

Excel Academy Charter School

Rising 7th Grade Recommended Reading List¹

* Not too Challenging ** Challenging *** Very Challenging

➔ - denotes “hot,” popular titles

Sports

➔ **Travel Team (and other titles) by Mike Lupica** *Twelve-year-old Danny Walker may be the smallest kid on the basketball court -- but don't tell him that. Because no one plays with more heart or court sense. But none of that matters when he is cut from his local travel team, the very same team his father led to national prominence as a boy. Danny's father, still smarting from his own troubles, knows Danny isn't the only kid who was cut for the wrong reason, and together, this washed-up former player and a bunch of never-say-die kids prove that the heart simply cannot be measured.

Ghost and other titles in the Track series by Jason Reynolds * Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves.

Goal: the Dream Begins (series) by Robert Rigby * While growing up on the tough streets of Los Angeles, Santiago's greatest joy is playing soccer. So it is a dream come true when a British scout sees him playing in the park and offers him a trial with one of England's top Premiership clubs. Determined to succeed, Santiago leaves behind his struggling family and his modest home, and flies halfway around the world to give it his best shot.

Taking Sides by Gary Soto * Lincoln is in a jam when his basketball team at his new school--where the students are rich and mostly white--faces his old team from the barrio on the boards. How can he play his best against his friends? No matter who wins, it looks like it will be lose-lose for Lincoln.

➔ **Tangerine by Edward Bloor** ** Tangerine, Florida—once known for its citrus groves—is now an uninhabitable quagmire of muck fires and school-swallowing sinkholes. Still, twelve-year-old Paul sees the move as a way to start anew, maybe even make a name for himself in middle school soccer—despite his father's obsession with his high-school-age brother Erik's future in football.

➔ **Heart of a Champion (and other titles) by Carl Deuker** ** On the day Seth Barham met Jimmy Winter, his life changed. Seth had been an unfocused, confused pre-teen who had never come to terms with his father's death when he was seven. He meets Jimmy in a park as Jimmy's overbearing father is putting his son through intense baseball drills. As their friendship develops, Jimmy's intensity and self-assurance on the playing field spills over into Seth's life, helping him to blossom as a student and a baseball player. However, Jimmy's home life begins to unravel when his parents divorce.

Foul Trouble by John Feinstein ** Terrell Jamerson is the #1 high school basketball player in the country. His team is poised to win State, top colleges are lining up to give him scholarships, and everyone says he could play in the NBA tomorrow. But it only takes one false step to lose everything.

➔ **Rising Above: How 11 Athletes Overcame Challenges in their Youth to Become Stars by Gregory Zuckerman** ** Athlete after athlete in this book found discipline, hope, and inspiration on the playing field, rising above their circumstances. Filled with first-hand accounts from stars who exemplify the idea of enduring at all costs, Rising Above will serve as a must-read source of inspiration for kids and sports fans of all ages.

Rising Above: Inspiring Women in Sports by Gregory Zuckerman ** Behold the power of women! These are the inspirational real-life stories of female superstar athletes Serena and Venus Williams, Simone Biles, Carli Lloyd, and more -- role models all.

¹ All book descriptions were adapted from www.amazon.com.

➔ ***The Crossover and Booked both by Kwame Alexander (written in VERSE) ****** *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.*

➔ ***Hoops (and other sports titles) by Walter Dean Myers ****** *All eyes are on seventeen-year-old Lonnie Jackson while he practices with his team for a city-wide basketball Tournament of Champions. His coach, Cal, knows Lonnie has what it takes to be a pro-basketball player, but warns him about giving in to the pressure. Cal knows because he, too, once had the chance--but sold out.*

➔ ***Keeper by Mal Peet ****** *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 narrates a spellbinding tale that begins in the South American rainforest, where a ghostly but very real mentor, the Keeper, emerges to teach a poor, gawky boy the most thrilling secrets of the game.*

➔ ***Peak by Roland Smith ****** *After fourteen-year-old Peak Marcello is arrested for scaling a New York City skyscraper, he's left with a choice: wither away in juvenile detention or fly to Kathmandu with his long-lost father. Peak quickly learns that his father's renewed interest in him has strings attached. As owner of Peak Expeditions, he wants his son to be the youngest person to reach the Everest summit.*

Historical Fiction and Fiction about Other Cultures and Countries

***All the Broken Pieces* by Ann Burg (written in VERSE) *** *Matt, a Vietnamese boy abandoned by his American soldier father, is relinquished by his desperate mother, hoping that he might have a chance for a healthy, happy life in the United States. Matt has experienced the horrors of war and has witnessed the land mine maiming of his three-year-old brother. But it's Matt's experience in seventh grade where he is bullied, ridiculed, and blamed for the death of American soldiers, and he becomes the ultimate scapegoat for classmates echoing the feelings of their elders. And he feels unwanted by everyone, including his loving adoptive parents.*

***Caminar* by Skila Brown (written in VERSE) *** *Carlos knows that when the soldiers arrive with warnings about the Communist rebels, it is time to be a man and defend the village, keep everyone safe. But Mama tells him not yet — he's still her quiet moonfaced boy. The soldiers laugh at the villagers, and before they move on, a neighbor is found dangling from a tree, a sign on his neck: Communist. Mama tells Carlos to run and hide, then try to find her. . . . Numb and alone, he must join a band of guerillas as they trek to the top of the mountain where Carlos's abuela lives. Will he be in time, and brave enough, to warn them about the soldiers? What will he do then? A novel in verse inspired by actual events during Guatemala's 1981 civil war, Caminar is the moving story of a boy who loses nearly everything before discovering who he really is.*

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

***Downtown Boy* by Juan Felipe Herrera (written in VERSE) *** *In 1950s California, Juanito is tired of moving with his migrant-worker. He aches for his often-absent father. Finally, Papi returns, and home becomes San Diego, where Juanito settles into a deeper sense of place and faces family secrets and hardship. Herrera's free-verse lines make poetry from the sounds and rhythms in everyday life: one passage, for example, juxtaposes the Boys' Club boxers' relentlessly bouncing feet with Juanito's memories of constant movement. This is the vivid portrait of a family, the struggles of undocumented immigrants, and a boy's search for the young man he will become: "Sometimes I see a boy / blurry and worried; / sometimes I see a boy / strong and tall."*

→ ***One Crazy Summer* by Rita Williams-Garcia *** *It is 1968, and three black sisters from Brooklyn have been put on a California-bound plane by their father to spend a month with their mother, a poet who ran off years before and is living in Oakland. It's the summer after Black Panther founder Huey Newton was jailed and member Bobby Hutton was gunned down trying to surrender to the Oakland police, and there are men in berets shouting "Black Power" on the news. Eleven-year-old Delphine has only a few fragmented memories of her mother, Cecile, a poet who wrote verses on walls and cereal boxes, played smoky jazz records, and abandoned the family in Brooklyn after giving birth to her third daughter. Set during one of the most tumultuous years in recent American history, One Crazy Summer is the heartbreaking, funny tale of three girls who travel to Oakland, California, in 1968 in search of the mother who abandoned them.*

Before We Were Free* by Julia Alvarez * *Anita de la Torre never questioned her freedom living in the Dominican Republic. But by her 12th birthday in 1960, most of her relatives have emigrated to the United States, her Tío Toni has disappeared without a trace, and the government's secret police terrorize her remaining family because of their suspected opposition of el Trujillo's dictatorship. Using the strength and courage of her family, Anita must overcome her fears and fly to freedom, leaving all that she once knew behind.*

→ ***Chains and the sequels Forge and Ashes* by Laurie Halse Andersen **** *As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom.*

→ ***Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Andersen **** *During the summer of 1793, Mattie Cook lives above the family coffee shop with her widowed mother and grandfather. Mattie spends her days avoiding chores and making plans to turn the family business into the finest Philadelphia has ever seen. But 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. (For a non-fiction account of these same events read: [An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Plague Epidemic of 1793](#) by Jim Murphy.)

Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal (and other titles) by Margarita Engle (written in VERSE) ** In 1906, 14-year-old Mateo, who is desperate to leave his Cuban home, lies about his age to secure a job digging the Panama Canal. After arriving in Panama, he soon discovers that the “land of many butterflies” is also the land of rain, mud, and rock. Instead of becoming a digger—the job of his new friend, a Jamaican named Henry—Mateo finds work as a train-track mover. Both jobs are dangerous, backbreaking, and hellish. Mateo’s life becomes better when, first, he meets a local girl, Anita, with whom he falls in love, and, second, when he becomes a part-time assistant to mapmaker and artist Augusto, who teaches him how to sketch. Engle tells her stirring story in multiple voices, including President Theodore Roosevelt and even the fauna and flora of the jungle. And she vividly presents her Panamanian setting and the often cruel context of the canal’s construction and its system of segregation.

➔ ***Refugee by Alan Gratz*** ** Three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers -- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end. This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

Uprising by Margaret Peterson Haddix ** Bella, newly arrived in New York from Italy, gets a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. There, along with hundreds of other immigrants, she works long hours at a grueling job under terrible conditions. Yetta, a coworker from Russia, has been crusading for a union, and when factory conditions worsen, she helps workers rise up in a strike. . . . Bella and Yetta are at work on March 25, 1911, when a spark ignites some cloth and the building is engulfed in fire, leading to one of the worst workplace disasters ever.

The Lions of Little Rock by Kristin Levine ** As twelve-year-old Marlee starts middle school in 1958 Little Rock, it feels like her whole world is falling apart. Until she meets Liz, the new girl at school. Liz is everything Marlee wishes she could be: she's brave, brash and always knows the right thing to say. But when Liz leaves school without even a good-bye, the rumor is that Liz was caught passing for white. Marlee decides that doesn't matter. She just wants her friend back. And to stay friends, Marlee and Liz are even willing to take on segregation and the dangers their friendship could bring to both their families.

When Morning Comes by Arushi Raina ** A series of chance meetings changes everything. A chain of events is set in motion--a failed plot, a murdered teacher, and a secret movement of students that has spread across the township. And the students will rise during the Soweto, South Africa uprising of June 1976.

Betty Before X by Ilyasah Shabazz ** This moving fictional account of the early life of the late civil rights leader and widow of Malcolm X draws on the recollections of family and friends. The result is a heart-rending imagining of Shabazz's personal challenges as well as a rare, intimate look at the complex roots of the American civil rights movement. A personal, political and powerful imagining of the early life of the late activist.

Under a Painted Sky by Stacey Lee* ** All Samantha wanted was to move back to New York and pursue her music, which was difficult enough being a Chinese girl in Missouri, 1849. Then her fate takes a turn for the worse after a tragic accident leaves her with nothing and she breaks the law in self-defense. With help from Annamae, a runaway slave she met at the scene of her crime, the two flee town for the unknown frontier. But life on the Oregon Trail is unsafe for two girls. Disguised as Sammy and Andy, two boys heading for the California gold rush, each search for a link to their past and struggle to avoid any unwanted attention. Until they merge paths with a band of cowboys turned allies, and Samantha can't stop herself from falling for one. But the law is closing in on them and new setbacks come each day, and the girls will quickly learn there are not many places one can hide on the open trail, woo

All We Have Left by Wendy Mills* ** Now: Sixteen-year-old Jesse is used to living with the echoes of the past. Her older brother died in the September 11th attacks, and her dad since has filled their home with anger and grief. When Jesse gets caught up with the wrong crowd, one momentary hate-fueled decision turns her life upside down. The only way to make amends is to face the past, starting Jesse on a journey that will reveal the truth about how her brother died. Then: In 2001, sixteen-year-old Alia is proud to be Muslim . . . it's being a teenager that she finds difficult. After being grounded for a stupid mistake, Alia decides to confront her father at his Manhattan office, putting her in danger she never could have imagined. When the planes collide into the Twin Towers, Alia is trapped inside one of the buildings. In the final hours, she meets a boy who will change everything for her as the flames rage around them.

Riot by Walter Dean Myers* ** The Civil War is raging and in a desperate effort to find more recruits, the Union begins a draft - a draft with a difference. The wealthy can pay \$300 to be released from their obligation, but the poor must go and fight and die. In New York City, the recently arrived Irish are the hardest hit by the draft and during the long hot days of July the city explodes in a rash of arson, marches, attacks, and lynchings, with the immigrant Irish taking out their anger on the black inhabitants of the city. Fourteen-year-old Claire, the daughter of an Irish mother and a black father, has never had to choose between the two sides of the family - she has never had reason to consider her own identity. When she learns that a friend of hers is in danger, she decides to go to her aid, but by venturing out on the streets, she puts her own life at risk. Myers's use of the screenplay format allows his readers a birds-eye view of the four hot days in July when New York City burned.

Romance (Natural and Supernatural)

***The Princess Diaries* by Meg Cabot** *-** Mia Thermopolis is your average urban ninth grader. Even though she lives in Greenwich Village with a single mom who is a semifamous painter, Mia still puts on her Doc Martens one at a time, and the most exciting things she ever dreams about are smacking lips with sexy senior Josh Richter, "six feet of unadulterated hotness," and passing Algebra I. Then Mia's dad comes to town, and drops a major bomb. Turns out he's not just a European politician as he's always lead her to believe, but actually the prince of a small country! And Mia, his only heir, is now considered the crown princess of Genovia!

***Angus, Thongs, and Full Frontal Snogging (Confessions of Georgia Nicolson series)* by Louise**

Rennison *-** Georgia has a precocious 3-year-old sister who tends to leave wet diapers at the foot of her bed, an insane cat who is prone to leg-shredding "Call of the Wild" episodes, and embarrassing parents who make her want to escape to Stonehenge and dance with the Druids. No wonder 14-year-old Georgia Nicolson laments, "Honestly, what is the point?" Georgia records the momentous events of her life--and they are all momentous--in her diary, which serves as a truly hilarious account of what it means to be a modern girl on the cusp of womanhood.

***How To Be Popular* by Meg Cabot** ** Do you want to be popular? Everyone wants to be popular—or at least, Stephanie Landry does. Steph's been the least popular girl in her class since a certain cherry Super Big Gulp catastrophe five years earlier. Does being popular matter? It matters a lot—to Steph. That's why this year, she has a plan to get in with the It Crowd in no time flat. She's got a secret weapon: an old book called—what else?—How to Be Popular.

➔ ***The Mediator (series)* by Meg Cabot** ** Suze is a mediator -- a liaison between the living and the dead. In other words, she sees dead people. And they won't leave her alone until she helps them resolve their unfinished business with the living. But Jesse, the hot ghost haunting her bedroom, doesn't seem to need her help. Which is a relief, because Suze has just moved to sunny California and plans to start fresh, with trips to the mall instead of the cemetery, and surfing instead of spectral visitations. But the very first day at her new school, Suze realizes it's not that easy. There's a ghost with revenge on her mind ... and Suze happens to be in the way.

➔ ***Vanished (series)* by Meg Cabot** ** Jessica Mastriani has never liked attention. All she wants is to make it to high school graduation like any ordinary girl. But when Jess is struck by lightning, she becomes anything but ordinary: suddenly she has the ability to locate missing children. Now Jess is getting noticed in all the wrong ways and by all the wrong people. The media is obsessed with her and her story. The FBI is tapping her phone. And what's going on with sexy senior Rob?

***Song for Bijou* by Josh Farrar** ** Life for Alex Schrader has never involved girls. He goes to an all-boys prep school and spends most of his time goofing around with his friends. But all that changes the first time he meets Bijou Doucet, a Haitian girl recently relocated to Brooklyn after the earthquake--and he is determined to win her heart. For Bijou, change is the only constant, and she's surprised every day by how different life is in America, especially when a boy asks her out. Alex quickly learns that there are rules when it comes to girls--both in Haitian culture and with his own friends. And Bijou soon learns that she doesn't have to let go of her roots to find joy in her new life. Told in alternating viewpoints against the vibrant backdrop of Haitian-American culture, Alex and Bijou take their first tender steps toward love in this heartwarming story.

***The Fill-In Boyfriend* and other titles by Jacqueline Kasie West** ** When Gia Montgomery's boyfriend, Bradley, dumps her in the parking lot of her high school prom, she decides to do the unthinkable...convince the cute guy waiting to pick up his sister to pretend to be her boyfriend for the night. The task is simple: two hours, zero commitment, a few white lies. The problem is that days after prom, she can't stop thinking about her fill-in boyfriend. But can Gia turn her fake boyfriend into a real one without exposing her lie and possibly destroying her friendships and her newfound relationship? Wonderfully romantic.

Jinx by Meg Cabot *** *Jean Honeychurch is so unlucky that even her family calls her Jinx. To escape an unpleasant situation with a boy who refuses to let her end their relationship, Jinx moves from Iowa to Manhattan to live with her aunt and her family in their swanky Upper East Side townhouse. It's no surprise that the klutzy, small-town 16-year-old doesn't fit in with über-chic cousin Tory and her friends, and she definitely doesn't share their fondness for drugs and alcohol. Tory, who has been practicing witchcraft for some time, soon realizes that Jinx also has the gift and invites her cousin to join her coven. But Jinx knows the dangers of playing with magic and refuses.*

→ **City of Bones (The Mortal Instruments series) by Cassandra Clare ***** *When fifteen-year-old Clary Fray heads out to the Pandemonium Club in New York City, she hardly expects to witness a murder—much less a murder committed by three teenagers covered with strange tattoos and brandishing bizarre weapons. Then the body disappears into thin air. It's hard to call the police when the murderers are invisible to everyone else and when there is nothing—not even a smear of blood—to show that a boy has died. Or was he a boy? This is Clary's first meeting with the Shadowhunters, warriors dedicated to ridding the earth of demons. It's also her first encounter with Jace, a Shadowhunter who looks a little like an angel and acts a lot like a jerk. Within twenty-four hours Clary is pulled into Jace's world with a vengeance, when her mother disappears and Clary herself is attacked by a demon.*

Bright Lights, Dark City by Stephen Emond *** *Walter Wilcox has never been in love. That is, until he meets Naomi, and sparks, and clever jokes, fly. But when his cop dad is caught in a racial profiling scandal, Walter, who is white, and Naomi, who is African American, are called out at school, home, and online. Can their bond (and mutual love of the Foo Fighters) keep them together?*

Nonfiction

I Got This!: To Gold and Beyond by Laurie Hernandez * Gold medal-winning Olympic Laurie Hernandez shares her story in her own words in this debut book for fans of all ages. At sixteen years old, Laurie Hernandez has already made many of her dreams come true—and yet it's only the beginning for this highly accomplished athlete. A Latina Jersey girl, Laurie saw her life take a dramatic turn last summer when she was chosen to be a part of the 2016 US Olympic gymnastics team.

Blizzard!: The Storm that Changed America by Jim Murphy * 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 ferocious standstill.

Antarctica: Journey to the South Pole by Walter Dean Myers * The dramatic race to the South Pole, 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 science. The heroism and adventure - and the ultimate failure - of the expeditions are depicted in Myer's powerful prose, and through the photos, maps, and illustrations that complement the text.

➔ ***Let Me Play: The Story of Title IX: The Law that Changed the Future of Girls in America by Karen Blumenthal*** ** 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. This is a powerful tale of courage and persistence, the stories of the people who believed that girls could do anything -- and were willing to fight to prove it.

Flags of Our Fathers: A Young People's Edition by James Bradley (adapted by Michael French) ** In this unforgettable chronicle of perhaps the most famous moment in American military history, James Bradley has captured the glory, the triumph, the heartbreak, and the legacy of the six men who raised the flag at Iwo Jima. Here is the true story behind the immortal photograph that has come to symbolize the courage and indomitable will of America. In February 1945, American Marines plunged into the surf at Iwo Jima—and into history. Through a hail of machine-gun and mortar fire that left the beaches strewn with comrades, they battled to the island's highest peak. And after climbing through a landscape of hell itself, they raised a flag. Now the son of one of the flagraisers has written a powerful account of six very different young men who came together in a moment that will live forever.

➔ ***How They Croaked: The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous and How They Choked: Failures, Flops and Flaws of the Awfully Famous by Georgia Bragg*** ** Over the course of history men and women have lived and died. In fact, getting sick and dying can be a big, ugly mess-especially before the modern medical care that we all enjoy today. *How They Croaked* relays all the gory details of how nineteen world figures gave up the ghost. Readers will be fascinated well past the final curtain, and feel lucky to live in a world with painkillers, X-rays, soap, and 911.

➔ ***A Life in Motion: An Unlikely Ballerina by Misty Copeland*** ** As the first African-American principal dancer at the American Ballet Theatre, Misty Copeland has been breaking down all kinds of barriers in the world of dance. But when she first started dancing—at the late age of thirteen—no one would have guessed the shy, underprivileged girl would one day make history in her field. Determination meets dance in this memoir by the first African-American principal dancer in American Ballet Theatre history.

***I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives* by Martin Ganda** ** *It started as an assignment. Everyone in Caitlin's class wrote to an unknown student somewhere in a distant place. Martin was lucky to even receive a pen-pal letter. There were only ten letters, and fifty kids in his class. But he was the top student, so he got the first one. That letter was the beginning of a correspondence that spanned six years and changed two lives. In this compelling dual memoir, Caitlin and Martin recount how they became best friends --and better people--through their long-distance exchange. Their story will inspire you to look beyond your own life and wonder about the world at large and your place in it.*

***We Rise, We Resist, We Raise Our Voices* by Wade Hudson** ** *An anthology of poetry, essays, short stories and art. This collection encourages America's children to remember their history, learn from it, and choose to be kind in the face of hatred, racism, and oppression.*

→ ***An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Plague Epidemic of 1793* by Jim Murphy** ** *1793, Philadelphia. The nation's capital and the largest city in North America is devastated by an apparently incurable disease, cause unknown. In a powerful, dramatic narrative, critically acclaimed author Jim Murphy describes the illness known as yellow fever and the toll it took on the city's residents, relating the epidemic to the major social and political events of the day and to 18th-century medical beliefs and practices. Drawing on first-hand accounts, Murphy spotlights the heroic role of Philadelphia's free blacks in combating the disease, and the Constitutional crisis that President Washington faced when he was forced to leave the city--and all his papers--while escaping the deadly contagion. The search for the fever's causes and cure, not found for more than a century afterward, provides a suspenseful counterpoint to this riveting true story of a city under siege. (For a fictional account of these same events read: Fever 1793 by Laurie Halse Anderson.)*

→ ***By Any Means Necessary: A Biography of Malcolm X* by Walter Dean Myers** ** *Newbery Honor book author Myers (Scorpions ; Fallen Angels) notes that Malcolm X's pivotal impact on the civil rights movement of the '60s was the result of his distinctive, dramatic approach: "It was Malcolm's anger, his biting wit, his dedication, that put the hard edge on the movement, that provided the other side of the sword, not the handle of acceptance and nonviolence, but the blade." Appropriately, it is with incisive, precise prose that the author chronicles the labyrinthine path of Malcolm's life, from his 1925 birth in Omaha to his assassination in Harlem 40 years later.*

***For Every One* by Jason Reynolds** ** *This stirring and inspirational poem is Jason Reynolds's rallying cry to the dreamers of the world. For Every One is just that: for every one. For every one person. For every one dream. But especially for every one kid. The kids who dream of being better than they are. Kids who dream of doing more than they almost dare to dream. Kids who are like Jason Reynolds, a self-professed dreamer.*

***Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town* by Warren St. John** ** *A complex and inspirational story about the Fugees, a youth soccer team made up of diverse refugees from around the world, and their formidable female coach, Luma Mufleh.*

***Hidden Figures* by Margot Shetterley** ** *The powerful story of four African-American female mathematicians at NASA who helped achieve some of the greatest moments in our space program. Before John Glenn orbited the earth, or Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, a group of dedicated female mathematicians known as "human computers" used pencils, slide rules, and adding machines to calculate the numbers that would launch rockets, and astronauts, into space. This book brings to life the stories of Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden, who lived through the Civil Rights era, the Space Race, the Cold War, and the movement for gender equality, and whose work forever changed the face of NASA and the country.*

***Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream* by Tanya Lee Stone** ** *What does it take to be an astronaut? Excellence at flying, courage, intelligence, resistance to stress, top physical shape — any checklist would include these. But when America created NASA in 1958, there was another unspoken rule: you had to be a man. Here is the tale of thirteen women who proved that they were not only as tough as the toughest man but also brave enough to challenge the government. They were blocked by prejudice, jealousy, and the scrawled note of one of the most powerful men in Washington. ALMOST ASTRONAUTS is the story of thirteen true pioneers of the space age.*

→ ***I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban* by Malala Yousafzai** ** *"I come from a country that was created at midnight. When I almost died it was just after midday." When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for*

her right to an education. On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive. Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize. *I AM MALALA* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. *I AM MALALA* will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

Getting Away with Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case by Chris Crowe *** "The Emmett Till case was not the sole cause of the civil rights movement, but it was the final indignity that caused the flood of outrage to overflow the dam of racial injustice." Mainstream history has all but forgotten about this 14-year-old African American from Chicago who was murdered by two white men in Mississippi for making "ugly remarks" to one of their wives. The men were acquitted, and several months later, they were interviewed by *Look* magazine and publicly confessed to the crime. The event galvanized black Americans, and even many of the whites who had supported the defendants were appalled at their national confession.

Attucks! Oscar Robertson and the Basketball Team That Awakened a City by Phillip Hoose *** The true story of the all-black high school basketball team that broke the color barrier in segregated 1950s Indianapolis, anchored by one of the greatest players of all time.

Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution by Ji-Li Jiang *** It's 1966, and twelve-year-old Ji-li Jiang has everything a girl could want: brains, tons of friends, and a bright future in Communist China. But it's also the year that China's leader, Mao Ze-dong, launches the Cultural Revolution—and Ji-li's world begins to fall apart. Over the next few years, people who were once her friends and neighbors turn on her and her family, forcing them to live in constant terror of arrest. When Ji-li's father is finally imprisoned, she faces the most difficult dilemma of her life.

➔ **Bad Boy by Walter Dean Myers ***** As a boy, Walter Dean Myers was quick-tempered and physically strong, always ready for a fight. He also read voraciously—he would check out books from the library and carry them home, hidden in brown paper bags in order to avoid other boys' teasing. He aspired to be a writer. But growing up in a poor family in Harlem, his hope for a successful future diminished as he came to realize fully the class and racial struggles that surrounded him. He began to doubt himself and the values that he had always relied on, attending high school less and less, turning to the streets and his books for comfort. In a memoir that is gripping, funny, and ultimately unforgettable, Walter Dean Myers travels back to his roots in the magical world of Harlem during the 1940s and 1950s. Here is the story of one of the strongest voices in young people's literature today.

Chew on This: Everything You Don't Want to Know about Fast Food by Eric Schlosser *** Kids love fast food. And the fast food industry definitely loves kids. It couldn't survive without them. Did you know that the biggest toy company in the world is McDonald's? It's true. In fact, one out of every three toys given to a child in the United States each year is from a fast food restaurant. In *Chew On This*, Schlosser shares with kids the fascinating and sometimes frightening truth about what lurks between those sesame seed buns, what a chicken 'nugget' really is, and how the fast food industry has been feeding off children for generations.

Chasing Lincoln's Killer by James Swanson *** A fast-paced thriller about the pursuit and capture of John Wilkes Booth: a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia. "This story is true. All the characters are real and were alive during the great manhunt of April 1865. Their words are authentic and come from original sources: letters, manuscripts, trial transcripts, newspapers, government reports, pamphlets, books and other documents. What happened in Washington, D.C., that spring, and in the swamps and rivers, forests and fields of Maryland and Virginia during the next twelve days, is far too incredible to have been made up."

Science Fiction/Fantasy/Adventure

Charlie Hernandez & The League of Shadows by Ryan Calejo * For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series. The *Lightning Thief* meets The *Story Thieves* series in this fantasy inspired by Hispanic folklore, legends, and myths from the Iberian Peninsula and Central and South America.

→ ***The School for Good and Evil* (series) by Soman Chainani * For fans of the *Harry Potter* series.** Every four years, two children, one regarded as particularly nice and the other particularly nasty, are snatched from the village of Gavalton by the shadowy School Master to attend the school. Those who survive to graduate become major or minor characters in fairy tales. Hogwarts-style pranks, classroom mishaps and competitions both academic and romantic.

***Aru Shah and the End of Time* by Roshani Chokshi * For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series.** Hindu mythology comes to life in modern times as a lonely 12-year-old girl accidentally unleashes a fearsome demon. Bravery, friendship, and adventure, await.

***The Serpent's Secret* (*Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond* series) by Sayantani Dasgupta ** For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series.** MEET KIRANMALA: INTERDIMENSIONAL DEMON SLAYER. (Only she doesn't know it yet.) On the morning of her twelfth birthday, Kiranmala is just a regular sixth grader living in Parsippany, New Jersey . . . until her parents mysteriously vanish and a drooling rakkhosh demon slams through her kitchen, determined to eat her alive. Turns out there might be some truth to her parents' fantastical stories-like how Kiranmala is a real Indian princess and how she comes from a secret place not of this world. To complicate matters, two crush-worthy princes ring her doorbell, insisting they've come to rescue her. Suddenly, Kiran is swept into another dimension full of magic, winged horses, moving maps, and annoying, talking birds. There she must solve riddles and battle demons all while avoiding the Serpent King of the underworld and the Rakkhoshi Queen in order to find her parents and basically save New Jersey, her entire world, and everything beyond it . . .

***The Flame of Olympus* (*Pegasus* series) by Kate O'Hearn * A young girl, a winged horse, and an Olympian war make for an adventurous start to an exciting trilogy. When Pegasus crashes onto a Manhattan roof during a terrible storm, thirteen-year-old Emily's life changes forever. Suddenly allied with a winged horse she'd always thought was mythical, Emily is thrust into the center of a fierce battle between the Roman gods and a terrifying race of multiarmed stone warriors called the Nirads. Emily must team up with a thief named Paelen, the goddess Diana, and a mortal boy named Joel in order to return Pegasus to Olympus and rescue the gods from a certain death.**

→ ***The Lightning Thief* (*Percy Jackson* series) by Rick Riordan * Percy Jackson is a good kid, but he can't seem to focus on his schoolwork or control his temper. When his mom tells him the truth about where he came from, she takes him to the one place he'll be safe—Camp Half-Blood, a summer camp for demigods (on Long Island). There, Percy learns that the father he never knew is actually Poseidon, God of the Sea. Soon Percy finds himself caught up in a mystery that could lead to disastrous consequences.**

→ ***Black Panther: The Young Prince* by Roland Smith * Black Panther. Ruler of Wakanda. Avenger. This is his destiny. But right now, he's simply T'Challa-the young prince.**

The Girl Who Drank the Moon* by Kelly Barnhill * Every year, the people of the Protectorate leave a baby as an offering to the witch who lives in the forest. They hope this sacrifice will keep her from terrorizing their town. But the witch in the Forest, Xan, is kind. She shares her home with a wise Swamp Monster and a Perfectly Tiny Dragon. Xan rescues the children and delivers them to welcoming families on the other side of the forest, nourishing the babies with starlight on the journey. But one year, Xan accidentally feeds a baby moonlight instead of starlight, filling the ordinary child with extraordinary magic.

→ ***The Compound* (series) by S. A. Bodeen **** Eli and his family have lived in the Compound for six years. The world they knew is gone. Eli's father built the Compound to keep them safe. Now, they can't get out. He won't let them.

***The Storm Runner* by J. C. Cervantes ** For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series.** Feisty heroes, tricky gods, murderous demons, and spirited giants are just some of the pleasures that await in this fresh and funny take on Maya mythology.

→ ***The Warrior Heir* (*Heir Chronicle* series) by Cinda Williams Chima ** For fans of the *Harry Potter* series.** Before he knew about the Roses, 16-year-old Jack lived an unremarkable life in the small Ohio town of Trinity. Only the medicine he has to take daily and the thick scar above his heart set him apart from the other high-schoolers. Then one day Jack skips his medicine. Suddenly, he is stronger, fiercer, and more confident than ever before. And it feels great-until he loses control of his own strength and nearly kills another player during soccer team tryouts. Soon, Jack learns the startling truth about himself: He is Weirind, part of an underground society of magical people who live among us. At the head of this magical society sit the feuding houses of the Red Rose and the White Rose, whose power is determined by playing *The Game*--a magical tournament in which each house sponsors a warrior to fight to the death. The winning house rules the Weir. As if his bizarre

magical heritage isn't enough, Jack finds out that he's not just another member of Weirind-he's one of the last of the warriors-at a time when both houses are scouting for a player.

➔ **Hunger Games (series) by Suzanne Collins** ** In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead, and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.

The Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy by Padraic Colum ** **For fans of the Lightning Thief series.** Travel back to a mythical time when Achilles, aided by the gods, waged war against the Trojans. And join Odysseus on his journey through murky waters, facing obstacles like the terrifying Scylla and whirling Charybdis, the beautiful enchantress Circe, and the land of the raging Cyclôpes.

➔ **The Way We Fall (series) by Megan Crewe** ** It starts with an itch you just can't shake. Then comes a fever and a tickle in your throat. A few days later, you'll be blabbing your secrets and chatting with strangers like they're old friends. Three more days, and the paranoid hallucinations kick in. And then you're dead. *A strange virus begins to sweep through Kaelyn's small island community, infecting young and old alike. As the dead pile up, the government quarantines the island: no one can leave, and no one can come back. Cut off from the world, the remaining islanders must fend for themselves. With no cure in sight, Kaelyn knows their only hope of survival is to band together. But as the virus robs her of friends and family, Kaelyn realizes her efforts may be in vain. How can she fight an enemy that's too small to see?*

The Sea of Trolls (series) by Nancy Farmer ** Jack was eleven when the berserkers loomed out of the fog and nabbed him. "It seems that things are stirring across the water," the Bard had warned. "Ships are being built, swords are being forged." "Is that bad?" Jack had asked, for his Saxon village had never before seen berserkers. "Of course. People don't make ships and swords unless they intend to use them." The year is A.D. 793. In the next months, Jack and his little sister, Lucy, are enslaved by Olaf One-Brow and his fierce young shipmate, Thorgil. With a crow named Bold Heart for mysterious company, they are swept up into an adventure-quest.

→ **Stormbreaker (Alex Rider series) by Anthony Horowitz** ** Alex Rider's world is turned upside down when he discovers that his uncle and guardian has been murdered. The 14-year-old makes one discovery after another until he is sucked into his uncle's undercover world. The Special Operations Division of M16, his uncle's real employer, blackmails the teen into serving England. After two short weeks of training, Alex is equipped with several special toys like a Game Boy with unique cartridges that allow it to scan, fax, and emit smoke bombs. Alex's mission is to complete his uncle's last assignment, to discover the secret that Herod Sayle is hiding behind his generous donation of one of his supercomputers to every school in the country.

The Game by Monica Hughes ** It's the future, and most jobs are done by machines. Now that school is over, Lisse and her friends are consigned to a bleak neighborhood for the permanently unemployed. Then they receive an invitation to the Game—which transports them to a paradise. Is it a dream, or a computer simulation? Each time they play the Game, the new world seems more and more real.

Dragon Pearl by Yoon Ha Lee ** For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series. This Korean-mythology-in-space setup is great fun, with supernatural beings and ghosts aplenty, spaceships that run on technological and spiritual energy combined, an entire planet populated by ghosts, and bountiful space hijinks and derring-do.

→ **Legend (series) by Marie Lu** ** What was once the western United States is now home to the Republic, a nation perpetually at war with its neighbors. Born into an elite family in one of the Republic's wealthiest districts, fifteen-year-old June is a prodigy being groomed for success in the Republic's highest military circles. Born into the slums, fifteen-year-old Day is the country's most wanted criminal. But his motives may not be as malicious as they seem. From very different worlds, June and Day have no reason to cross paths - until the day June's brother, Metias, is murdered and Day becomes the prime suspect. Caught in the ultimate game of cat and mouse, Day is in a race for his family's survival, while June seeks to avenge Metias's death. But in a shocking turn of events, the two uncover the truth of what has really brought them together, and the sinister lengths their country will go to keep its secrets. Full of nonstop action, suspense, and romance.

Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky by Kwame Mbalia ** For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series. Seventh grader Tristan Strong feels anything but strong ever since he failed to save his best friend when they were in a bus accident together. All he has left of Eddie is the journal his friend wrote stories in. Tristan is dreading the month he's going to spend on his grandparents' farm in Alabama, where he's being sent to heal from the tragedy. But on his first night there, a sticky creature shows up in his bedroom and steals Eddie's notebook. Tristan chases after it and finds himself in the middle of a battle that has left black American folk heroes John Henry and Brer Rabbit exhausted. In order to get back home, Tristan and these new allies will need to entice the god Anansi, the Weaver, to come out of hiding and seal the hole in the sky. But bartering with the trickster Anansi always comes at a price. Can Tristan save this world before he loses more of the things he loves?

→ **Cinder (Lunar Chronicles series) by Marissa Meyer** ** Humans and androids crowd the raucous streets of New Beijing. A deadly plague ravages the population. From space, a ruthless lunar people watch, wait to make their move. No one knows that Earth's fate hinges on one girl. . . . Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect her world's future.

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

→ **Mark of the Thief (series) by Jennifer Nielsen** ** For fans of the *Lightning Thief* series. When Nic, a slave in the mines outside of Rome, is forced to enter a sealed cavern containing the lost treasures of Julius Caesar, he finds much more than gold and gemstones: He discovers an ancient bulla, an amulet that belonged to the great Caesar and is filled with a magic once reserved for the Gods -- magic some Romans would kill for.

Mister Monday (Keys to the Kingdom series) by Garth Nix ** For fans of the Harry Potter series. *Seven days. Seven keys. Seven virtues. Seven sins. One mysterious house is the doorway to a very mysterious world -- where one boy is about to venture and unlock a number of fantastical secrets.*

Akata Witch (series) by Nnedi Okorafor ** For fans of the Harry Potter series. *A year ago, Sunny Nwazue, an American-born girl Nigerian girl, was inducted into the secret Leopard Society. As she began to develop her magical powers, Sunny learned that she had been chosen to lead a dangerous mission to avert an apocalypse, brought about by the terrifying masquerade, Ekwensu. Now, stronger, feistier, and a bit older, Sunny is studying with her mentor Sugar Cream and struggling to unlock the secrets in her strange Nsibidi book. Eventually, Sunny knows she must confront her destiny. With the support of her Leopard Society friends, Orlu, Chichi, and Sasha, and of her spirit face, Anyanwu, she will travel through worlds both visible and invisible to the mysteries town of Osisi, where she will fight a climactic battle to save humanity.*

➔ ***Maximum Ride (series) by James Patterson ***** *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. Along the way Max discovers that her purpose is save the world--but can she?*

➔ ***Miles Morales: Spider-Man by Jason Reynolds ***** *Miles Morales is just your average teenager. Dinner every Sunday with his parents, chilling out playing old-school video games with his best friend, Ganke, crushing on brainy, beautiful poet Alicia. He's even got a scholarship spot at the prestigious Brooklyn Visions Academy. Oh yeah, and he's Spider Man. But lately, Miles's spidey-sense has been on the fritz. When a misunderstanding leads to his suspension from school, Miles begins to question his abilities. After all, his dad and uncle were Brooklyn jack-boys with criminal records. Maybe kids like Miles aren't meant to be superheroes. Maybe Miles should take his dad's advice and focus on saving himself.*

The Red Pyramid (Kane Chronicles series) by Rick Riordan ** *Since their mother's death, Carter and Sadie have become near strangers. While Sadie has lived with her grandparents in London, her brother has traveled the world with their father, the brilliant Egyptologist, Dr. Julius Kane. One night, Dr. Kane brings the siblings together for a "research experiment" at the British Museum, where he hopes to set things right for his family. Instead, he unleashes the Egyptian god Set, who banishes him to oblivion and forces the children to flee for their lives. Soon, Sadie and Carter discover that the gods of Egypt are waking, and the worst of them--Set--has his sights on the Kanes. To stop him, the siblings embark on a dangerous journey across the globe -- a quest that brings them ever closer to the truth about their family, and their links to a secret order that has existed since the time of the pharaohs.*

➔ ***Cryptid Hunters (series) by Roland Smith ***** *When their parents disappear, twins Marty and Grace, 13, are taken in by their Uncle Travis, who searches the world for supposedly mythical creatures. After a parachute fall from an airplane, the kids find themselves in the middle of the Congo, where a surviving dinosaur may still exist. While their conservationist uncle tries to rescue the children, an evil cryptid hunter who kills species rather than saving them pursues the creature.*

→ ***I, Q (series) by Roland Smith*** ** *Thirteen-year-old Q (short for Quest) has just gained a stepfather and stepsister—his mother, singer-songwriter Blaze Munoz, has married singer-songwriter Roger Tucker, and their new band, Match, is set to start a yearlong tour. Roger's 15-year-old daughter, Angela is, like Q, less than thrilled at the speed of their parents' romance, and both teens have mixed feelings about the prospect of spending a year together on a tour bus. But there's no time for grousing: the teens discover they are being followed, and given Angela's mother's past history as a Secret Service agent, that's not a good thing. The appearance of Boone, an old roadie friend of their parents, only keeps the mysteries building. Q's skills as a magician save the teens more than once, while Angela's knowledge of martial arts and spy games will fascinate readers.*

→ ***Uglies (series) by Scott Westerfeld*** ** *Tally is about to turn sixteen, and she can't wait. Not for her license -- for turning pretty. In Tally's world, your sixteenth birthday brings an operation that turns you from a repellent ugly into a stunningly attractive pretty and catapults you into a high-tech paradise where your only job is to have a really great time. In just a few weeks Tally will be there. But Tally's new friend Shay isn't sure she wants to be pretty. She'd rather risk life on the outside. When Shay runs away, Tally learns about a whole new side of the pretty world -- and it isn't very pretty. The authorities offer Tally the worst choice she can imagine: find her friend and turn her in, or never turn pretty at all. The choice Tally makes changes her world forever.*

→ ***The Red Queen (series) by Victoria Aveyard*** *** *Mare Barrow's world is divided by blood--those with common, Red blood serve the Silver-blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities. Mare is a Red, scraping by as a thief in a poor, rural village, until a twist of fate throws her in front of the Silver court. Before the king, princes, and all the nobles, she discovers she has an ability of her own. To cover up this impossibility, the king forces her to play the role of a lost Silver princess and betroths her to one of his own sons. As Mare is drawn further into the Silver world, she risks everything and uses her new position to help the Scarlet Guard--a growing Red rebellion--even as her heart tugs her in an impossible direction. One wrong move can lead to her death, but in the dangerous game she plays, the only certainty is betrayal.*

→ ***The Maze Runner (series) by James Dashner*** *** *Thomas wakes up in an elevator, remembering nothing but his own name. He emerges into a world of about 60 teen boys who have learned to survive in a completely enclosed environment, subsisting on their own agriculture and supplies from below. A new boy arrives every 30 days. The original group has been in "the glade" for two years, trying to find a way to escape through a maze that surrounds their living space. They have begun to give up hope. Then a comatose girl arrives with a strange note, and their world begins to change. The Maze Runner has a great hook, and fans of dystopian literature, particularly older fans of Jeanne DuPrau's *The City of Ember* (Random, 2003), will likely enjoy this title and ask for the inevitable sequel.*

The House of the Scorpion (series) by Nancy Farmer *** *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.*

Origin also Vitro and Kalahari by Jessica Khoury *** *Pia has always known her destiny. She is meant to start a new race, a line of descendants who will bring an end to death. She has been bred for no other purpose, genetically engineered to be immortal and raised by a team of scientists in a secret compound hidden deep in the Amazon rainforest. Now those scientists have begun to challenge her, with the goal of training her to carry on their dangerous work. For as long as she can remember, Pia's greatest desire has been to fulfill their expectations. But then one night she finds a hole in the impenetrable fence that surrounds her sterile home. Free in the jungle for the first time in her life, Pia meets Eio, a boy from a nearby village. Unable to resist, she continues sneaking out to see him. As they fall in love, they begin to piece together the truth about Pia's origin—a truth with nothing less than deadly consequences that will change their lives forever.*

➔ **Monument 14 (series) by Emmy Laybourne ***** *Fourteen kids. One superstore. A million things that go wrong. In Emmy Laybourne's action-packed debut novel, six high school kids (some popular, some not), two eighth graders (one a tech genius), and six little kids trapped together in a chain superstore build a refuge for themselves inside. While outside, a series of escalating disasters, beginning with a monster hailstorm and ending with a chemical weapons spill, seems to be tearing the world—as they know it—apart.*

Sabriel (series) by Garth Nix *** *Sent to a boarding school in Ancelstierre as a young child, Sabriel has had little experience with the random power of Free Magic or the Dead who refuse to stay dead in the Old Kingdom. But during her final semester, her father, the Abhorsen, goes missing, and Sabriel knows she must enter the Old Kingdom to find him. She soon finds companions in Mogget, a cat whose aloof manner barely conceals its malevolent spirit, and Touchstone, a young Charter Mage long imprisoned by magic, now free in body but still trapped by painful memories. As the three travel deep into the Old Kingdom, threats mount on all sides. And every step brings them closer to a battle that will pit them against the true forces of life and death—and bring Sabriel face-to-face with her own destiny.*

➔ **Divergent (series) by Veronica Roth ***** *One choice can transform you. Beatrice Prior's society is divided into five factions—Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless), Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the intelligent). Beatrice must choose between staying with her Abnegation family or transferring factions. Her choice will shock her community and herself. But the newly christened Tris also has a secret, one she's determined to keep hidden, because in this world, what makes you different makes you dangerous. The gripping story of a dystopian world transformed by courage, self-sacrifice, and love.*

➔ **H.I.V.E., Higher Institute of Villainous Education (series) by Mark Walden ***** *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. 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, can Otto achieve what has never been done before and break out of H.I.V.E.?*

Double Helix by Nancy Werlin *** *Eli Samuels, barely out of high school, is offered a job at prestigious Wyatt Transgenics by its founder, a legendary molecular biologist. The salary's amazing, the work is interesting, and Dr. Wyatt seems to want to mentor him. It's almost too good to be true. But Mr. Samuels is vehemently against Eli's taking the job, and he won't explain why. Eli knows that there's some connection between Dr. Wyatt and his parents—something painful for his father. Something to do with his mother, now debilitated by Huntington's disease. As Eli works at the lab and spends time with Dr. Wyatt, he begins to uncover some disconcerting information—about himself.*

The Midnighters (series) by Scott Westerfeld *** *Moving when you're in high school is difficult enough, especially when your parents can't seem to hold their own lives together and your younger sister is being more obnoxious than usual. However, for 15-year-old Jessica Day, these concerns pale when bizarre things start to happen and she discovers that she now has unwanted magical powers. Part science fiction, part horror story, this novel is the first in a series about the midnighters, a select group of individuals whose birth at the stroke of midnight gives them the special ability to move about in a mysterious 25th hour. As Jessica takes her place among these extraordinary teens, she must battle the increasingly dangerous slithers and other darklings that have suddenly become more violent and aggressive.*

Mystery and Horror

➔ ***The Collector* by K R Alexander** * A witch dolls up local children by transforming them into, well, dolls. Delightfully spooky—readers may want to avoid dolls for a while after finishing this one.

***Me, Frida, and the Secret of the Peacock Ring* by Angela Cervantes** * A room locked for fifty years. A valuable peacock ring. A mysterious brother-sister duo. Paloma Marquez is traveling to Mexico City, birthplace of her deceased father, for the very first time. She's hoping that spending time in Mexico will help her unlock memories of the too-brief time they spent together. While in Mexico, Paloma meets Lizzie and Gael, who present her with an irresistible challenge: The siblings want her to help them find a valuable ring that once belonged to beloved Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Finding the ring means a big reward -- and the thanks of all Mexico. What better way to honor her father than returning a priceless piece of jewelry that once belonged to his favorite artist!

➔ ***Darkdeep* by Ally Condie** * Everyone in Timbers knows Still Cove is off-limits, with its creepy Beast sightings and equally terrifying legends. But when a bullying incident sends Nico Holland over a cliff and into Still Cove's icy waters, friends Tyler and Emma--and even Opal Walsh, who usually runs with the popular kids--rush to his rescue . . . and discover a mysterious island hiding in the murky, swirling mists below.

***Took: A Ghost Story* by Mary Downing Hahn** * Thirteen-year-old Daniel Anderson doesn't believe Brody Mason's crazy stories about the ghost witch who lives up on Brewster's Hill with Bloody Bones, her man-eating razorback hog. He figures Brody's probably just trying to scare him since he's the new kid. But Daniel's seven-year-old sister Erica has become more and more withdrawn, talking to her lookalike doll. When she disappears into the woods one day, he knows something is terribly wrong. Did the witch strike? Has Erica been "took"?

***Framed (series)* by James Ponti** * So you're only halfway through your homework and the Director of the FBI keeps texting you for help...What do you do? Save your grade? Or save the country? If you're Florian Bates, you figure out a way to do both.

➔ ***Cirque du Freak (Saga of Darren Shan series)* by Darren Shan** * Darren Shan and his best friend, Steve, get tickets to the Cirque Du Freak, a wonderfully gothic freak show featuring weird, frightening half human/half animals who interact terrifyingly with the audience. In the midst of the excitement, true terror raises its head when Steve recognizes that one of the performers-- Mr. Crepsley-- is a vampire! Steve remains after the show finishes to confront the vampire-- but his motives are surprising! In the shadows of a crumbling theater, a horrified Darren eavesdrops on his friend and the vampire, and is witness to a monstrous, disturbing plea. As if by destiny, Darren is pulled to Mr. Crepsley and what follows is his horrifying descent into the dark and bloody world of vampires. This is Darren's story.

➔ ***Bad Girls Don't Die (series)* by Katie Alender** ** When Alexis's little sister Kasey becomes obsessed with an antique doll, Alexis thinks she is just being her usual weird self. Things get weirder, though, when their house starts changing. Doors open and close by themselves; water boils on the unlit stove; and an unplugged air conditioner blasts cold air. Kasey is changing, too. Her blue eyes go green, she starts using old-fashioned language, and she forgets chunks of time. Most disturbing of all is the dangerous new chip on Kasey's shoulder. The formerly gentle child is gone, and the new Kasey is angry. Alexis is the only one who can stop her sister -- but what if that green-eyed girl isn't even Kasey anymore?

➔ ***The Dead Girls of Hysteria Hall* by Katie Alender** ** Delia's new house isn't just a house. Long ago, it was the Piven Institute for the Care and Correction of Troubled Females -- an insane asylum nicknamed "Hysteria Hall." However, many of the inmates were not insane, just defiant and strong willed. Kind of like Delia herself. But the house still wants to keep "troubled" girls locked away. So, in the most horrifying way, Delia becomes trapped. And that's when she learns that the house is also haunted.

→ **Frozen Charlotte by Alex Bell** ** When her best friend dies under mysterious circumstances, Sophie sets off to stay with her cousins. It's been years since she last saw them--brooding Cameron with his scarred hand; Piper, who seems too perfect to be real; and peculiar little Lilius with her fear of bones. Still, Sophie never expected the strange new rules the family now lives by: Make no mention of Cameron's accident. Never leave the front gate unlocked. Above all, don't speak of the girl who's no longer there, the sister whose death might have closer ties to Sophie's past--and more sinister consequences for her future--than she ever knew.

→ **The Christopher Killer (Forensic Mystery series) by Alana Ferguson** ** As the daughter of a Colorado County coroner, seventeen-year-old Cameryn Mahoney is no stranger to death. In fact, she's always been fascinated by the science of it. So she's thrilled to finally get some hands-on experience in forensics working as her father's assistant. But Cammie is in for more than she bargained for when the second case that she attends turns out to be someone she knows--the latest victim of a serial killer known as the Christopher Killer. And if dealing with that isn't hard enough, Cammie soon realizes that if she's not careful, she might wind up as the killer's next victim.

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman ** It takes a graveyard to raise a child. Nobody Owens, known as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a graveyard, being raised by ghosts, with a guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor the dead. There are adventures in the graveyard for a boy—an ancient Indigo Man, a gateway to the abandoned city of ghouls, the strange and terrible Sleer. But if Bod leaves the graveyard, he will be in danger from the man Jack—who has already killed Bod's family.

The House on the Gulf by Margaret Peterson Haddix ** When Britt's older brother, Bran, lands a summer job house-sitting in Florida, it seems like a great opportunity. Britt's family has just recently moved to Florida, and could use the extra money while her mom finishes college. There's only one problem: Britt starts to suspect her family isn't supposed to be there. Britt starts poking around, and makes a startling discovery -- the owners of the house aren't who Bran says they are. So whose house are they living in, and why has Bran brought them there?

→ **The Body in the Woods and other titles by April Henry** ** This first book in April Henry's Point Last Seen mystery series, *The Body in the Woods* is full of riveting suspense, putting readers right in the middle of harrowing rescues and crime scene investigations. Alexis, Nick, and Ruby have very different backgrounds: Alexis has spent her life covering for her mom's mental illness, Nick's bravado hides his fear of not being good enough, and Ruby just wants to pursue her eccentric interests in a world that doesn't understand her. When the three teens join Portland County Sheriff's Search and Rescue, they are teamed up to search for an autistic man lost in the woods. What they find instead is a dead body. In a friendship that will be forged in danger, fear and courage, the three team up to find the girl's killer—before he can strike one of their own.

OCDaniel by Wesley King ** Daniel is the back-up punter for the Erie Hills Elephants. Which really means he's the water boy. He spends football practice perfectly arranging water cups—and hoping no one notices. Actually, he spends most of his time hoping no one notices his strange habits—he calls them Zaps-- especially his best friend Max, and Raya, the prettiest girl in school. Then Daniel gets a note: "I need your help," it says, signed, Fellow Star Child—whatever that means. And suddenly Daniel, a total no one at school, is swept up in a mystery that might change everything for him.

→ **Haunting of Sunshine Girl (series) by Paige McKenzie** ** Shortly after her sixteenth birthday, Sunshine Griffith and her mother Kat move from sunny Austin, Texas, to the rain-drenched town of Ridgemont, Washington. Though Sunshine is adopted, she and her mother have always been close, sharing a special bond filled with laughter and inside jokes. But from the moment they arrive, Sunshine feels her world darken with an eeriness she cannot place. And even if Kat doesn't recognize it, Sunshine knows that something about their new house is just ... creepy.

***The Prince of Venice Beach* by Blake Nelson** ** Robert "Cali" Callahan is a teen runaway, living on the streets of Venice Beach, California. He's got a pretty sweet life: a treehouse to sleep in, a gang of surf bros, a regular basketball game...even a girl who's maybe-sorta interested in him. What he doesn't have is a plan. All that changes when a local cop refers Cali to a private investigator who is looking for a missing teenager. After all, Cali knows everyone in Venice. But the streets are filled with people who don't want to be found, and when he's hired to find the beautiful Reese Abernathy--who would do anything to stay hidden--Cali enters a new world filled with mysterious characters, dangerous choices, and his first chance at real love.

***The Shadow House* series by Dan Poblocki** ** Some houses are more than just haunted... they're hungry. Dash, Dylan, Poppy, Marcus, and Azumi don't know this at first. They each think they've been summoned to Shadow House for innocent reasons. But there's nothing innocent about Shadow House. Something within its walls is wickedly wrong. Nothing -- and nobody -- can be trusted. Hallways move. Doors vanish. Ghosts appear. Children disappear. And the way out?

***I am Princess X* by Cherie Priest** ** Once upon a time, two best friends created a princess together. Libby drew the pictures, May wrote the tales, and their heroine, Princess X, slayed all the dragons and scaled all the mountains their imaginations could conjure. Once upon a few years later, Libby was in the car with her mom, driving across the Ballard Bridge on a rainy night. When the car went over the side, Libby passed away, and Princess X died with her. Once upon a now: May is sixteen and lonely, wandering the streets of Seattle, when she sees a sticker slapped in a corner window. Best friends, big fans, a mysterious webcomic, and a long-lost girl collide in this riveting novel illustrated throughout with comics.

***What Waits in the Woods* series by Kieran Scott** ** Seeing things. You were just seeing things.

For city girl Callie Velasquez, nothing sounds more terrifying than a night out in the wilderness. But, wanting to bond with her popular new friends, Lissa and Penelope, she agrees to join them on a camping trip. At least Callie's sweet new boyfriend, Jeremy, will be coming too. But nothing goes as planned. The group loses half their food supply. Then they lose their way. And with strange sounds all around her--the snap of a twig, a sinister laugh--Callie wonders if she's losing her mind. Tensions swirl among the group, with dark secrets suddenly revealed. And then, things take a fatal turn.

→ ***Deadly Little Secret (Touch series)* by Laurie Stolarz** ** Some secrets shouldn't be kept... Up until three months ago, everything in sixteen-year-old Camelia's life had been fairly ordinary: decent grades; an okay relationship with her parents; and a pretty cool part-time job at the art studio downtown. But when Ben, the mysterious new guy, starts junior year at her high school, Camelia's life becomes anything but ordinary. Rumored to be somehow responsible for his ex-girlfriend's accidental death, Ben is immediately ostracized by everyone on campus. Except for Camelia.

→ ***Welcome to the Dark House (series)* by Laurie Stolarz** ** What's your worst nightmare? For Ivy Jensen, it's the eyes of a killer that haunt her nights. For Parker Bradley, it's bloodthirsty sea serpents that slither in his sleep. And for seven essay contestants, it's their worst nightmares that win them an exclusive, behind-the-scenes look at director Justin Blake's latest, confidential project. Ivy doesn't even like scary movies, but she's ready to face her real-world fears. Parker's sympathetic words and perfect smile help keep her spirits up . . . at least for now. Except, things are a little weird. The hostess is a serial-killer look-alike, the dream-stealing Nightmare Elf is lurking about, and the seventh member of the group is missing.

→ ***Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (series)* by Ransom Riggs** *** A mysterious island. An abandoned orphanage. A strange collection of very curious photographs. It all waits to be discovered in *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*, an unforgettable novel that mixes fiction and photography in a thrilling reading experience. As our story opens, a horrific family tragedy sets sixteen-year-old Jacob journeying to a remote island off the coast of Wales, where he discovers the crumbling ruins of *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*. As Jacob explores its abandoned bedrooms and hallways, it becomes clear that the children were more than just peculiar. They may have been dangerous. They may have been quarantined on a deserted island for good reason. And somehow—impossible though it seems—they may still be alive.

***The Killer's Cousin* by Nancy Werlin** *** After being accused and acquitted in the death of his girlfriend, seventeen-year-old David is sent to live with his aunt, uncle, and young cousin to avoid the media frenzy. But all is not well at his relatives' house. His aunt and uncle are not speaking, and twelve-year-old Lily seems intent on making David's life a torment. And then there's the issue of his older cousin Kathy's mysterious death some years back. As things grow more and more tense, David starts to wonder if there something else that his family is trying to hide from?

Realistic Fiction

***Double Dutch* by Sharon Draper** * Delia loves *Double Dutch* more than just about anything, and she's really good at it - so good she and her teammates have a shot at winning the World Double Dutch Championships. Delia would die if she couldn't

jump -- but Delia has a secret, and it could keep her off the team next year. Delia's friend Randy has a secret too, one that has him lonely and scared. And while Delia and Randy struggle to keep their secrets, their school is abuzz with rumors about what malicious mischief the terrible Tolliver twins -- who just may have a secret of their own -- are planning. Delia and Randy's secrets collide on what should be the happiest day of Delia's life, and the collision threatens to destroy their friendship. Why can't life be as easy for Delia as *Double Dutch*?

Braced (and other titles) by Alison Gerber * Rachel Brooks is excited for the new school year. She's finally earned a place as a forward on her soccer team. Her best friends make everything fun. And she really likes Tate, and she's pretty sure he likes her back. After one last appointment with her doctor, this will be her best year yet. Then the doctor delivers some terrible news: The sideways curve in Rachel's spine has gotten worse, and she needs to wear a back brace twenty-three hours a day. The brace wraps her in hard plastic from shoulder blades to hips. It changes how her clothes fit, how she kicks a ball, and how everyone sees her--even her friends and Tate. But as Rachel confronts all the challenges the brace presents, the biggest change of all may lie in how she sees herself.

Restart by Gordon Korman * Will a bully always be a bully? That's the question eighth-grade football captain Chase Ambrose has to answer for himself after a fall from his roof leaves him with no memory of who and what he was. Has the author's trademark humor.

Confetti Girl by Diana Lopez * Apolonia "Lina" Flores is a sock enthusiast, a volleyball player, a science lover, and a girl who's just looking for answers. Even though her house is crammed full of books (her dad's a bibliophile), she's having trouble figuring out some very big questions, like why her dad seems to care about books more than her, why her best friend's divorced mom is obsessed with making cascarones (hollowed eggshells filled with colorful confetti), and, most of all, why her mom died last year. Like colors in cascarones, Lina's life is a rainbow of people, interests, and unexpected changes.

Wonder by R. J. Palacio * August Pullman is a 10-year-old boy who likes Star Wars and Xbox, ordinary except for his jarring facial anomalies. Homeschooled all his life, August heads to public school for fifth grade and he is not the only one changed by the experience--something we learn about first-hand through the narratives of those who orbit his world. August's internal dialogue and interactions with students and family ring true, and though remarkably courageous he comes across as a sweet, funny boy who wants the same things others want: friendship, understanding, and the freedom to be himself.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli * From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her.

Finding Miracles and other titles by Julia Alvarez ** MILLY KAUFMAN IS an ordinary American teenager living in Vermont—until she meets Pablo, a new student at her high school. His exotic accent, strange fashion sense, and intense interest in Milly force her to confront her identity as an adopted child from Pablo's native country. As their relationship grows, Milly decides to undertake a courageous journey to her homeland and along the way discovers the story of her birth is intertwined with the story of a country recovering from a brutal history.

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

Flowers in the Sky and other titles by Lynn Joseph ** “Just about everyone from my country, República Dominicana, dreams of moving to New York City, except for me. On the flight to New York, my first time on a plane, my first time away from Mami, I was finally free to cry. But nothing came out. I watched as the green mountains of my beloved island slipped away far below.”

Under the Mesquite by Guadalupe Garcia McCall (written in VERSE) ** *A resilient Mexican-American girl copes with familial obligation and loss in this free-verse novel. Lupita's first-person tale captures pivotal moments of her high-school years in the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas, with glimpses back at her first six years in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, Mexico. When during her freshman year Lupita discovers that her mother has cancer, Lupita sometimes becomes the de facto parental unit for her seven younger siblings.*

Cuba 15 by Nancy Osa ** *Violet Paz has just turned fifteen, a pivotal birthday in the eyes of her Cuban grandmother. Fifteen is the age when a girl enters womanhood, traditionally celebrating the occasion with a quinceañero. But while Violet is half Cuban, she's also half Polish, and more importantly, she feels 100% American. Except for her zany family's passion for playing dominoes, smoking cigars, and dancing to Latin music, Violet knows little about Cuban culture, nada about quinces, and only tidbits about the history of Cuba. So when Violet begrudgingly accepts Abuela's plans for a quinceañero—and as she begins to ask questions about her Cuban roots—cultures and feelings collide. The mere mention of Cuba and Fidel Castro elicits her grandparents' sadness and her father's anger. Only Violet's aunt Luz remains open-minded. With so many divergent views, it's not easy to know what to believe. All Violet knows is that she's got to form her own opinions, even if this jolts her family into unwanted confrontations. After all, a quince girl is supposed to embrace responsibility—and to Violet that includes understanding the Cuban heritage that binds her to a homeland she's never seen.*

The Seventh Most Important Thing by Shelley Pearsall ** *Arthur T. Owens grabbed a brick and hurled it at the trash picker. Arthur had his reasons, and the brick hit the Junk Man in the arm, not the head. But none of that matters to the judge—he is ready to send Arthur to juvie forever. Amazingly, it's the Junk Man himself who offers an alternative: 120 hours of community service working for him. Arthur is given a rickety shopping cart and a list of the Seven Most Important Things: glass bottles, foil, cardboard, pieces of wood, lightbulbs, coffee cans, and mirrors. He can't believe it—is he really supposed to rummage through people's trash? But it isn't long before Arthur realizes there's more to the Junk Man than meets the eye, and the “trash” he's collecting is being transformed into something more precious than anyone could imagine.*

Drums, Girls and Dangerous Pie (series) by Jordan Sonnenblick ** *Steven has a totally normal life (well, almost). He plays drums in the All-City Jazz Band (whose members call him the Peasant), has a crush on the hottest girl in school (who doesn't even know he's alive), and is constantly annoyed by his younger brother, Jeffrey (who is cuter than cute - which is also pretty annoying). But when Jeffrey gets sick, Steven's world is turned upside down, and he is forced to deal with his brother's illness, his parents' attempts to keep the family in one piece, his homework, the band, girls, and Dangerous Pie (yes, you'll have to read the book to find out what that is!).*

The Boy on Cinnamon Street by Phoebe Stone ** *A story about a wounded girl and the boy who won't give up on her. 7th grader Louise should be the captain of her school's gymnastics team - but she isn't. She's fun and cute and should have lots of friends - but she doesn't. And there's a dreamy boy who has a crush on her - but somehow they never connect. Louise has everything going for her - so what is it that's holding her back?*

Saving Baby Doe and The Trouble with Half a Moon by Danette Vigilante ** *Lionel and Anisa are the best of friends and have seen each other through some pretty tough times--Anisa's dad died and Lionel's dad left, which is like a death for Lionel. They stick together no matter what. So when Lionel suggests a detour through a local construction site on their way home, Anisa doesn't say no. And that's where Lionel and Anisa make a startling discovery--a baby abandoned in a port-o-potty. Anisa and Lionel spring into action. And in saving Baby Doe, they end up saving so much more.*

After Tupac and D Foster by Jacqueline Woodson ** *The day D Foster enters Neeka and her best friend's lives, the world opens up for them. Suddenly they're keenly aware of things beyond their block in Queens, things that are happening in the world—like the shooting of Tupac Shakur—and in search of their Big Purpose in life. When—all too soon—D's mom swoops in to reclaim her, and Tupac dies, they are left with a sense of how quickly things can change and how even all-too-brief connections can touch deeply.*

Ask Me No Questions by Marina Budhos *** *As part of a U.S. government crackdown on illegal immigration after 9/11, Muslim men were required to register with the government and many were arrested because their visas had long-since*

expired. Families who had lived and worked in this country were suddenly and forcibly reminded of their illegal status without any likelihood of changing it. For 18-year-old Aisha Hossain, this means the end of her dream of going to college to become a doctor. For 14-year-old Nadira, her younger sister and the story's narrator, it means coming out from behind the shadow of her perfect older sister to reveal her own strength and find a way to reunite her nearly shattered family.

DJ Rising by Maia Love *** “The first thing I hear is music. The first thing I've always heard is music.” *Meet Marley, an unassuming high school junior who breathes in music like oxygen. In between caring for his heroin-addicted mother, and keeping his scholarship at a fancy prep school, he dreams of becoming a professional DJ. When chance lands Marley his first real DJ job, his career as "DJ Ice" suddenly skyrockets. But when heart-rending disaster at home brings Marley crashing back down to earth, he is torn between obligation and following his dreams.*

Make Lemonade (series) by Virginia Euwer Wolff (written in VERSE) *** *The story of fourteen-year-old LaVaughn, who is determined to go to college—she just needs the money to get there. When she answers a babysitting ad, LaVaughn meets Jolly, a seventeen-year-old single mother with two kids by different fathers. As she helps Jolly make lemonade out of the lemons her life has given her, LaVaughn learns some lessons outside the classroom.*