The Book of Lies

The newest boy at Mrs. Timmins’s Home for Orphans and Foundlings awakes at first light with no name and no memory. But a strange girl who hides among the shadows of the orphanage
tells him that a mysterious wizard's creation, the Book of Lies, holds the answers, and then gives him one clue: "Your name is Marcel." With that knowledge, and the help of three new friends, Marcel begins a quest to find the truth about his real identity—a truth that is hidden in the Book of Lies. As Marcel learns more about his past, he realizes that truth can change at any moment and can be manipulated by anyone, and he begins to wonder if the old book's so-called magical truth might be the greatest lie of all. (books.google.com)

Morpurgo, Michael, Beowulf

Long ago there was a Scandinavian warrior who fought three evils so powerful they could destroy whole kingdoms. Standing head and shoulders above his comrades, Beowulf single-handedly saves the land of the Danes from a merciless ogre named Grendel and then from his sea-hag mother. But it is his third terrible battle, with the death-dragon of the deep, in which he truly meets his match. Lovers of heroes, monsters, and the drama of battle will find this retelling as enthralling as it is tragic. (candlewick.com)

Morris, Gerald, The Squire's Tale

Growing up an orphan in an isolated cottage in the woods, young Terence never expected much adventure. But upon the arrival of Gawain, his life takes a surprising turn. Gawain is destined to become one of the most famous knights of the Round Table. Terence becomes Gawain's squire and leaves his secluded life for one of adventure in King Arthur's court. In no time Terence is plunged into the exciting world of kings, wizards, knights, wars, magic spells, dwarfs, damsels in distress, and enchanters. As he adjusts to his new life, he proves to be not only an able squire but also a keen observer of the absurdities around him. His duties take him on a quest with Gawain and on a journey of his own, to solve the mystery of his parentage. Filled with rapier-sharp wit, jousting jocularity, and chuckleheaded knights, this is King Arthur's court as never before experienced. (hmhco.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order.
Napoli, Donna Jo, Books

Donna Jo Napoli has written many, many books, but my favorites are her fairy tale retellings. If you enjoyed Ella Enchanted or The Princess Academy, you should take a look at her books. She takes a fairy tale, such as Cinderella, sets it in ancient China, and makes a powerful novel out of it. She also rewrote the Beauty and the Beast story from the Beast’s perspective. I have a special place in my heart for fairy tales, and Donna Jo Napoli’s retellings honor the traditional stories while bringing new perspectives to them. You might just feel like you finally found the “real” version of the story. Zel or Beast are good ones to start with, but my favorite is The Magic Circle. If you can resist, don’t read the back of the book where it tells you what tale she’s retelling. It’s especially fun to figure it out in the middle of the book! (Ms. Bock)

Napoli, Donna Jo, Treasury of Egyptian Mythology: Classic Stories of Gods, Goddesses, Monsters & Mortals (National Geographic Kids)

The new National Geographic Treasury of Egyptian Mythology is a stunning tableau of Egyptian myths, including those of pharaohs, queens, the boisterous Sun God Ra, and legendary creatures like the Sphinx. The lyrical storytelling of award-winning author Donna Jo Napoli dramatizes the timeless tales of ancient Egypt in the year when Angelina Jolie will make Cleopatra a multimedia star. And just like the popular National Geographic Treasury of Greek Mythology, the stories in this book will be beautifully illustrated to bring ancient characters vividly to life. (ngchildrensbooks.org)

Negro, Janice M. Del, Passion and Poison: Tales of Shape-Shifters, Ghosts, and Spirited Women

Janice M. Del Negro’s unique storyteller’s voice enlivens this collection of eight original tales about strong, resolute females. (books.google.com)
Nimmo, Jenny, *Midnight for Charlie Bone*

Charlie doesn’t want to believe it when he can hear people speaking through their photographs. But his horrible aunts are delighted; it means that he is one of the chosen. Sent to a special school that is filled with hidden secrets and mysterious rooms, Charlie must use his wits, as well as his powers, to escape from the clutches of the evil Dr. Bloor. (scholastic.com)

O’Brien, Robert C., *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nimh*

Mrs. Frisby, a widowed mouse with four small children, is faced with a terrible problem. She must move her family to their summer quarters immediately, or face almost certain death. But her youngest son, Timothy, lies ill with pneumonia and must not be moved. Fortunately, she encounters the rats of NIMH, an extraordinary breed of highly intelligent creatures, who come up with a brilliant solution to her dilemma. And Mrs. Frisby in turn renders them a great service. (simonandschuster.com)

O’Connor, George, *Zeus: King of the Gods*

Retells in graphic novel format stories from Greek mythology about the exploits of the young Zeus and how he rallied an army and overthrew his father, Kronos, to become king of the gods. (books.google.com) This book is part of a series. You can read them in any order.

Oppel, Kenneth, *Silverwing*

Shade is a young silverwing bat, the runt of his colony. But he’s determined to prove himself on the long, dangerous winter migration to Hibernaculum, millions of wingbeats to the south. During a fierce storm, he loses the others and soon faces the most incredible journey of his young life. Desperately searching for a way to rejoin his flock, Shade meets a remarkable cast of characters: Marina, a Brightwing bat with a strange metal band on her leg; Zephyr, a mystical albino bat with an unusual gift; and Goth, a gigantic carnivorous vampire bat. But which ones are friends and which ones are enemies? In this epic story of adventure and suspense, Shade is going to need all the help he
can find -- if he hopes to ever see his family again. (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is the first book in a trilogy. They should be read in order.)

Owen, James A., Here, There Be Dragons
An unusual murder brings together three strangers, John, Jack, and Charles, on a rainy night in London during the first World War. An eccentric little man called Bert tells them that they are now the caretakers of the Imaginarium Geographica -- an atlas of all the lands that have ever existed in myth and legend, fable and fairy tale. These lands, Bert claims, can be traveled to in his ship the Indigo Dragon, one of only seven vessels that is able to cross the Frontier between worlds into the Archipelago of Dreams. Pursued by strange and terrifying creatures, the companions flee London aboard the Dragonship. Traveling to the very realm of the imagination itself, they must learn to overcome their fears and trust in one another if they are to defeat the dark forces that threaten the destiny of two worlds. And in the process, they will share a great adventure filled with clues that lead readers to the surprise revelation of the legendary storytellers these men will one day become. (books.google.com)

Park, Linda Sue, Archer's Quest
Twelve-year-old Kevin, A Korean American math whiz, is shocked beyond belief when a young man, complete with bow and arrows, crash lands in his bedroom. And that’s just the beginning. The man, called Skillful Archer, claims to be a legendary ruler from ancient Korea. While Kevin tries explaining contemporary life to the man he nicknames Archie, the young ruler teaches Kevin about focusing his thoughts in an attempt to help him return to his kingdom. There’s not a moment to lose as Kevin uses Korean history and folktales, math, and the Chinese Zodiac to help his friend travel back through time before the Year of the Tiger ends. If Archie can’t get home, history will be forever changed. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Patterson, James, Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment
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? (hatchettbookgroup.com)

Peet, Mal, Keeper

When Paul Faustino of LA NACION flips on his tape recorder for an exclusive interview with El Gato -- the phenomenal goalkeeper who single-handedly brought his team the World Cup -- the seasoned reporter quickly learns that this will be no ordinary story. Instead, the legendary El Gato ("The Cat") quietly narrates a spellbinding tale that begins in a mythic corner of the South American rain forest, where a ghostly but very real mentor, the Keeper, emerges to teach the gangly boy the most thrilling secrets of the game. Combining vivid imagery and heart-stopping action, this evocative, strikingly ethereal novel about loyalty, passion, and magic will haunt readers, regardless of their love for soccer, long after the story is ended. An enthralling story of a poor, gawky kid who mysteriously becomes the world's greatest goalkeeper -- a seamless blend of magic realism and exhilarating soccer action. (candlewick.com)

Pierce, Tamora, Alanna: The First Adventure

Becoming a legend is not easy, as young Alanna of Trebond discovers when she disguises herself as a boy and begins training to be a knight. Alanna's skills and stubbornness help her befriend Prince Jonathan but alienate his evil uncle, Duke Roger. Filled with swords and sorcery, adventure and intrigue, good and evil, this book is a rousing introduction to the intensely satisfying story of Alanna. (scholastic.com) This is the first book in the Song of the Lioness series. This author writes excellent fantasy
fiction, but she also writes for older teens and adults. Discretion is advised when choosing books by her.

Pierce, Tamora, *Sandry’s Book*
Here begins the tale of Daja, Briar, Tris, and Sandry — four children brought to Winding Circle Temple for training in crafts and magic. They are outcasts in their homeland. But in this magical place, they are valued and respected for their special powers. (scholastic.com) This is the first book in the Circle of Magic series. Although each one focuses on a different character, I think they are still best read in order. This author also writes for older teenagers and adults. Discretion is advised if looking for other books by her.

The old powers try to come back, and the planet is plunged into chaos, and civilization is destroyed, and it gets all violent and evil...the old legends tell that a hero...with the sacred turtle, always... Los Angeles, California. Neddie Wentworthstein is the guy with the turtle. Sandor Eucalyptus is the guy with the jellybean. Sholmos Bunyip wants the turtle...and he'll stop at nothing to get it. This is the story of how Neddie, three good friends, a shaman, a ghost, and a little maneuver known as the French substitution determine the fate of the world. Daniel Pinkwater’s weird and wonderful tale of Neddie Wentworthstein’s quest to save civilization features some of the most unique heroes and villains a reader could hope to meet. Despite the heavy responsibility that Neddie must carry (not every kid is charged with rescuing humankind from doom), his story is hilarious, warm, welcoming, and sweet.(hmhco.com) There is a sequel to this book called The Yggyssey.

Pommaux, Yvan, *Theseus and the Minotaur*
Son of both a god and a man, Theseus was destined for greatness. How did he become both the king of Athens and the creator of democracy? And why did he abandon Ariadne after she risked her life to save him? Thanks to the unique flair of writer and artist Yvan Pommaux, this classic tale is brought vividly to life in a glorious retelling of the original myth. (toon-books.com) This is a graphic novel.
Preus, Margi, *West of the Moon*  
After being separated from her sister and sold to a cruel goat farmer, Astri makes a daring escape. She quickly retrieves her little sister, and, armed with a troll treasure, a book of spells and curses, and a possibly magic hairbrush, they set off for America. With a mysterious companion in tow and the malevolent “goatman” in pursuit, the girls head over the Norwegian mountains, through field and forest, and in and out of folktales and dreams as they steadily make their way east of the sun and west of the moon. (abramsbooks.com)

Prevost, Guillaume, *Book Of Time*  
Ten days ago, Sam Faulkner's dad disappeared. Ten minutes ago, Sam discovered a hidden room. Five minutes ago, he picked up a book about Dracula's castle. Two minutes ago, he found a way to travel through time. Now... The adventure begins. (arthuralevinebooks.com) (This is the first book in the series.)

Priestley, Chris, *Uncle Montague's Tales of Terror*  
This spine-tingling novel has more than enough fear factor for the most ardent fan of scary stories. Uncle Montague lives alone in a big house, but regular visits from his nephew, Edgar, give him the opportunity to recount some of the frightening stories he knows. As each tale unfolds, an eerie pattern emerges of young lives gone awry in the most terrifying of ways. Young Edgar begins to wonder just how Uncle Montague knows all these ghastly tales. This clever collection of stories-within-a-story is perfectly matched with darkly witty illustrations by David Roberts. (bloomsbury.com) (This book is part of a series of scary stories. You can read them in any order.)

Prineas, Sarah, *The Magic Thief*  
In a city that runs on a dwindling supply of magic, a young boy is drawn into a life of wizardry and adventure. Conn should have dropped dead the day he picked Nevery's pocket and touched the wizard’s locus magicalicus, a stone used to focus magic and work spells. But for some reason he did not. Nevery finds that interesting, and he takes Conn as his apprentice on the provision that the boy find a locus stone of his own. But Conn has
little time to search for his stone between wizard lessons and helping Nevery discover who—or what—is stealing the city of Wellmet's magic. (harpercollins.com) (This is the first book in the series.)

**Reeve, Philip, *Larklight: A Rousing Tale of Dauntless Pluck in the Farthest Reaches of Space***

Arthur (Art) Mumsby and his irritating sister, Myrtle live with their father in a huge and rambling house called Larklight, that just happens to be traveling through outer space. When a visitor called Mr. Webster arrives unexpectedly, it is far from an innocent social call. Before long Art and Myrtle are off on an adventure to the farthest reaches of space, where they will do battle with evil forces in order to save each other-and the universe. A fantastically original Victorian tale set in an outer space world that might have come from the imaginations of Jules Verne or L. Frank Baum, but has a unique gravitational pull all its own. (bloomsbury.com) This is probably the first steampunk book for kids. Steampunk is a mash-up of old westerns, Victorian England, and science fiction.

**Rex, Adam, *The True Meaning of Smekday***

It all starts with a school essay. When twelve-year-old Gratuity (“Tip”) Tucci is assigned to write five pages on “The True Meaning of Smekday” for the National Time Capsule contest, she’s not sure where to begin. When her mom started telling everyone about the messages aliens were sending through a mole on the back of her neck? Maybe on Christmas Eve, when huge, bizarre spaceships descended on the Earth and the aliens-called Boov-abducted her mother? Or when the Boov declared Earth a colony, renamed it “Smekland” (in honor of glorious Captain Smek), and forced all Americans to relocate to Florida via rocketpod? In any case, Gratuity’s story is much, much bigger than the assignment. It involves her unlikely friendship with a renegade Boov mechanic named J.Lo.; a futile journey south to find Gratuity’s mother at the Happy Mouse Kingdom; a cross-country road trip in a hovercar called Slushious; and an outrageous plan to save the Earth from yet another alien invasion. (books.disney.com) (This book inspired the recent movie Home.)

**Rich, Susan, *Half-Minute Horrors***

How scared can you get in only 30 seconds? Dare to find out with Half-Minute Horrors, a collection of deliciously terrifying short short
tales and creepy illustrations by an exceptional selection of writers and illustrators, including bestselling talents Lemony Snicket, James Patterson, Neil Gaiman, R.L. Stine, Faye Kellerman, Holly Black, Melissa Marr, Margaret Atwood, Jon Scieszka, Brett Helquist, and many more. (harpercollins.com)

**Riordan, Rick, The Lightning Thief (Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book 1)**

When Percy Jackson's mom is informed that her son can’t seem to control his temper at boarding school, she sends him to Camp Half-Blood on Long Island, where Percy learns that the father he never met is Poseidon, God of the Sea. (This is the first book in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series.)

**Rodda, Emily, The Key To Rondo**

There are three rules to the old painted, music box: Wind the box three times only. Never shut the box when the music is playing. Never move the box before the music stops. Leo wouldn’t dream of breaking these rules, but does his stubborn cousin Mimi listen? She winds the box four times — and suddenly the paintings on its side come to life and a powerful witch is released. Now its up to Leo and Mimi to stop the witch, if only they can find the key to the music box — and the magical world it controls. (scholastic.com) This is the first book in the series.

**Rollins, James, Jake Ransom and the Skull King’s Shadow**

When a mysterious envelope arrives for Jake Ransom, he and his older sister, Kady, are plunged into a gripping chain of events. An artifact found by their parents—on the expedition from which they never returned—leads Jake and Kady to a strange world inhabited by a peculiar mix of long-lost civilizations, a world that may hold the key to their parents' disappearance. But even as they enter the gate to this extraordinary place, savage grackyls soar across the sky, diving to attack. Jake's new friends, the pretty Mayan girl Marika and the Roman Pindor, say the grackyls were created by an evil alchemist—the Skull King. And as Jake struggles to find a way home, it becomes obvious that what the Skull King wants most is Jake and Kady—dead or alive. (harpercollins.com) (This is the first book in the series.)
Rowling, J.K., *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*

I know; I know. You’re going to tell me you read this when you were in second grade. Guess what? You probably didn’t get everything you could out of it. I don’t care if you’ve read them before or seen the movies: you should read it when you’re ten. And if you really want to do it right, you’ll wait a year (or two! or three!) between each book like the rest of us had to.

(Ms. Bock)

Sfar, Joann, *Little Vampire*

Living in a house filled with grown-up ghouls and monsters, Little Vampire is so lonely that he’s even willing to go to school if that’s what it takes to find friends. Unfortunately, school seems to be filled with children who are still alive. Little Vampire finds friendship with a boy named Michael, and they embark on adventures in the three stories in this collection. Included in this book are Little Vampire Goes to School (a New York Times Bestseller), Little Vampire Does Kung Fu, and Little Vampire and the Society of Canine Defenders (now published in the United States for the first time). Insightful and inventive, Joann Sfar brings Little Vampire and Michael’s fantastical world to young readers in stories that both feed the imagination and resonate with emotional truth. (books.google.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

Shulman, Polly, *The Grimm Legacy*

Elizabeth has just started working as a page at the New York Circulating Material Repository – a lending library of objects, contemporary and historical, common and obscure. And secret, too – for in the repository’s basement lies the Grimm Collection, a room of magical items straight from the Grimm Brother’s fairy tales. But the magic mirrors and seven-league boots and other items are starting to disappear. And before she knows it, she and her fellow pages – handsome Marc, perfect Anjali, and brooding Aaron – are suddenly caught up in an exciting, and dangerous, magical adventure. (penguinrandomhouse.com) This is the first book in a series, but it doesn’t follow the same characters, so you can read them in any order.
Stanley, Diane, *Bella at Midnight*

Bella has grown up thinking that she was just a simple peasant girl. But suddenly, Bella’s world collapses. First, her best friend, Julian, betrays her. Then she finds out that she is, in fact, Isabel, the daughter of a knight who abandoned her in infancy. And now he wants her back. Bella is torn from her beloved foster family and tries to accept her new life with her deranged father and his resentful wife. But when she finds out about a terrible plot that threatens the kingdom, she sets out on a journey that will lead her to a destiny far greater than she could have imagined. (harpercollins.com)

Stroud, Jonathan, *Heroes of the Valley*

Halli Sveinsson has grown up in the House of Svein, listening to the legends of the heroes as all his forefathers did. His is a peaceful society where the violence of the past has been outlawed and disputes are settled by the Council. But young Halli has never quite seemed to fit in with the others. For starters, he was not at all handsome or tall, like his attractive blond siblings. He’s stumpy and swarthy, with a quick mind and aptitude for getting in trouble. Bored with the everyday chores and sheep herding, he can’t help himself from playing practical jokes on everyone, from Eyjolf the old servant, to his brother and sister. But when he plays a trick on Ragnor of the House of Hakonsson, he goes too far, setting in motion a chain of events that will forever alter his destiny. Because of it, Halli will have to leave home and go on a hero’s quest. Along the way, he will encounter highway robbers, terrifying monsters, and a girl who may finally be his match. In the end, he will discover the truth about the legends, his family, and himself. Jonathan Stroud’s new novel is a hero’s saga and coming-of-age–as well as a surprising look at what bravery really means. (books.disney.com)

Stroud, Jonathan, *The Amulet of Samarkand*

Nathaniel is a magician’s apprentice, taking his first lessons in the arts of magic. But when a devious hot-shot wizard named Simon Lovelace ruthlessly humiliates Nathaniel in front of his elders, Nathaniel decides to kick up his education a few notches and show Lovelace who’s boss. With revenge on his mind, he summons the powerful djinni, Bartimaeus. But summoning Bartimaeus and controlling him are two different things
entirely, and when Nathaniel sends the djinni out to steal Lovelace’s greatest treasure, the Amulet of Samarkand, he finds himself caught up in a whirlwind of magical espionage, murder, and rebellion. (books.disney.com) (This is the first book in The Bartimaeus Trilogy.)

Sturm, James, Adventures in Cartooning: How to Turn Your Doodles Into Comics
In this action-packed cartooning adventure, kids will have as much fun making comics as reading them! Once upon a time . . . a princess tried to make a comic. And with the help of a magical cartooning elf, she learned how – well enough to draw her way out of an encounter with a dangerous dragon, near-death by drowning, and into her very own adventure! Like the princess, young readers will discover that they already have the drawing and writing skills it takes to make a comic – they just need a little know-how. And Adventures in Cartooning supplies just that. (us.macmillan.com) (This is the first books in the series.)

Swift, Jonathan, Jonathan Swift's Gulliver
Shipwrecked and cast adrift, Lemuel Gulliver wakes to find himself on Lilliput, an island inhabited by little people, whose height makes their quarrels over fashion and fame seem ridiculous. His subsequent encounters - with the crude giants of Brobdingnag, the philosophical Houyhnhnms and the brutish Yahoos - give Gulliver new, bitter insights into human behaviour. Swift's savage satire view mankind in a distorted hall of mirrors as a diminished, magnified and finally bestial species, presenting us with an uncompromising reflection of ourselves. (goodreads.com) (The edition that is retold by Martin Jenkins and illustrated by Chris Riddell is particularly recommended.)

Tan, Shaun, The Arrival
In a heartbreaking parting, a man gives his wife and daughter a last kiss and boards a steamship. He's embarking on the most difficult journey -- he's leaving home to build a better future for his family. In this wordless graphic novel, Shaun Tan captures the immigrant experience through clear, mesmerizing images. The reader enters a strange new world, participating in the main character's isolation -- and ultimately his joy. (arthuralevinebooks.com)
Thompson, Kate, *The New Policeman*

Who knows where the time goes? There never seems to be enough time in Kinvara, or anywhere else in Ireland for that matter. When J.J.’s mother says time’s what she really wants for her birthday, J.J. decides to find her some. He’s set himself up for an impossible task... until a neighbor reveals a secret. There’s a place where time stands still—at least, it’s supposed to. J.J. can make the journey there, but he'll have to vanish from his own life to do so. Can J.J. find the leak between the two worlds? Will a shocking rumor about his family's past come back to haunt him? And what does it all have to do with the village’s new policeman? (harpercollins.com)

Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Hobbit*

Bilbo Baggins is a hobbit who enjoys a comfortable, unambitious life, rarely traveling any farther than his pantry or cellar. But his contentment is disturbed when the wizard Gandalf and a company of dwarves arrive on his doorstep one day to whisk him away on an adventure. They have launched a plot to raid the treasure hoard guarded by Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Bilbo reluctantly joins their quest, unaware that on his journey to the Lonely Mountain he will encounter both a magic ring and a frightening creature known as Gollum. (hmhco.com)

Trondheim, Lewis, *Kaput and Zosky*

Would-be world conquerors Kaput and Zosky are at the pinnacle of their careers. So why does victory always slip from their grasp? On one planet the natives surrender to Kaput and Zosky without a fight - where's the fun in that? On another, Kaput finds that he's won the lottery - and the prize is invested by well-meaning people against his will until he learns he now rules their planet. He doesn’t even have to shoot anyone first! Mayhem and hilarity abounds in these thirteen stories told with bright, cartoony art by Lewis Trondheim. (us.macmillan.com) (This is a graphic novel.)

Turner, Megan Whalen, *The Thief*

I can steal anything. So declares Gen, the hero of the Newbery Honor Book *The Thief*—an exciting adventure fantasy set in a
mythical land rich with intrigue. Gen’s bragging lands him in prison... but then the king’s magus needs the thief’s skill for a near-impossible task: to steal a priceless magical jewel from a faraway land. (harpercollins.com) (This is the first book in The Queen’s Thief series.)

Walden, Mark, *H.I.V.E.: The Higher Institute of Villainous Education*

Otto Malpense may only be thirteen years old, but so far he has managed to run the orphanage where he lives, and he has come up with a plan clever enough to trick the most powerful man in the country. He is the perfect candidate to become the world's next supervillain. That is why he ends up at H.I.V.E., handpicked to become a member of the incoming class. The students have been kidnapped and brought to a secluded island inside a seemingly active volcano, where the school has resided for decades. All the kids are elite; they are the most athletic, the most technically advanced, and the smartest in the country. Inside the cavernous marble rooms, floodlit hangars, and steel doors, the students are enrolled in Villainy Studies and Stealth and Evasion 101. But what Otto soon comes to realize is that this is a six-year program, and leaving is not an option. With the help of his new friends: an athletic martial-arts expert; a world-famous, beautiful diamond thief; and a spunky computer genius -- the only other people who seem to want to leave -- can Otto achieve what has never been done before and break out of H.I.V.E.? (simonandschuster.com) This is the first book in the series. They are best read in order. If you enjoy this book, you might also like the Artemis Fowl series by Eoin Colfer.

Waugh, Sylvia, *Space Race*

Eleven-year-old Thomas Derwent is moving. Not to another town or city, but to another planet. He and his father have completed their research mission on Earth, and are returning to The Other Place, the planet of Ormingat, where they came from five years ago. It was so long ago that Thomas can’t remember anything about his life there. All he knows is his life on Earth, and he can’t imagine leaving the places and people he loves so much. Then Thomas becomes separated from his father, and the decision of whether to stay or to go becomes his. Which will he choose? (scholastic.com)
Weigel, Jeff, Dragon Girl: The Secret Valley
Eleven-year-old Alanna and her brother, Hamel, are orphans doing their best to make their way in a grim world until Alanna stumbles upon a cave full of dragon eggs. When the eggs hatch and a mother comes to claim the babies, Alanna is swept along on an adventure beyond her wildest imaginings as they journey to Dragon Rock, whose mysterious force draws dragons of all shapes and sizes to a magical, untouched valley. But when the valley is threatened by outsiders, Alanna must join forces with a mysterious explorer to save the dragons' homeland. Kids will love this graphic novel adventure, filled with action, adventure, suspense and humor. (jeffweigel.com)

White, Terence Hanbury, The Sword in the Stone
Before there was a famous king named Arthur, there was a curious boy named Wart and a kind old wizard named Merlyn. Transformed by Merlyn into the forms of his fantasy, Wart learns the value of history from a snake, of education from a badger, and of courage from a hawk—the lessons that help turn a boy into a man. Together, Wart and Merlyn take the reader through this timeless story of childhood and adventure—The Sword in the Stone. T.H. White’s classic tale of the young Arthur’s questioning and discovery of his life is unparalleled for its wit and wisdom, and for its colorful characters, from the wise Merlyn to the heroic Robin Wood to the warmhearted King Pellinore. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Williams, Mark London, Ancient Fire
Eli Sands is a twelve-year-old boy from the twenty-first century whose father has created time sphere experiments. Eli accidentally becomes part of the experiments and makes an unlikely team with a dinosaur from another planet and a girl from ancient Egypt. (scholastic.com) (This is the first book in the Ancient Fire series.)

Wrede, Patricia C., Dealing with Dragons
Meet Princess Cimorene—a princess who refuses to be proper. She is everything a princess is not supposed to be: headstrong, tomboyish smart... And bored. So bored that she runs away to live with a dragon. And not just any dragon, but Kazul—one of the most
powerful and dangerous dragons arounds. Of course, Cimorene has a way of hooking up with dangerous characters, and soon she's coping with a witch, a jinn, a death-dealing talking bird, a stone prince, and some very oily wizards. If this princess ran away to find some excitement, it looks like she's found plenty! (hmhco.com) This is the first book in The Enchanted Forest Chronicles. They are best read in order.
Nonfiction

Aronson, Marc, *Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert*

In early August 2010, the unthinkable happened when a mine collapsed in Copiapo, Chile, trapping 33 miners 2,000 feet below the surface. For sixty-nine days they lived on meager resources with increasingly poor air quality. When they were finally rescued, the world watched with rapt attention and rejoiced in the amazing spirit and determination of the miners. What could have been a terrible tragedy became an amazing story of survival. In *Trapped*, Marc Aronson provides the backstory behind the rescue. By tracing the psychological, physical, and environmental factors surrounding the mission, Aronson highlights the amazing technology and helping hands that made it all possible. From the Argentinean soccer players that hoped to raise morale, to NASA volunteering their expertise to come up with a plan, there was no shortage of enterprising spirit when it came to saving lives. Readers will especially appreciate the eight pages of full-color photos, timeline, glossary, notes, and more. (books.simonandschuster.com)

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell, *Kids On Strike!*

By the early 1900s, nearly two million children were working in the United States. From the coal mines of Pennsylvania to the cotton mills of New England, children worked long hours every day under stunningly inhumane conditions. After years and years of oppression, children began to organize and make demands for better wages, fairer housing costs, and safer working environments. Some strikes led by young people were successful; some were not. Some strike stories are shocking, some are heartbreaking, and many are inspiring — but all are a testimony to the strength of mind and spirit of the children who helped build American industry. (hmhco.com)


In February of 1908, six cars from four countries gathered in Times Square for the pistol shot that began the first around-the-world automobile race. Gas-powered cars hadn’t been round very long, and roads were nonexistent as this group of hardy pioneers
set out to drive from New York to Paris, hoping to cross the ice of the Bering Strait along the way. The Europeans were sure their cars were superior, but it would be the scrappy Americans in their Thomas Flyer, after braving twenty-foot snowdrifts, bandits, and many near drownings, who would win the race.

(abrasbooks.com)


Can girls play softball? Can girls be school crossing guards? Can girls play basketball or ice hockey or soccer? Can girls become lawyers or doctors or engineers? Of course they can... today. But just a few decades ago, opportunities for girls were far more limited, not because they weren't capable of playing or didn't want to become doctors or lawyers, but because they weren't allowed to. Then quietly, in 1972, something momentous happened: Congress passed a law called "Title IX," forever changing the lives of American girls. Hundreds of determined lawmakers, teachers, parents, and athletes carefully plotted to ensure that the law was passed, protected, and enforced. Time and time again, they were pushed back by _erce opposition. But as a result of their perseverance, millions of American girls can now play sports. Young women make up half of the nation's medical and law students, and star on the best basketball, soccer, and softball teams in the world. This small law made a huge difference.

(books.simonandschuster.com)


On the ten year anniversary of the September 11 tragedy, a straightforward and sensitive book for a generation of readers too young to remember that terrible day. The events of September 11, 2001 changed the world forever. In the fourth installment of the Actual Times series, Don Brown narrates the events of the day in a way that is both accessible and understandable for young readers. Straightforward and honest, this account moves chronologically through the morning, from the terrorist plane hijackings to the crashes at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Pennsylvania; from the rescue operations at the WTC site in New York City to the collapse of the buildings. Vivid watercolor illustrations capture the emotion and
Brown, Don, *The Great American Dust Bowl*

A speck of dust is a tiny thing. In fact, five of them could fit into the period at the end of this sentence. On a clear, warm Sunday, April 14, 1935, a wild wind whipped up millions upon millions of these specks of dust to form a duster—a savage storm—on America’s high southern plains. The sky turned black, sand-filled winds scoured the paint off houses and cars, trains derailed, and electricity coursed through the air. Sand and dirt fell like snow—people got lost in the gloom and suffocated . . . and that was just the beginning. Don Brown brings the Dirty Thirties to life with kinetic, highly saturated, and lively artwork in this graphic novel of one of America’s most catastrophic natural events: the Dust Bowl. (hmhco.com) This is a graphic novel.

Carroll, Lewis, *Jabberwocky*

With his signature exuberant, high-energy art, Christopher Myers delivers this radically new interpretation of Carroll's beloved poem, brilliantly reimagining it as a face-off on the basketball court. This classic Lewis Carroll nonsense poem first appeared in 1872 in the author's Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There. Chris Myers' witty, yet stylish, fine-art illustrations are perfectly suited to the nonsensical brilliance of the poem. (scholastic.com) There are many editions of this poem, but the edition illustrated by Christopher Myers is particularly recommended.

Cherry, Lynne, *How We Know What We Know About Our Changing Climate: Scientists and Kids Explore Global Warming*

When the weather changes daily, how do we really know that Earth’s climate is changing? Here is the science behind the headlines—evidence from flowers, butterflies, birds, frogs, trees, glaciers and much more, gathered by scientists from all over the world, sometimes with assistance from young “citizen-scientists.” And here is what young people, and their families and teachers, can do to learn about climate change and take action. Climate change is a critical and timely topic of deep concern, here told in an age-appropriate manner, with clarity and hope. Kids can make a difference! (dawnpub.com)
Close, Chuck, *Chuck Close: Face Book*

This fascinating, interactive autobiography presents Chuck Close’s story, his art, and a discussion of the many processes he uses in the studio. The question-and-answer format is based on real kids’ inquiries about Close’s life and work, and his answers to them. Close, who is wheelchair-bound and paints with a brush strapped to his arm, discusses the severe dyslexia and face blindness he has struggled with since childhood, as well as a collapsed spinal artery that left him nearly paralyzed at the age of 48. An engaging feature of the book is a mix-and-match Chuck Close self-portrait section. This hands-on component encourages the reader to create new and interesting combinations of Close’s techniques and images. The book also includes an illustrated chronology of Close’s life, a list of museums where his work can be seen, and an index. (abramsbooks.com) You can see one of his paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Deary, Terry, *Wicked History Of The World*

In the best book ever written to prove history teachers wrong, pester parents and disgust grandmothers, you will find out the truth about the Rules of War and meet fifty of the most vicious villains of all time in a bonus feature pull-out. Want to know... --The ghastly fate of Captain Cook? --What smelly sport was played by Samurai warriors? --Who tried to kill her enemies with a cake made from poisoned bath water? Then let The Wicked History of the World be your guide. History with the nasty bits left in! (scholastic.com)

Denenberg, Barry, *Lincoln Shot: A President’s Life Remembered*

Lincoln Shot! So begins this intimate portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Conceived as a one year anniversary edition of a newspaper, dated April 14, 1866, strongly evocative of the time and the nation’s mood. The moment-by-moment recital of the events of the day that ended in assassination holds readers enthralled awaiting the tragic end. The account of the flight, capture, and hanging of some of the conspirators is riveting. From there, Denenberg moves to the log cabin in Kentucky and Lincoln’s life unfolds. The boy, the man, the husband and the father is portrayed as a trifle clumsy, often unsure of himself, and plagued by dark moods. Denenberg’s Lincoln is
ambitious and modest. He struggles with his role as leader as the Civil War nears. In the third part of the book, the year-by-year account of the Civil War is seen through Lincoln’s eyes. Every defeat and every victory deepens his struggle and resolve. Award-winning artist Christopher Bing evokes an 1866 newspaper with pen-and-ink scenes from Lincoln’s life: Lincoln wrestling Jack Armstrong, Lincoln taking vows with Mary Todd, Grant and Lee at Appomattox, and Booth shooting Lincoln. Rich Deas, book designer, has folded Bing’s art and sourced archival images into layouts that are undistinguishable from 1866 newspaper design. Every facet of design, from frames to advertisements, has been exactingly molded to evoke the era. The oversized vertical trim underscores the newspaper look and feel. (us.macmillan.com)

Fleischman, Sid, The Trouble Begins at 8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West

Mark Twain was born fully grown, with a cheap cigar clamped between his teeth. So begins Sid Fleischman’s ramble-scramble biography of the great American author and wit, who started life in a Missouri village as a barefoot boy named Samuel Clemens. Abandoning a career as a young steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River, Sam took a bumpy stagecoach to the Far West. In the gold and silver fields, he expected to get rich quick. Instead, he got poor fast, digging in the wrong places. His stint as a sagebrush newspaperman led to a duel with pistols. Had he not survived, the world would never have heard of Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn—or red-headed Mark Twain. Samuel Clemens adopted his pen name in a hotel room in San Francisco and promptly made a jumping frog (and himself) famous. His celebrated novels followed at a leisurely pace; his quips at jet speed. "Don’t let schooling interfere with your education," he wrote. Here, in high style, is the story of a wisecracking adventurer who came of age in the untamed West; an ink-stained rebel who surprised himself by becoming the most famous American of his time. (harpercollins.com)

Fleming, Candace, Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart

From the acclaimed author of The Great and Only Barnum—as well as The Lincolns, Our Eleanor, and Ben Franklin’s Almanac—comes the thrilling story of America’s most celebrated flyer, Amelia Earhart. In alternating chapters, Fleming deftly moves readers
back and forth between Amelia’s life (from childhood up until her last flight) and the exhaustive search for her and her missing plane. With incredible photos, maps, and handwritten notes from Amelia herself—plus informative sidebars tackling everything from the history of flight to what Amelia liked to eat while flying (tomato soup)—this unique nonfiction title is tailor-made for middle graders. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

**Fleming, Candace, The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary**

The award-winning author of Ben Franklin’s Almanac and Our Eleanor has created an enthralling joint biography of our greatest president and his complex wife unlike any other—a scrapbook history that uses photographs, letters, engravings, and even cartoons, along with a fascinating text, to form an enthralling museum on the page. Here are the extraordinary lives of Abraham and Mary, from their disparate childhoods and tumultuous courtship, through the agony of the Civil War, to the loss of three of their children, and finally their own tragic deaths. Readers can find Mary’s recipe for Abraham’s favorite cake—and bake it themselves; hear what Abraham looked like as a toddler; see a photo of the Lincolns’ dog; discover that the Lincoln children kept goats at the White House; see the Emancipation Proclamation written in Lincoln’s own hand. Perfect for reluctant readers as well as history lovers, The Lincolns provides a living breathing portrait of a man, a woman, and a country. (randomhouse.com)

**Fradin, Dennis Brindell, Duel!: Burr and Hamilton’s Deadly War of Words**

In the early morning hours of July 11, 1804, two men stood facing each other on a New Jersey cliff side. One was the U.S. vice president, Aaron Burr, and the other was Alexander Hamilton, the secretary of the treasury. They were ready to fight to the death for honor. These Founding Fathers, once friends and colleagues, had become the bitterest of enemies. After years of escalating tension, Burr had finally challenged Hamilton to a duel. In the end, only one man survived, but their infamous rivalry lives on. (books.google.com)

**Freedman, Russell, Books**

If you like reading about history, take a look at Russell Freedman’s books. He has won almost every award
there is for a children’s author. He usually writes biographies about famous people, but what makes his books stand out is that he does a really good job of explaining what else was going on at that time and why these important people were able to do the things that made them famous. Some of his books will be challenging, but they are well worth the effort. His most famous book is probably Lincoln: a Photobiography. My favorites are Who Was First? Discovering the Americas and Give Me Liberty: the Story of the Declaration of Independence. (Ms. Bock)

Giblin, James Cross, The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin
This beautifully illustrated biography of one of the Founding Fathers of the United States gives the reader an overview of the long and fascinating life of a man who is as well remembered for his inventions and writings as for his statesmanship. (scholastic.com)

Giblin, James Cross, The Riddle of the Rosetta Stone
The Rosetta Stone was the key to figuring out what ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics meant. The Stone has the same text written in three different languages, Egyptian hieroglyphics, ancient Greek, and Demotic script, another ancient language. The discovery of this stone changed what we know about ancient Egypt forever. This book doesn’t have a very interesting cover, but the information it gives is fascinating. (Ms. Bock)

Goodall, Jane, Chimpanzees I Love: Saving Their World And Ours
As a young child, Jane Goodall dreamed of living with the wild animals of Africa. As a young woman, she amazed the world with her groundbreaking discoveries about chimpanzees, memorably documented in her acclaimed National Geographic television specials. Ever since, Dr. Goodall has campaigned unceasingly for the protection of chimpanzees, the animal most closely related to humans — and now an endangered species. In a compelling first-person narrative written especially for young people, Jane Goodall tells the exciting adventure of her discoveries about
chimpanzees' profound similarities to ourselves, from their lifelong family bonds to their ability to engage in primitive warfare. She shares endearing stories about individual chimpanzees she loves. And she tells of her own tireless efforts to save the chimpanzees from being lost forever. (scholastic.com)

**Gore, Al, An Inconvenient Truth: The Crisis of Global Warming**

Former Vice President Al Gore's New York Times #1 bestselling book is a daring call to action, exposing the shocking reality of how humankind has aided in the destruction of our planet and the future we face if we do not take action to stop global warming. Now, Viking has adapted this book for the most important audience of all: today's youth, who have no choice but to confront this climate crisis head-on. Dramatic full-color photos, illustrations, and graphs combine with Gore's effective and clear writing to explain global warming in very real terms: what it is, what causes it, and what will happen if we continue to ignore it. An Inconvenient Truth will change the way young people understand global warming and hopefully inspire them to help change the course of history. (penguinrandomhouse.com) You will want to make sure you get the kids' edition.

**Harrington, Jane, Extreme Pets**

Filled with fast facts about all kinds of cool animals, from snakes to ferrets to frogs, this book includes the pros and cons of ownership, as well as hilarious tips on how to convince parents to allow an extreme pet into the house. (scholastic.com)

**Hoose, Phillip, We Were There, Too!: Young People in U.S. History**

From the boys who sailed with Columbus to today's young activists, this unique book brings to life the contributions of young people throughout American history. Based on primary sources and including 160 authentic images, this handsome oversized volume highlights the fascinating stories of more than 70 young people from diverse cultures. Young readers will be hooked into history as they meet individuals their own age who were caught up in our country's most dramatic moments—Olaudah Equiano, kidnapped from his village in western Africa and forced into slavery, Anyokah, who helped her father create a written Cherokee language, Johnny Clem, the nine-year-old drummer boy who became a Civil War hero, and Jessica Govea, a teenager who risked joining Cesar
Chavez's fight for a better life for farmworkers. Throughout, Philip Hoose's own lively, knowledgeable voice provides a rich historical context-making this not only a great reference-but a great read. The first U.S. history book of this scope to focus on the role young people have played in the making of our country, its compelling stories combine to tell our larger national story, one that prompts Howard Zinn, author of A People's History of the United States, to comment, "This is an extraordinary book-wonderfully readable, inspiring to young and old alike, and unique." (us.macmillan.com)

You might also enjoy It's Our World, Too!, which is about young people who have made an important difference in the world.

Hopkinson, Deborah, Titanic: Voices From the Disaster

Critically acclaimed nonfiction author Deborah Hopkinson pieces together the story of the Titanic and that fateful April night, drawing on the voices of survivors and archival photographs. Scheduled to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the tragic sinking of the Titanic, a topic that continues to haunt and thrill readers to this day, this book by critically acclaimed author Deborah Hopkinson weaves together the voices and stories of real Titanic survivors and witnesses to the disaster — from the stewardess Violet Jessop to Captain Arthur Rostron of the Carpathia, who came to the rescue of the sinking ship. Packed with heart-stopping action, devastating drama, fascinating historical details, loads of archival photographs on almost every page, and quotes from primary sources, this gripping story, which follows the Titanic and its passengers from the ship's celebrated launch at Belfast to her cataclysmic icy end, is sure to thrill and move readers. (scholastic.com)

Janeczko, Paul B., A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms

In this splendid and playful volume, acclaimed poetry anthology Paul B. Janeczko and Caldecott Honor illustrator Chris Raschka present lively examples of twenty-nine poetic forms, demonstrating not only the (sometimes bendable) rules of poetry, but also the spirit that brings these forms so wonderfully to life. Featuring formal poems, some familiar and some never before published, from the likes of Eleanor Farjeon (aubade), X. J. Kennedy (elegy), Ogden Nash (couplet), Liz Rosenberg (pantoum), and William Shakespeare, the sonnet king himself, A KICK IN THE HEAD perfectly illustrates Robert Frost's maxim that poetry without rules is like a
Johnson, Rebecca L., *Zombie Makers: True Stories of Nature's Undead*

As far as we know, dead people do not come back to life and start walking around, looking for trouble. But there are things that can take over the bodies and brains of innocent creatures, turning them into senseless slaves. Meet nature’s zombie makers — including a fly-enslaving fungus, a suicide worm, and a cockroach-taming wasp — and their victims.

(rebeccajohnsonbooks.com)

Laroche, Giles, *What's Inside?*

As it takes us on a tour of some of the most unique and beautiful structures, this book shows how the purpose of each structure dictated its design, or location. Here are soaring glass skyscrapers (for working people) and a humble stone barn (for working animals); a sealed tomb hewn out of a limestone hillside (for buried treasure) and a majestic marble building, honoring a goddess. As it reveals what lies inside each structure, this book gives insight into the people who designed these buildings -- into their hopes, their lives, and their concepts of beauty. Included -- for budding engineers and architects -- are statistics such as the year built, square footage, materials used, height, and other little known statistics. Structures included are: Tomb of Tutankamumn in Thebes, Egypt The Parthenon in Athens, Greece Temple of Kukulcan in Chichen Itza, Mexico Buddha's Place in Shanxi Province, China Walled city of Toldeo in Spain Alcazar Castle in Segovia, Spain Independence Hall in Philadelphia Shaker dairy barn in Hancock, MA A Circus big top tent, which traveled to many American cities The Guggenheim Museum in NYC The Sydney Opera House in Sydney, Australia The Petrona Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia The Georgia Aquarium in Georgia, Atlanta

(books.google.com)

Lauber, Patricia, *Who Came First? New Clues to Prehistoric Americans*

All of the people who came to the Americas many thousands of years ago walked across the Bering Land Bridge between Siberia and Alaska. Right? Wrong! Some early Americans did come that
way, but tantalizing evidence shows that many did not. How do you explain a settlement 14,800 years old near the southern coast of Chile when glaciers still covered most of Canada and made land travel virtually impossible? Or that the oldest human skull found in the Americas is that of a woman who lived in southern Brazil? Or that the oldest human settlement in North America is located near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, not in the West as one would have expected? New evidence is pouring in, as archaeologists dig further and combine their work with that of linguists, geneticists, climatologists, and scientists in other related disciplines. Come along with Pat Lauber as she explores what new evidence is being found and what it means for one of history’s most intriguing mysteries: Where did early Americans come from and how did they get here? (books.google.com)

Lester, Julius, *Blues Singers, The*
Ten of the most celebrated blues singers in history are profiled in this book. From the Empress of the Blues to the Godfather of Soul, the influence of these remarkable singers on the blues is discussed in this outstanding tribute. (scholastic.com)

Lipsyte, Robert, *Heroes of Baseball: The Men Who Made It America's Favorite Game*
TY COBB. CHRISTY MATHEWSON. SHOELESS JOE JACKSON. BABE RUTH. LOU GEHRIG. JACKIE ROBINSON. JOE DIMAGGIO. MICKEY MANTLE. WILLIE MAYS. DUKE SNIDER. TED WILLIAMS. CURT FLOOD. ROBERTO CLEMENTE. HANK AARON. Their names echo through the halls of time and the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Their feats are legendary. They never quit, and they never backed down. They inspired generations of Americans to push themselves to do their very best. They were, and remain, the heroes of baseball. Hitting monster home runs, pitching perfect games, making impossible catches, and stealing home during the World Series -- these are the kinds of feats that turn baseball players into baseball superstars. But it takes more than great feats to become a hero of the game. Every generation needs its own heroes, and in each generation that need is answered differently. Heroes reflect the times and societies in which they live and work. The impact made by baseball’s heroes affects the way our society perceives itself, as well as the goals we set for ourselves and for our nation. Award-winning sportswriter Robert Lipsyte presents his vision
Littlefield, Bill, *Champions: Stories of Ten Remarkable Athletes*
A collection of sports profiles exploring athletes who have made extraordinary achievements, grown beyond their successes, and given something back to their sports. (scholastic.com)

Losure, Mary, *The Fairy Ring: Or Elsie and Frances Fool the World*
Frances was nine when she first saw the fairies. They were tiny men, dressed all in green. Nobody but Frances saw them, so her cousin Elsie painted paper fairies and took photographs of them “dancing” around Frances to make the grown-ups stop teasing. The girls promised each other they would never, ever tell that the photos weren’t real. But how were Frances and Elsie supposed to know that their photographs would fall into the hands of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle? And who would have dreamed that the man who created the famous detective Sherlock Holmes believed ardently in fairies — and wanted very much to see one? Mary Losure presents this enthralling true story as a fanciful narrative featuring the original Cottingley fairy photos and previously unpublished drawings and images from the family’s archives. A delight for everyone with a fondness for fairies, and for anyone who has ever started something that spun out of control. (candlewick.com)

Macaulay, David, *The New Way Things Work*
The information age is upon us, baffling us with thousands of complicated state-of-the-art technologies. To help make sense of the computer age, David Macaulay brings us *The New Way Things Work*. This completely updated and expanded edition describes twelve new machines and includes more than seventy new pages detailing the latest innovations. With an entirely new section that guides us through the complicated world of digital machinery, where masses of electronic information can be squeezed onto a single tiny microchip, this revised edition embraces all of the newest developments, from cars to watches. Each scientific principle is brilliantly explained—with the help of a charming, if rather slow-witted, woolly mammoth. (hmhco.com)
Macaulay, David, *The Way We Work*

In this comprehensive and entertaining resource, David Macaulay reveals the inner workings of the human body as only he could. In order to present this complicated subject in an accurate and entertaining way, he put in years of research. He sat in on anatomy classes, dissections, and even reached inside the rib cages of two cadavers to compare their spleen sizes. He observed numerous surgeries, including a ten-hour procedure where a diseased pancreas was removed, as well as one where a worn-out old knee was replaced by a brand new one. This hands-on investigation gives Macaulay a unique perspective to lead his readers on a visual journey through the workings of the human body. The seven sections within the book take us from the cells that form our foundation to the individual systems they build. Each beautifully illustrated spread details different aspects of our complex structure, explaining the function of each and offering up-close glimpses, unique cross-sections and perspectives, and even a little humor along the way. (hmhco.com)

McDonell, Chris, *The Football Game I'll Never Forget: 100 NFL Stars' Stories*

The Football Game I'll Never Forget is a collection of fascinating, firsthand accounts from the 1950s through to the 1990s. Selected from columns in Football Digest, these stories are told by stars from every position on the field and by coaches along the sidelines. Many of the entries are by current (or future) Hall of Fame players from John Elway to Elroy "Crazy Legs" Hirsch, representing the best players of their generation. The Football Game I'll Never Forget features one hundred personal accounts by such NFL legends as: Quarterbacks: John Unitas, Y.A. Tittle, Terry Bradshaw, Joe Montana, Doug Williams, Joe Theismann, Phil Simms Running backs: Marcus Allen, Earl Campbell, Franco Harris, Gale Sayers, Tony Dorsett Receivers: Lynn Swann, John Taylor, John Stallworth, Drew Pearson Linebackers: Dick Butkus, Ray Nitschke Defensive linemen: Merlin Olsen, Ed "Too Tall" Jones Defensive backs: Ronnie Lott, Paul Krause, Ken Houston, Mel Blount Offensive linemen: Mark Bortz, Brad Benson Kickers and special team players: Jan Stenerud, Jim Turner, Pat Leahy Coaches: Mike Ditka, Don Shula, Bill Parcells. The Football Game I'll Never Forget is an ideal book for football fans of all ages. (books.google.com) (This book can be hard to find, but it’s worth tracking down!)
McDonell, Chris, *The Game I'll Never Forget: 100 Hockey Stars' Stories*

A professional hockey player plays in hundreds of games during his career but there is always one game that stands out from the rest — the game he'll never forget. For Dave Schultz it was beating the Soviet Union after the Central Red Army had embarrassed the NHL's best teams in 1976. Maurice “Rocket” Richard recalls the Leafs-Canadiens game where he scored five goals in a playoff game, single-handedly winning the game. Frank Mahovlich remembers scoring his 500th goal after falling -- not the most beautiful way to reach this career milestone. But it's not just the incredible victories, career milestones or amazing goals that stand out. Ted Lindsay recalls playing for the Detroit Red Wings while under a death threat. And for Denis Potvin, it was sleeping in and missing a game during his rookie year, a mistake that could have torpedoed his career before it started. Gordie Howe’s most memorable game was the first game he played with his sons. Spanning 70 years of hockey, *The Game I'll Never Forget* is an unique account of some incredible games and the players who played them. (books.google.com) (This book can be hard to find, but it’s worth tracking down!)

Mckissack, Patricia, *To Establish Justice: Citizenship and the Constitution*

America was founded on the idea of liberty for all. But it has not always achieved that ideal. *To Establish Justice* is an honest and powerful examination of the Supreme Court’s role in legalizing—or negating—civil rights for various groups. From the struggles of Native Americans at the country’s birth to the African American civil rights movement of the 1960s, from the vote for women to the internment of the Japanese during World War II, *To Establish Justice* shows how the Supreme Court has paved the way for both justice and discrimination, and how this important arm of our government has impacted all of our lives. (books.google.com)

Mckissack, Patricia C., *Days Of Jubilee*

For two and a half centuries African-American slaves sang about, prayed for, and waited on their long anticipated freedom — a day of Jubilee. But freedom didn’t come for slaves at the same time *Days of Jubilee* chronicles the various stages of U.S. emancipation beginning with those slaves who were
freed for their service during the Revolutionary War, to those who were freed by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. Using slave narratives, letters, diaries, military orders, and other documents, the McKissacks invite young readers to celebrate coming freedom and the Days of Jubilee. (scholastic.com)

**McPherson, Stephanie Sammartino, Iceberg, Right Ahead!: The Tragedy of the Titanic**

Iceberg, Right Ahead! Only 160 minutes passed between the time a sailor on lookout duty uttered these chilling words and the moment when the mighty ocean liner Titanic totally disappeared into the cold, dark waters of the North Atlantic. This century-old tragedy, which took more than 1,500 lives, still captivates people in the twenty-first century. Seventy-three years separate the two major Titanic events—the 1912 sinking of the vessel and the dramatic 1985 discovery of the wreck by Robert Ballard. But additional stories about the victims, survivors, rescuers, reporters, investigators, and many others show the far-reaching effects this tragedy had on society. Award-winning author Stephanie Sammartino McPherson has collected numerous personal accounts of the event, including the knighted man who spent the rest of his life in seclusion because he was accused of dishonorable behavior in a lifeboat, the stewardess who survived two shipwrecks and a mid-ocean collision, and the New York Times executive who sent multiple reporters to meet the rescue ship, thus earning a national reputation for his newspaper. She also links the Titanic tragedy to changes in regulations worldwide. After a Senate Inquiry and a British trial attempted to assign blame for the disaster, new laws on ship safety were put in place. A group of nations also banded together to form an ice patrol, eventually leading to the formation of the U.S. Coast Guard. Even the most avid Titanic fans will learn something new as McPherson brings the reader up to date on the politics and intrigue still surrounding the wreck—including what modern science can reveal about what really happened to the ship and who was at fault. Prepare to follow the never-ending story of the Titanic into its second century. (learnerbooks.com)

**Metselaar, Menno, Anne Frank: Her life in words and pictures from the archives of The Anne Frank House**

On a summer in 1942, Anne Frank and her family went into hiding from the Nazis. Until the day they arrested her, more than two years later, she kept a diary. ANNE FRANK is the indespensable visual guide to her tragic,
but inspiring story. Produced in association with The Anne Frank House and filled with never-before-published snapshots, school pictures, and photos of the diary and the Secret Annex, this elegantly designed album is both a stand-alone introduction to Anne’s life and a photographic companion to a classic of Holocaust literature. (us.macmillan.com)

**Montgomery, Sy, Temple Grandin: How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World**

When Temple Grandin was born, her parents knew that she was different. Years later she was diagnosed with autism. While Temple’s doctor recommended a hospital, her mother believed in her. Temple went to school instead. Today, Dr. Temple Grandin is a scientist and professor of animal science at Colorado State University. Her world-changing career revolutionized the livestock industry. As an advocate for autism, Temple uses her experience as an example of the unique contributions that autistic people can make. This compelling biography complete with Temple’s personal photos takes us inside her extraordinary mind and opens the door to a broader understanding of autism. (hmhco.com)

**Murphy, Glenn, Why Is Snot Green?**

Scientific answers to mysteries kids really want to know. Sure a lot of kids want to grow up to be astronauts, but according to scientist Glenn Murphy, even MORE kids want to know what happens to astronaut farts. (Short answer: Not good things!) And they want to know: Why don’t all fish die from lightening storms? Why haven’t we all been sucked into a black hole? Do animals talk? Told in a back-and-forth conversational style, Why is Snot Green? presents science just the way kids want to learn it—with lots of laughter. (us.macmillan.com)

**Murphy, Jim, Blizzard!: The Storm That Changed America**

Snow began falling over New York City on March 12, 1888. All around town, people struggled along slippery streets and sidewalks — some seeking the warmth of their homes, some to get to work or to care for the less fortunate, and some to experience what they assumed would be the last little snowfall of one of the
warmest winters on record. What no one realized was that in a very few hours, the wind and snow would bury the city in nearly 21 inches of snow and bring it to a standstill. (scholastic.com)

**Murphy, Jim, *The Great Fire***

The Great Fire of 1871 was one of the most colossal disasters in American history. Overnight, the flourishing city of Chicago was transformed into a smoldering wasteland. The damage was so profound that few people believed the city could ever rise again. It all began one Sunday evening when a small fire broke out inside the O'Learys' barn. The panic was slow to build at first. People ignored the danger signals, and even the fire department was unable to locate the fire. This city, built of wood, was connected by hundreds of miles of wooden sidewalks and roads. In time, wild flames, fueled by a steady wind, engulfed everything in their path. As people took to the crowded streets, hours of mounting chaos, fear, and panic followed before the relentless flames were halted. When at last they were, a new kind of drama was only just beginning. Nearly 100,000 people were homeless and searching through the burnt rubble for their families. By weaving personal accounts of actual survivors together with the carefully researched history of Chicago and the disaster, Jim Murphy constructs a riveting narrative that recreates the event with drama and immediacy. And finally, he reveals how, even in a time of deepest despair, the human spirit triumphed, as the people of Chicago found the courage and strength to build their city once again. (scholastic.com)

**Myers, Walter Dean, *Antarctica: Journeys to the South Pole***

Walter Dean Myers brings the dramatic race to the South Pole to life in Antarctica, tracking the explorers of the South Pole — including James Cook, Ernest Shackleton, and Richard Evelyn Bird — and the dangers they encountered there, as well as their contributions to modern science. The heroism and adventure — and sometimes the ultimate failure — of the expeditions are depicted in Myers's powerful prose, and through photos, maps, and illustrations that complement the text. (scholastic.com)

**Myers, Walter Dean, *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali***

The life and times of Muhammad Ali, who transformed boxing and became one of the world's most
engaging and charismatic athletes, as told by renowned Newbery Honor author Walter Dean Myers. It is the perfect choice for both young adult sports fans and fans of the author himself. (scholastic.com)

Nelson, Kadir, We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball  
In this "New York Times" bestseller, noted artist Kadir Nelson tells the story of baseball's unsung heroes. A sumptuous volume that no baseball fan should be without. Using an Everyman player as his narrator, Kadir Nelson tells the story of Negro League baseball from its beginnings in the 1920s through the decline after Jackie Robinson crossed over to the majors in 1947. Illustrations from oil paintings by artist Kadir Nelson. Includes bibliographical references and index. (scholastic.com)

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux, Bad News for Outlaws: The Remarkable Life of Bass Reeves, Deputy U. S. Marshal  
The story of Bass Reeves is the story of a remarkable African American and a remarkable hero of the Old West. Sitting tall in the saddle, with a wide-brimmed black hat and twin Colt pistols on his belt, Bass Reeves seemed bigger than life. Outlaws feared him. Law-abiding citizens respected him. As a peace officer, he was cunning and fearless. When a lawbreaker heard Bass Reeves had his warrant, he knew it was the end of the trail because Bass Reeves always got his man — dead or alive. He achieved all this in spite of whites who didn’t approve of the notion of a black lawman. (scholastic.com)

Olson, Tod, How to Get Rich in the California Gold Rush: An Adventurer's Guide to the Fabulous Riches Discovered in 1848  
How to Get Rich in the California Gold Rush follows the adventures or the charming, witty, fictitious Thomas Hartley as a way of offering a fascinating and fully historical portrait of life in the California gold fields. Archival imagery pairs with delightful and humorous artwork to produce a visual feast for the eyes. The inimitable Mr. Hartley’s guide is a unique snapshot of a key period in the economic development of our country—and a fun romp through time. (ngchildreensbook.org)
**Orgill, Roxane, *Shout, Sister, Shout!: Ten Girl Singers Who Shaped A Century***

Dip into this collective biography of ten outstanding female singers of popular music in the twentieth century and meet some of the most remarkable women who've ever lived! Through intimate personal details and numerous photographs, interviews, and tidbits of little-known information, music critic Roxane Orgill brings to life ten "girl singers" and the decades in which they did their best work. Readers of *Shout, Sister, Shout!* will learn about the lives, the loves, and the music of: Sophie Tucker (1900s), Ma Rainey (1910s), Bessie Smith (1920s), Ethel Merman (1930s), Judy Garland (1940s), Anita O'Day (1950s), Joan Baez (1960s), Bette Midler (1970s), Madonna (1980s), Lucinda Williams (1990s). Writing in a friendly, readable style, Roxane Orgill has created a book of great distinction that will fascinate and inspire readers of all ages. (simonandschuster.com)

**Ottaviani, Jim, *T-Minus: The Race to the Moon***

In T-Minus the exciting story of two world superpowers racing to land a man on the moon is depicted through compelling comics artwork, taking readers through the history of the race and turning the engineers and astronauts involved into vivid and real characters. The story unfolds through the eyes of the figures working behind the scenes to make this miracle happen, showing every triumph and catastrophe along the way, and culminating in the dramatic event itself. (books.simonandschuster.com) (This is a graphic novel)

**Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw, *When the Wolves Returned: Restoring Nature's Balance in Yellowstone***

Yellowstone National Park’s majestic geologic wonders and remarkable wildlife draw millions of visitors each year. But there was a time when these natural treasures were in great danger, all because after years of unrestricted hunting, one key piece of the puzzle had been eliminated—the wolf. Now, more than a decade after scientists realized the wolves’ essential role and returned them to Yellowstone, the park’s natural balance is gradually being restored. The informative dual-level text and spectacular full-color photographs show the wolves in the natural habitat that was
almost lost without them. Readers of all ages will be inspired by the delicate natural system that is Yellowstone. (books.google.com) For a really cool short video about this topic, search for "How Wolves Change Rivers" by Sustainable Man.

Pizzoli, Greg, **Tricky Vic: The Impossibly True Story of the Man Who Sold the Eiffel Tower**

In the early 1900s, Robert Miller, a.k.a. “Count Victor Lustig,” moved to Paris hoping to be an artist. A con artist, that is. He used his ingenious scams on unsuspecting marks all over the world, from the Czech Republic, to Atlantic ocean liners, and across America. Tricky Vic pulled off his most daring con in 1925, when he managed to “sell” the Eiffel Tower to one of the city’s most successful scrap metal dealers! Six weeks later, he tried to sell the Eiffel Tower all over again. Vic was never caught. For that particular scam, anyway.... Kids will love to read about Vic’s thrilling life, and teachers will love the informational sidebars and back matter. Award-winner Greg Pizzoli’s humorous and vibrant graphic style of illustration mark a bold approach to picture book biography. (penguinrandomhouse.com)

Raczka, Bob, **Lemonade: and Other Poems Squeezed from a Single Word**

Play with your words! A brand-new poetic form that turns word puzzles into poetry. Part anagram, part rebus, part riddle—the poems in Lemonade: and Other Poems Squeezed from a Single Word capture a scene from a child’s daily life and present a puzzle to solve. Sometimes sweet and sometimes funny but always clever, these poems are fun to read and even more fun for kids to write. Bob Raczka is a fresh, new voice in children’s poetry who knows that fun and games can turn a poetry lesson into lemonade! (us.macmillan.com)

Ride, Sally, **Mission: Planet Earth: Our World and Its Climate—and How Humans Are Changing Them**

From an American hero and dedicated scientist: A compelling introduction to the changes taking place in Earth's climate, written for the audience that matters most to our planet's future. Beginning with Sally Ride's unique, astronaut's-eye view of Earth's fragile atmosphere, Mission: Planet Earth describes how water, air, and other climate systems shape our world, and how a
disruption in one part of the system can spread through the entire planet. Drawing on the latest scientific research and presenting a clear, even-handed account of the current state of climate studies, illustrated with helpful diagrams and stunning photographs of and from the front lines of climate change, here is a celebration of Earth's natural complexity—and a call to action for a new generation. (us.macmillan.com)

**Robinson, Sharon, *Promises To Keep: How Jackie Robinson Changed America***

Sharon Robinson shares memories of her famous father in this warm, loving biography of the man who broke the color barrier in baseball. Jackie Robinson was an outstanding athlete, a devoted family man and a dedicated civil rights activist. The author explores the fascinating circumstances surrounding Jackie Robinson's breakthrough. She also tells the off-the-field story of Robinson's hard-won victories and the inspiring effect he had on his family, his community, and his country. Includes never-before-published letters by Jackie Robinson, as well as photos from the Robinson family archives. (scholastic.com)

**Roche, Art, *Comic Strips: Create Your Own Comic Strips from Start to Finish***

Kids love comic strips...and now they can devise their own imaginative illustrations and stories with the help of a professional artist who designs for the Cartoon Network. He provides advice on the basic tools and materials; demonstrates how to construct bodies and faces; explains how to come up with appealing characters and build an ensemble cast; and provides ideas for fine-tuning the finished work with proper inking techniques, shading, and colour use. There are loads of practical tips and hands-on activities to hone technique, along with tutorials on writing jokes. Plus, Roche gives the low-down on the big business of comic strips, including suggestions for getting published. To top it off, readers watch as the author produces a brand-new strip, from start to finish. (books.google.com)

**Rubin, Susan Goldman, *Freedom Summer: The 1964 Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi***

In 1964, Mississippi civil rights groups banded together to fight Jim Crow laws in a state where 6.4 percent of eligible black voters were registered. They recruited thousands of student volunteers...
from across the United States who defied segregation by living with local black hosts, opening Freedom Schools, and canvassing to register voters. Everyone involved knew there would be risks but were nonetheless shocked when during the first week three civil rights workers disappeared and were found murdered. The organizers’ worst fears were realized as volunteers, local activists, and hosts faced terror on a daily basis. The summer unleashed an unstoppable wave of determination from black Mississippian to demand their rights and helped bring about a new political order in the American South. (holidayhouse.com)

Rubin, Susan Goldman, Whaam! The Art and Life of Roy Lichtenstein
Classically trained in painting and drawing, Roy found inspiration from cartoons, newspaper comics, and children’s books—images most people didn’t consider “serious” art. He also chose to paint, in meticulous detail, the building blocks of painting—a single brushstroke or the back of a canvas—drawing attention to the way that artists use these tools. Roy and the other Pop Artists, including Andy Warhol, broke down the rules about what makes proper subjects for fine art. In over a thousand paintings and numerous other works, Roy brought familiar images into new light and captured the imagination of the world. The book includes a bibliography, an index, and a list of museums where you can see Lichtenstein’s work. (abramsbooks.com)

Sayre, Henry M., Cave Paintings to Picasso: The Inside Scoop on 50 Art Masterpieces
From prehistoric cave paintings to the Mona Lisa, from Nefertiti to Andy Warhol’s Big Campbell’s Soup Can 19, this book pairs full-color reproductions of 50 of the world’s most celebrated masterpieces with brief, kid-accessible stories about how they were made, who made them and where they fit in the fascinating history of art. Featuring art from Europe, Africa, Asia, and America, organized chronologically, and including timelines and a glossary of art terms, this book is a wonderful overview of art and culture through the ages. (chroniclebooks.com)

Sheinkin, Steve, Lincoln’s Grave Robbers
A true crime thriller — the first book for teens to tell the nearly unknown tale of the brazen attempt to steal Abraham Lincoln’s
body! The action begins in October of 1875, as Secret Service agents raid the Fulton, Illinois, workshop of master counterfeiter Ben Boyd. Soon after Boyd is hauled off to prison, members of his counterfeiting ring gather in the back room of a smoky Chicago saloon to discuss how to spring their ringleader. Their plan: Grab Lincoln’s body from its Springfield tomb, stash it in the sand dunes near Lake Michigan, and demand, as a ransom, the release of Ben Boyd and $200,000 in cash. From here, the action alternates between the conspirators, the Secret Service agents on their trail, and the undercover agent moving back and forth between the two groups. Along the way readers get glimpses into the inner workings of counterfeiting, grave robbing, detective work, and the early days of the Secret Service. The plot moves toward a wild climax as robbers and lawmen converge at Lincoln’s tomb on election night: November 7, 1876. (scholastic.com)

Sheinkin, Steve, The Notorious Benedict Arnold: A True Story of Adventure, Heroism & Treachery
Most people know that Benedict Arnold was America's first, most notorious traitor. Few know that he was also one of its greatest Revolutionary War heroes. Steve Sheinkin's accessible biography, The Notorious Benedict Arnold, introduces young readers to the real Arnold: reckless, heroic, and driven. Packed with first-person accounts, astonishing American Revolution battle scenes, and surprising twists, this is a gripping and true adventure tale from history. (us.macmillan.com)

Smith, David J., If America Were a Village: A Book about the People of the United States
America, with all its diversity, is not easily defined. David J. Smith's If America Were a Village takes a snapshot - past, present and future - to help define America for children. Using the same successful metaphor of the international bestseller If the World Were a Village, the book shrinks down America to a village of 100. The metaphor helps children easily understand American ethnic origins, religions, family profiles, occupations, wealth, belongings and more. Shelagh Armstrong's expansive illustrations imagine America as a classic, vibrant small town. Who are the people living in this vast and varied nation? Where did they come from? What are they like today? How do they compare with people in other countries? The book's simple
statistical analysis provides a new way of learning about where people live in America, the state of their health, the shapes and sizes of families, what they use and more - forming a concise picture of a country. (kidscanpress.com) If you enjoyed this book, you will also like If the World Were a Village by the same author.

Sturm, James, Satchel Paige: Striking Out Jim Crow
Baseball Hall of Famer Leroy "Satchel" Paige (1906-1982) changed the face of the game in a career that spanned five decades. Much has been written about this larger-than-life pitcher, but when it comes to Paige, fact does not easily separate from fiction. He made a point of writing his own history -- and then rewriting it. A tall, lanky fireballer, he was arguably the Negro League's hardest thrower, most entertaining storyteller and greatest gate attraction. Now the Center for Cartoon Studies turns a graphic novelist's eye to Paige's story. Told from the point of view of a sharecropper, this compelling narrative follows Paige from game to game as he travels throughout the segregated South. (scholastic.com) This is a graphic novel.

Stutt, Ryan, The Skateboarding Field Manual
An illustrated guide to skateboarding skills and techniques. Skateboarding is more than a sport; it is a passion and way of life driven by those who love to push the limits of gravity and inertia while bending the notions of social acceptability. The Skateboarding Field Manual addresses both the intricacies of the sport and the intangibles of its culture. Skateboard enthusiast and journalist Ryan Stutt provides outstanding advice, which ranges from how to stand on your board and how to fall without causing injuries to how to perform grinds, slides and flips. This comprehensive reference is simply the very best manual on the sport of skateboarding. There are 33 maneuvers and tricks for beginners to intermediates, all illustrated with over 350 custom color photographs by skateboarding photographer Harry Gils. (us.macmillan.com)

Thomas, Lyn, 100% Pure Fake: Gross Out Your Friends and Family with 25 Great Special Effects!
Parents, beware of this book. With 100% Pure Fake, the art of scaring the pants off friends and family reaches new levels of ease and sophistication. Pranksters can now amaze, alarm and totally disgust everyone with these easy-to-make Pure Fakes. These 25
safe, kid-tested recipes that can be made with ingredients found in most households, including corn syrup, rolled oats, makeup and pasta. Other ingredients, such as school glue, food coloring, tempera paint and gelatin, are widely available in grocery or craft stores. Each project is presented with step-by-step instructions and includes warnings for allergy and mess alerts, non-edible and edible projects, and when kids should get adult help. Parents, beware of this book. With 100% Pure Fake, the art of scaring the pants off friends and family reaches new levels of ease and sophistication. Pranksters can now amaze, alarm and totally disgust everyone with these easy-to-make Pure Fakes. These 25 safe, kid-tested recipes that can be made with ingredients found in most households, including corn syrup, rolled oats, makeup and pasta. Other ingredients, such as school glue, food coloring, tempera paint and gelatin, are widely available in grocery or craft stores. Each project is presented with step-by-step instructions and includes warnings for allergy and mess alerts, non-edible and edible projects, and when kids should get adult help. (kidscanpress.com)

Various, Scientists in the Field Series

I couldn’t choose just one (or even a few) books from this award-winning series to recommend. There are over 30 books and they are all great. Each one follows a group of scientists as they work with animals or in a certain habitat. You’ll learn about how the scientists work, what questions they are trying to answer, and what problems they are trying to solve. If you are interested in animals or nature, you must read some of these books. Some of the titles include Chasing Cheetahs: the Race to Save Africa’s Fastest Cat; Stronger Than Steel : Spider Silk DNA and the Quest for Better Bulletproof Vests, Sutures, and Parachute Rope; The Hive Detectives : Chronicle of a Honey Bee Catastrophe; Diving to a Deep-Sea Volcano. Don’t those sound amazing? You can find the entire series listed at sciencemeetsadventure.com. They also have videos, information about enhanced ebooks, and additional information about the authors. (Ms. Bock)
Various, *Who Was...? Biographies*

There are over 30 books in this series. You can see the whole list and keep track of which ones you’ve read at whowasbookseries.com. There are biographies about athletes, musicians, writers, artists, world leaders, adventurers, scientists... You name it, they have it. They are easily distinguishable by the enormous heads the people have on the covers. Some biographies are boring, but not these ones! They tell the stories of people’s lives in a fun, interesting way. See if you can read them all! (Ms. Bock)

Vass, George, *The Game I’ll Never Forget: 36 Former Stars Recall*

The most popular and widely read feature of Baseball Digest, the oldest monthly magazine devoted to our national pastime, has been "The Game I'll Never Forget", a series of first-hand recollections by many of the game's greatest names of their most memorable experiences, as told to veteran baseball writer George Vass. Such Hall of Famers as Mickey Mantle, Tom Seaver, Don Drysdale, Ernie Banks, Carl Yastrzemski, Ralph Kiner, Bill Veeck, and Duke Snider are included in fifty exciting, revealing, and informative stories collected together for the first time. These will undoubtedly appeal to the general reader as much as to devoted baseball fans, many of whom are sure to share the memories of specific games and incidents recounted by favorite players. Vass's "as-told-to" approach had enabled his subjects to tell, in their own words and in their unmistakable accents, their dramatic -- or occasionally humbling -- experiences on the diamond. (books.google.com) This book can be hard to find, but it's worth tracking down!

Weate, Jeremy, *Young Person's Guide to Philosophy*

From Socrates and Plato to Kant, Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir, here is an entertaining look at the world's greatest thinkers and their ideas, presented in a lively way that makes this intriguing subject accessible to all ages - Discover the ideas and famous sayings at the heart of philosophy and understand their meanings-
Find out about the people who spent their lives trying to find the answers. (books.google.com)

**Winchester, Simon, *The Day the World Exploded: The Earthshaking Catastrophe at Krakatoa***

Eruptions. Explosions. Shock waves. Tsunamis. The almighty explosion that destroyed the volcano island of Krakatoa was followed by an immense tsunami that killed more than thirty thousand people. The effects of the waves were felt as far away as France, and bodies were washed up in Zanzibar. Today, one hundred and twenty-five years after the volcano erupted in one of the greatest catastrophes the world has ever known, the name Krakatoa is still synonymous with disaster. In this illustrated account based on Simon Winchester's bestselling Krakatoa, the colossal explosion is brought to vivid life. From the ominous warnings leading up to the eruption to the wave of killings it provoked, here is an engaging and insightful look at what happened on the day the world exploded. (books.google.com)

**Wyatt, Valerie, *How to Build Your Own Country***

How to Build Your Own Country is an interactive and totally original learning experience that shows kids how to build their very own country from scratch. This book, the only one of its kind, offers children the expertise and advice they'll need to plant their flag in the backyard, in the bedroom or online. Kids will be amazed to discover that anyone can do it. Nation-building advice is peppered with examples of events that have shaped countries throughout history, teaching young readers about government, elections, geography and global issues. Backed up with lots of amazing examples of real micronations - some established or ruled by kids - How to Build Your Own Country promises to inspire, entertain and inform young nation-builders. (kidsanpress.com)
About Ms. Bock

Amanda Bock is the Library Teacher at the Angier School in Newton, MA. She has been a Librarian for 14 years and a children’s bookseller for nearly as long. Ms. Bock has Masters degrees in Library Science and Children’s Literature, which means she went to school for 4 extra years after college. A voracious reader as a younger person, Ms. Bock now identifies more with reluctant readers. She spends more time carrying books around to look cool instead of actually reading them. But, she’s trying to get back in the habit of reading and has made a goal to read 100 books this year. You can see how far behind she is at goodreads.com/amandabock.

My Notes

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