

PCMS 2021 Summer Reading Book List and Assignment

For Rising 7th and 8th Graders



The goal of summer reading is to develop lifelong reading habits, while limiting the effects of *the summer slide*—the tendency to lose some of the achievement gains students make during the school year—particularly in literacy skills.

Below is an illustrated, reviewed, and coded list of summer reading titles. **Students should pick a book from this list only as their content aligns with the concepts and/or content covered in the Grade 7 or Grade 8 ELA curriculum.** The novels on this list also help students to practice literacy skills embodied in the 2017 MA State Frameworks for English Language Arts. Included for those students who prefer to read historically accurate stories of adventure and survival, a list of nonfiction recommendations follows the Grade 8 novel choices. All students are expected to complete the following 2021 PCMS summer reading assignment.

Incoming 7th & 8th graders at PCMS are required to choose and read at least one book from their grade-level list. Then, they are expected to answer at least one question from each of the six categories in the list labeled “Questions for Any Book,” for a total of SIX questions. **We recommended that you read your book with the questions in mind.** Many of the questions have two or three parts, so make sure to fully answer ALL of the questions with specific details and relevant information from the text. Enjoy and have a great summer!

Questions for Any Book

Category 1: Characters (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Was there one character who was similar to you? How would the story have been different if you were the main character, and how?
2. Which character could you relate to best, and why?
3. Explain an experience of your own that was similar to someone in the book?
4. Compare a character, the story, or a main event to another book.
5. List and explain all the ways one of the characters changed in the book.
6. Explain what the main character learned in this book?
7. Choose two or three characters from the book and write what you think happens to them after the end. Be sure to include your reasoning.

Category 2: Plot and Conflict (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. What was more important, the characters or the plot? Was this book more about what people were doing or what people were thinking? Explain your reasons.
2. Choose three events in the story and explain why these events stand out for you as memorable.
3. Was there foreshadowing and suspense? Or, did the author give things away at the beginning of the book? Was this effective? Explain how the use of suspense and/or foreshadowing affected your enjoyment of the book.
4. Explain how you would have resolved the conflict (problem) in the book?

Category 3: Point of View (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Did the author use multiple voices in telling the story? How did this affect the story and your appreciation of the book? Explain!
2. Whose voice was the story told in (from whose point of view is the story told)? Explain how you think it might have been different if another character was telling the story.
3. Did you feel like the narrator was being honest in telling the story? Did you feel manipulated? Include your reasoning.
4. Was the narrator involved in the story while it was happening, or were they looking back on the events from a distance? Why do you think the author structured it this way? Include your reasoning.

Category 4: Setting (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Did the setting (the time and place) of the story make a difference? Could it have taken place anywhere? Why do you think the author wrote the book with this setting? Include your reasoning.
2. Was the author's description of the landscape/community well done? Could you visualize the landscape, rooms, town, etc.? Record a descriptive passage and draw a picture based on the author's language.
3. Was the time period important to the story? Why or why not? Explain!
4. Explain how the author conveyed the era (time period). Include details.
5. Did the story involve a road trip? Explain how the journey advanced the plot of the story?

Category 5: Theme (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Explain a major theme in the book and how it was developed. Be sure to use details and include your reasoning.
2. Are the major themes of the book relevant in your life? Why or why not? Explain!
3. Did you think the story was funny, sad, touching, disturbing, and/or moving? Provide details and reasoning as to why or why not.
4. Was the story realistic? Did it matter to the story line? Provide details and reasoning as to why you think the author wrote it this way.
5. Think about the book's title. Provide details and your reasoning to explain why you think the author chose the words in this title.

Category 6: Your Thoughts! (Choose one of these questions to answer about your book!)

1. Compare this book to others you have read. Is it similar to any of them? Did you like it more or less than other books you have read? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.
2. What do you think will be your lasting impression of the book? What will be your most vivid memories of it a year from now? Provide details and your reasoning.
3. What "touched" you most about this book? Did you feel any emotions while you read this? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.
4. If you could jump in at any point in this book, and become a part of the storyline, where would it be? Provide details and your reasoning.
5. Were you sorry the book ended? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.
6. Sometimes authors have notes at the end of the book explaining why they wrote the story. Is there information explaining why the author wrote this story or where they got their idea? What do you think? Provide details and your reasoning.
7. What do you think the author was trying to accomplish with this novel? Why? Provide details and your reasoning.
8. Are any of the events in the book relevant to your own life? Why or why not? Provide details and your reasoning.

Ratings Advice—PLEASE READ

Summaries provided by Amazon.com.

The grade level code and Clean Read designation are provided by Shauna Yusko, an award winning librarian and national presenter with the Bureau of Education & Research. The Clean Read designation is used by Shauna Yusko to refer to books that include no excessive or graphic language, no extreme or graphic violence, and no sexual content, but may include kissing and discussion of sex. Ms. Yusko finds the following helpful when deciding if a book is appropriate for a child:

Common Sense Media reviews and guidelines:

<http://www.common sense media.org>

Compass Book Ratings

<http://www.compassbookratings.com>

Parents' Choice Awards

<http://www.parents-choice.org/allawards.cfm>

Thrifty and Thriving: clean reads for girls/teens

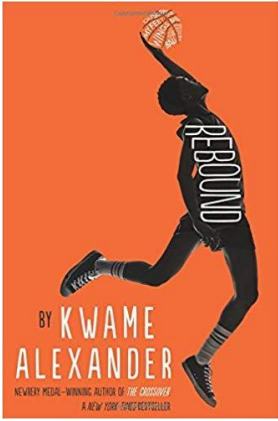
<http://www.thriftyandthriving.com/clean-books-for-teens-girls/>

PCMS 2021 Summer Reading Choices

Code: E (K-5); M (5-8); J (7-9); S (9-12)

7th Grade Fiction

Rebound – Kwame Alexander (MJ – clean read)



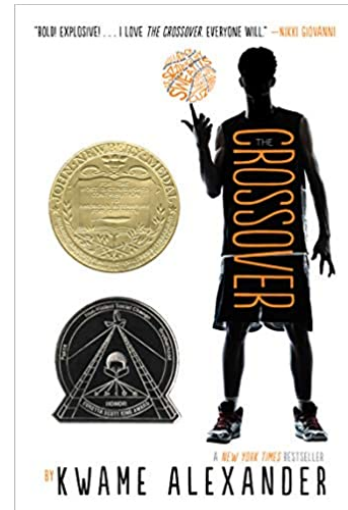
"An eminently satisfying story of family, recovery, and growing into manhood."—*Kirkus*, starred review

From the *New York Times* bestselling author Kwame Alexander comes *Rebound*, a dynamic novel in verse and companion to his Newbery Award-winner, *The Crossover*, illustrated with striking graphic novel panels.

Before Josh and Jordan Bell were streaking up and down the court, their father was learning his own moves. In this prequel to Newbery Medal winner *The Crossover*, Chuck Bell takes center stage, as readers get a glimpse of his childhood and how he became the jazz music worshipping, basketball star his sons look up to.

A novel in verse with all the impact and rhythm readers have come to expect from Kwame Alexander, *Rebound* will go back in time to visit the childhood of Chuck "Da Man" Bell during one pivotal summer when young Charlie is sent to stay with his grandparents where he discovers basketball and learns more about his family's past.

**If you liked this book, be sure to check out the companion book, *The Crossover*, which comes in two formats, novel in verse and graphic novel.



Posted – John David Anderson (MJ – clean read)



With multiple starred reviews, don't miss this humorous, poignant, and original contemporary story about bullying, broken friendships, social media, and the failures of communication between kids. In middle school, words aren't just words. They can be weapons. They can be gifts. The right words can win you friends or make you enemies. They can come back to haunt you. Sometimes they can change things forever.

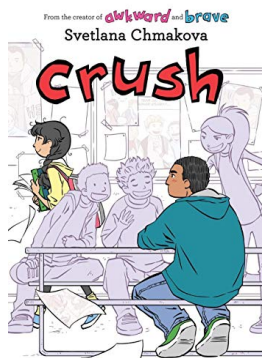
When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well.

In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost's lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it's clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won't easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same.

***Brave and Crush* – Svetlana Chmakova (EMJ – clean read)**

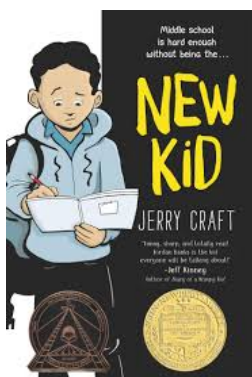


In his daydreams, Jensen is the biggest hero that ever was, saving the world and his friends on a daily basis. But his middle school reality is VERY different--math is hard, getting along with friends is hard... Even finding a partner for the class project is a huge problem when you always get picked last. And the pressure is on even more once the school newspaper's dynamic duo, Jenny and Akilah, draw Jensen into the whirlwind of school news, social-experiment projects, and behind-the-scenes club drama. Jensen has always played the middle school game one level at a time, but suddenly, someone's cranked up the difficulty setting. Will those daring daydreams of his finally work in his favor, or will he have to find real solutions to his real-life problems? The charming world of Berrybrook Middle School gets a little bigger in this highly anticipated follow-up to Svetlana Chmakova's award-winning *Awkward* with a story about a boy who learns his own way of being brave!



Following the overwhelming success of *AWKWARD* and *BRAVE*, Svetlana Chmakova's award winning Berrybrook Middle School series continues with its next installment - *CRUSH*! Jorge seems to have it all together. He's big enough that nobody really messes with him, but he's also a genuinely sweet guy with a solid, reliable group of friends. The only time he ever really feels off his game is when he crosses paths with a certain girl... But when the group dynamic among the boys starts to shift, will Jorge be able to balance what his friends expect of him versus what he actually wants?

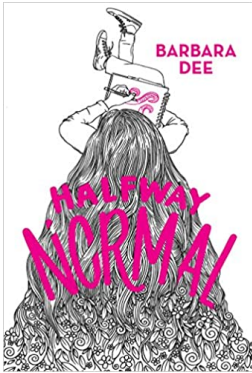
***New Kid* – Jerry Craft (EMJ - clean read)**



Winner of the Newbery Medal, Coretta Scott King Author Award, and Kirkus Prize for Young Readers' Literature! Perfect for fans of Raina Telgemeier and Gene Luen Yang, *New Kid* is a timely, honest graphic novel about starting over at a new school where diversity is low and the struggle to fit in is real, from award-winning author-illustrator Jerry Craft.

Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one. Can Jordan learn to navigate his new school culture while keeping his neighborhood friends and staying true to himself?

***Halfway Normal* – Barbara Dee (MJ – clean read)**



Norah Levy has just completed two years of treatment for leukemia and is ready to go back to the “real world” of middle school. She knows it'll be tricky—but like the Greek mythological characters she read about while she was sick, Norah's up for any challenge.

But seventh grade turns out to be trickier than she thought. Norah's classmates don't know what to make of her. Her best friend, Harper, tries to be there for her, but she doesn't *get it*, really—and is hanging out with a new group of girls. Norah's other good friend, Silas, is avoiding her. What's that about, anyway?

When Norah is placed with the eighth graders for math and science, she meets Griffin, a cute boy who encourages her love of Greek mythology and art. And Norah decides not to tell him her secret—that she was “that girl” who had cancer. But when something happens to make secret-keeping impossible, Norah must figure out a way to share her cancer story. But how do you explain something to others that you can't explain to yourself?

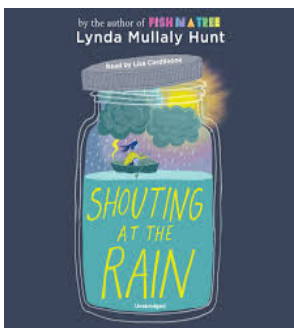
***The Lion of Mars* - Jennifer L. Holmes (MJ - clean read)**



Blast off with *New York Times* bestselling and Newbery Honor-winning Jennifer L. Holm's out-of-this-world new novel about a kid raised on Mars who learns that he can't be held back by the fears of the grown-ups around him.

Bell has spent his whole life - all eleven years of it - on Mars. But he's still just a regular kid - he loves cats, any kind of cake, and is curious about the secrets the adults in the US colony are keeping. Like, why don't have contact with anyone on the other Mars colonies? Why are they so isolated? When a virus breaks out and the grown-ups all fall ill, Bell and the other children are the only ones who can help. It's up to Bell - a regular kid in a very different world - to uncover the truth and save his family ... and possibly unite an entire planet.

***Shouting at the Rain* - Lynda Mullaly Hunt (MJ - clean read)**



A New York Times Bestseller. From the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Fish in a Tree* comes a compelling story about perspective and learning to love the family you have.

Delsie loves tracking the weather--lately, though, it seems the squalls are in her own life. She's always lived with her kindhearted Grammy, but now she's looking at their life with new eyes and wishing she could have a "regular family." Delsie observes other changes in the air, too--the most painful being a friend who's outgrown her.

Luckily, she has neighbors with strong shoulders to support her, and Ronan, a new friend who is caring and courageous but also troubled by the losses he's endured. As Ronan and Delsie traipse

around Cape Cod on their adventures, they both learn what it means to be angry versus sad, broken versus whole, and abandoned versus loved. And that, together, they can weather any storm.

***Amina's Voice* – Hena Khan (MJ – clean read)**

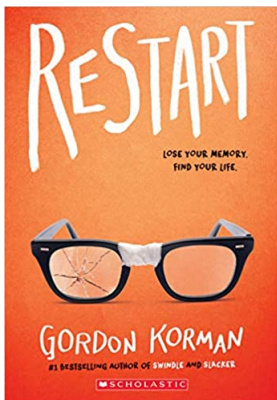


A Pakistani-American Muslim girl struggles to stay true to her family's vibrant culture while simultaneously blending in at school after tragedy strikes her community in this sweet and moving middle grade novel from the award-winning author of *It's Ramadan*, *Curious George*, and *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns*.

Amina has never been comfortable in the spotlight. She is happy just hanging out with her best friend, Soojin. Except now that she's in middle school everything feels different. Soojin is suddenly hanging out with Emily, one of the "cool" girls in the class, and even talking about changing her name to something more "American." Does Amina need to start changing too? Or hiding who she is to fit in? While Amina grapples with these questions, she is devastated when her local mosque is vandalized.

Amina's Voice brings to life the joys and challenges of a young Pakistani American and highlights the many ways in which one girl's voice can help bring a diverse community together to love and support each other.

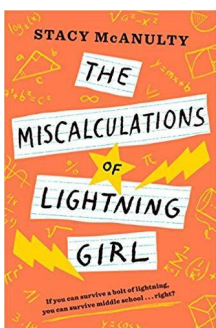
***Restart* – Gordan Korman (MJ – clean read)**



Chase's memory just went out the window. Chase doesn't remember falling off the roof. He doesn't remember hitting his head. He doesn't, in fact, remember *anything*. He wakes up in a hospital room and suddenly has to learn his whole life all over again . . . starting with his own name. He knows he's Chase. But who *is* Chase? When he gets back to school, he sees that different kids have very different reactions to his return. Some kids treat him like a hero. Some kids are clearly afraid of him. One girl in particular is so angry with him that she pours her frozen yogurt on his head the first chance she gets. Pretty soon, it's not only a question of who Chase is--it's a question of who he *was* . . . and who he's going to be.

From the #1 bestselling author of *Swindle* and *Slacker*, *Restart* is the spectacular story of a kid with a messy past who has to figure out what it means to get a clean start. Told in the alternating voices of Chase and some of his classmates, including both friends and victims.

***The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl* – Stacy McAnulty (MJ – clean read)**



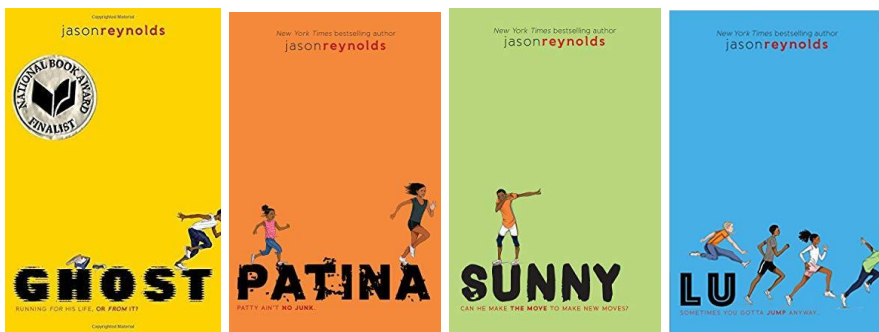
A lightning strike gave her a super power...but even a super genius can't solve the problem of middle school. This smart and funny novel is perfect for fans of *The Fourteenth Goldfish*, *Rain Reign*, and *Counting by Sevens*.

Lucy Callahan was struck by lightning. She doesn't remember it, but it changed her life forever. The zap gave her genius-level math skills, and ever since, Lucy has been homeschooled. Now, at 12 years old, she's technically ready for college. She just has to pass 1 more test--middle school!

Lucy's grandma insists: Go to middle school for 1 year. Make 1 friend. Join 1 activity. And read 1 book (that's not a math textbook!). Lucy's not sure what a girl who does calculus homework for fun can possibly learn in 7th grade. She has everything she needs at home, where nobody can make fun of her rigid routines or her superpowered brain. The equation of Lucy's life has already been solved. Unless there's been a miscalculation?

A celebration of friendship, Stacy McAnulty's smart and thoughtful middle-grade debut reminds us all to get out of our comfort zones and embrace what makes us different.

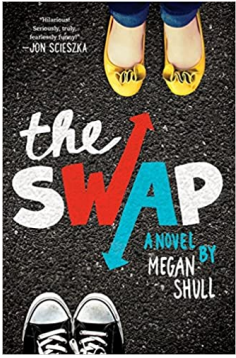
***Ghost, Patina, Sunny, Lu* — Jason Reynolds (EMJ – clean read) A *New York Times* Notable Children's 4-book Track series**



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.

Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

***The Swap* – Megan Shull (MJ – clean read)**



Megan Shull’s smart and funny, very readable book *The Swap* is a great summer reading (or anytime!) choice and will appeal to fans of R. J. Palacio and Katherine Applegate, and graphic novels such as *Click*, *Invisible Emmie*, and *Smile*.

With one random wish, Jack and Ellie are living life in each other’s shoes. He’s her. And she’s him.

ELLIE assumed popular guys didn’t worry about body image, being perfect, or talking to girls, but acting like you’re cool with everything is tougher than it looks.

JACK thought girls had it easy—no fights with bullies, no demanding dads, no hockey 24/7, no power plays—but facing mean girls at sleepovers and getting grilled about your period is way harder than taking a hit to the face at sports practice.

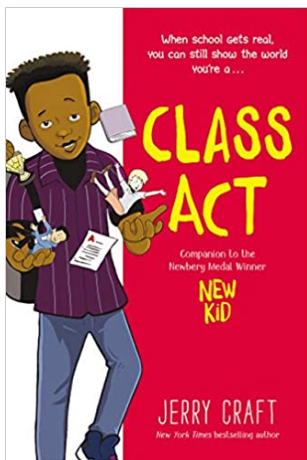
Now they’re dealing with each other’s middle school dramas—locker room teasing, cliques, video game battles, bra shopping, and a slew of hilariously awkward moments—until they hopefully switch back!

Told in both Jack’s and Ellie’s voices, *The Swap* offers a fresh and honest take on tween friendship, all while exploring more serious themes of family, loss, empathy, and what it really means to be yourself. And as Jon Scieszka says, it’s “seriously, truly, fearlessly funny!”

The Swap is now a Disney Channel Original Movie, plus don't miss Megan Shull's heartwarming book *Bounce*.

8th Grade Fiction

***New Kid* – Jerry Craft (MJ - clean read)**



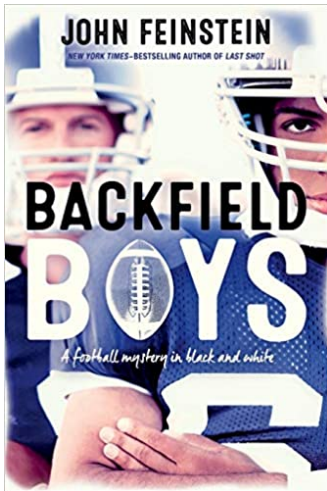
New York Times bestselling author Jerry Craft returns with a companion book to *New Kid*, winner of the 2020 Newbery Medal, the Coretta Scott King Author Award, and the Kirkus Prize. This time, it’s Jordan’s friend Drew who takes center stage in another laugh-out-loud funny, powerful, and important story about being one of the few kids of color in a prestigious private school.

Eighth grader Drew Ellis is no stranger to the saying “You have to work twice as hard to be just as good.” His grandmother has reminded him his entire life. But what if he works *ten* times as hard and still isn’t afforded the same opportunities that his privileged classmates at the Riverdale Academy Day School take for granted?

To make matters worse, Drew begins to feel as if his good friend Liam might be one of those privileged kids. He wants to pretend like everything is fine, but it's hard not to withdraw, and even their mutual friend Jordan doesn't know how to keep the group together.

As the pressures mount, will Drew find a way to bridge the divide so he and his friends can truly accept each other? And most important, will he finally be able to accept himself?

***Backfield Boys* – John Feinstein (MJS – clean read)**

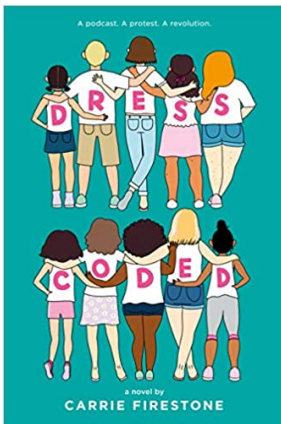


In *Backfield Boys*, renowned sports journalist and *New York Times*–bestselling author John Feinstein tells a thrilling story of friendship, football, and a fight for justice.

Freshman footballers Jason Roddin and Tom Jefferson are a perfect pair: Jason is a blazing-fast wide-receiver, while his best friend Tom has all the skills a standout quarterback needs. After summer football camp at an elite sports-focused boarding school, the boys are thrilled to be invited back with full-ride scholarships.

But on day one of practice, they're shocked when the team's coaching staff makes Tom, a black kid, a receiver and Jason, a white kid, a quarterback. Confronted with mounting evidence of deep-seated racial bias, the boys speak out, risking their scholarships and chances to play. As tensions ratchet up with coaches and other players, Tom and Jason must decide how much they're willing to lose in a conflict with powerful forces that have nothing—and everything—to do with the game they love.

***Dress Coded* – Carrie Firestone (MJ – clean read)**

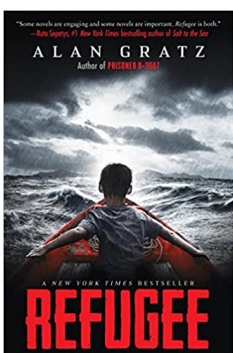


In this debut middle-grade girl-power friendship story, an eighth grader starts a podcast to protest the unfair dress code enforcement at her middle school and sparks a rebellion.

Molly Frost is FED UP... Because Olivia was yelled at for wearing a tank top. Because Liza got dress coded and Molly didn't, even though they were wearing the exact same outfit. Because when Jessica was pulled over by the principal and missed a math quiz, her teacher gave her an F. Because it's impossible to find shorts that are longer than her fingertips. Because girls' bodies are not a distraction. Because middle school is hard enough.

And so Molly starts a podcast where girls can tell their stories, and before long, her small rebellion swells into a revolution. Because now the girls are standing up for what's right, and they're not backing down.

***Refugee* – Alan Gratz (MJS – clean read)**

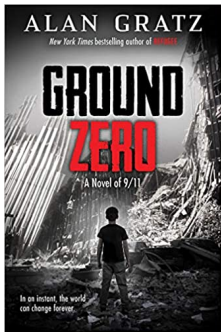


JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world . . . ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America . . . MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe . . . All 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.

Gratz's newest bestseller *Grenade* is the story of two young WWII soldiers, an American Marine and a soldier in Japan's Blood and Iron Student Corps.

***Ground Zero* – Alan Gratz (MJ)**



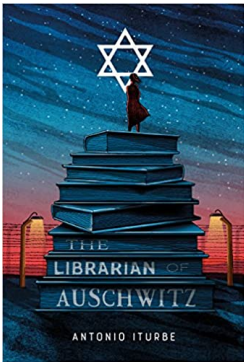
The instant #1 *New York Times* bestseller. In time for the twentieth anniversary of 9/11, master storyteller Alan Gratz (Refugee) delivers a pulse-pounding and unforgettable take on history and hope, revenge and fear -- and the stunning links between the past and present.

September 11, 2001, New York City: Brandon is visiting his dad at work, on the 107th floor of the World Trade Center. Out of nowhere, an airplane slams into the tower, creating a fiery nightmare of terror and confusion. And Brandon is in the middle of it all. Can he survive -- and escape?

September 11, 2019, Afghanistan: Reshmina has grown up in the shadow of war, but she dreams of peace and progress. When a battle erupts in her village, Reshmina stumbles upon a wounded American soldier named Taz. Should she help Taz -- and put herself and her family in mortal danger?

Two kids. One devastating day. Nothing will ever be the same.

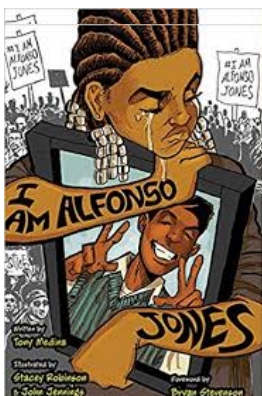
***The Librarian of Auschwitz* – Antonio Iturbi (S)**



Based on the experience of real-life Auschwitz prisoner Dita Kraus, this is the incredible story of a girl who risked her life to keep the magic of books alive during the Holocaust.

Fourteen-year-old Dita is one of the many imprisoned by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Taken, along with her mother and father, from the Terezín ghetto in Prague, Dita is adjusting to the constant terror that is life in the camp. When Jewish leader Freddy Hirsch asks Dita to take charge of the eight precious volumes the prisoners have managed to sneak past the guards, she agrees. And so Dita becomes the librarian of Auschwitz. Out of one of the darkest chapters of human history comes this extraordinary story of courage and hope.

***I Am Alfonso Jones* –TonyMedina (JS - for more mature readers)**



Named to the 2018 Top Ten Great Graphic Novels for Teens list (Young Adult Library Services Association) and the New York Public Library's list of Best Books for Teens.

Alfonso Jones can't wait to play the role of Hamlet in his school's hip-hop rendition of the classic Shakespearean play. He also wants to let his best friend, Danetta, know how he

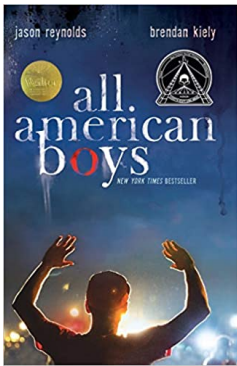
really feels about her. But as he is buying his first suit, an off-duty police officer mistakes a clothes hanger for a gun, and he shoots Alfonso.

When Alfonso wakes up in the afterlife, he's on a ghost train guided by well-known victims of police shootings, who teach him what he needs to know about this subterranean spiritual world. Meanwhile, Alfonso's family and friends struggle with their grief and seek justice for Alfonso in the streets. As they confront their new realities, both Alfonso and those he loves realize the work that lies ahead in the fight for justice.

In the first graphic novel for young readers to focus on police brutality and the Black Lives Matter movement, as in *Hamlet*, the dead shall speak--and the living yield even more surprises.

Featuring a foreword by **Bryan Stevenson**, Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative and author of *Just Mercy*.

All American Boys –Jason Reynolds &Brendan Kiely (**JS - for more mature readers**)



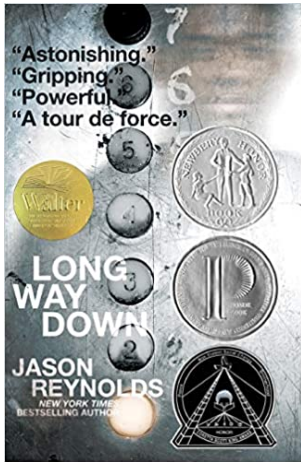
A 2016 Coretta Scott King Author Honor book, and recipient of the Walter Dean Myers Award for Outstanding Children's Literature.

In this *New York Times* bestselling novel, two teens—one black, one white—grapple with the repercussions of a single violent act that leaves their school, their community, and, ultimately, the country bitterly divided by racial tension.

A bag of chips. That's all sixteen-year-old Rashad is looking for at the corner bodega. What he finds instead is a fist-happy cop, Paul Galluzzo, who mistakes Rashad for a shoplifter, mistakes Rashad's pleadings that he's stolen nothing for belligerence, mistakes Rashad's resistance to leave the bodega as resisting arrest, mistakes Rashad's every flinch at every punch the cop throws as further resistance and refusal to STAY STILL as ordered. But how can you stay still when someone is pounding your face into the concrete pavement?

There were witnesses: Quinn Collins—a varsity basketball player and Rashad's classmate who has been raised by Paul since his own father died in Afghanistan—and a video camera. Soon the beating is all over the news and Paul is getting threatened with accusations of prejudice and racial brutality. Quinn refuses to believe that the man who has basically been his savior could possibly be guilty. But then Rashad is absent. And absent again. And again. And the basketball team—half of whom are Rashad's best friends—start to take sides. As does the school. And the town. Simmering tensions threaten to explode as Rashad and Quinn are forced to face decisions and consequences they had never considered before.

Written in tandem by two award-winning authors, this four-starred reviewed tour de force shares the alternating perspectives of Rashad and Quinn as the complications from that single violent moment, the type taken directly from today's headlines, unfold and reverberate to highlight an unwelcome truth.



***Long Way Down* –Jason Reynolds (JS - for more mature readers)**

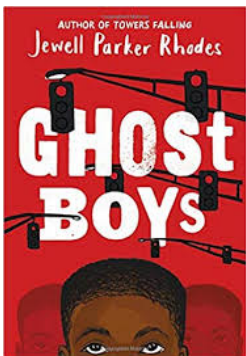
An ode to Put the Damn Guns Down, this is National Book Award finalist and *New York Times* bestseller Jason Reynolds's fiercely stunning novel that takes place in sixty potent seconds—the time it takes a kid to decide whether or not he's going to murder the guy who killed his brother.

A cannon. A strap.
A piece. A biscuit.
A burner. A heater.
A chopper. A gat.
A hammer
A tool for RULE

Or, you can call it a gun. That's what fifteen-year-old Will has shoved in the back waistband of his jeans. See, his brother Shawn was just murdered. And Will knows the rules. No crying. No snitching. *Revenge*. That's where Will's now heading, with that gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, the gun that was his brother's gun. He gets on the elevator, seventh floor, stoked. He knows who he's after. Or does he? As the elevator stops on the sixth floor, on comes Buck. Buck, Will finds out, is who gave Shawn the gun before Will took the gun. Buck tells Will to check that the gun is even loaded. And that's when Will sees that one bullet is missing. And the only one who could have fired Shawn's gun was Shawn. Huh. Will didn't know that Shawn had ever actually USED his gun. Bigger huh. BUCK IS DEAD. But Buck's in the elevator? Just as Will's trying to think this through, the door to the next floor opens. A teenage girl gets on, waves away the smoke from Dead Buck's cigarette. Will doesn't know her, but she knew him. Knew. When they were eight. And stray bullets had cut through the playground, and Will had tried to cover her, but she was hit anyway, and so what she wants to know, on that fifth floor elevator stop, is, what if Will, Will with the gun shoved in the back waistband of his jeans, MISSES.

And so it goes, the whole long way down, as the elevator stops on each floor, and at each stop someone connected to his brother gets on to give Will a piece to a bigger story than the one he thinks he knows. A story that might never know an END...if WILL gets *off* that elevator.

***Ghost Boys* – Jewell Parker Rhodes (J)**



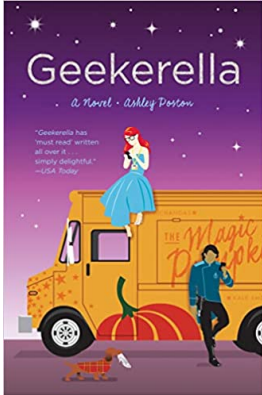
A heartbreaking and powerful story about a black boy killed by a police officer, drawing connections through history, from award-winning author Jewell Parker Rhodes. An instant *New York Times* bestseller & An instant IndieBound bestseller & The #1 Kids' Indie Next Pick & A Walter Award winner

Only the living can make the world better. Live and make it better. Twelve-year-old Jerome is shot by a police officer who mistakes his toy gun for a real threat. As a ghost, he

observes the devastation that's been unleashed on his family and community in the wake of what they see as an unjust and brutal killing.

Soon Jerome meets another ghost: Emmett Till, a boy from a very different time but similar circumstances. Emmett helps Jerome process what has happened, on a journey towards recognizing how historical racism may have led to the events that ended his life. Jerome also meets Sarah, the daughter of the police officer, who grapples with her father's actions.

***Geekerella* – Ashley Poston (MJS – clean read)**



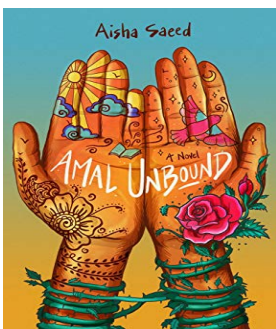
Cinderella goes to the con in this fandom-fueled twist on the classic fairy tale romance.

Part romance, part love letter to nerd culture, and all totally adorbs, *Geekerella* is a fairy tale for anyone who believes in the magic of fandom. Geek girl Elle Wittimer lives and breathes *Starfield*, the classic sci-fi series she grew up watching with her late father. So when she sees a cosplay contest for a new *Starfield* movie, she has to enter. The prize? An invitation to the ExcelsiCon Cosplay Ball, and a meet-and-greet with the actor slated to play Federation Prince Carmindor in the reboot. With savings from her gig at the Magic Pumpkin food truck (and her dad's old costume), Elle's determined to win...unless her stepsisters get there first.

Teen actor Darien Freeman used to live for cons—before he was famous. Now they're nothing but autographs and awkward meet-and-greets. Playing Carmindor is all he's ever wanted, but the *Starfield* fandom has written him off as just another dumb heartthrob. As ExcelsiCon draws near, Darien feels more and more like a fake—until he meets a girl who shows him otherwise.

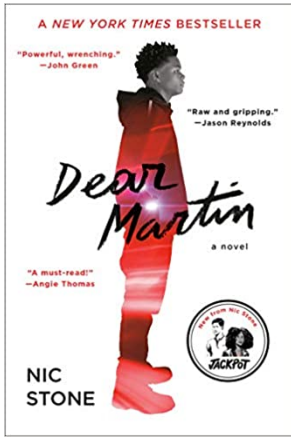
****If you liked this book, be sure to check out the companion books, *The Princess and the Fangirl & Bookish and the Beast*.**

***Amal Unbound* - Aisha Saeed (MJ – clean read)**



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

Life at the opulent Khan estate is full of heartbreak and struggle for Amal--especially when she inadvertently makes an enemy of a girl named Nabila. Most troubling, though, is Amal's growing awareness of the Khans' nefarious dealings. When it becomes clear just how far they will go to protect their interests, Amal realizes she will have to find a way to work with others if they are ever to exact change in a cruel status quo, and if Amal is ever to achieve her dreams.



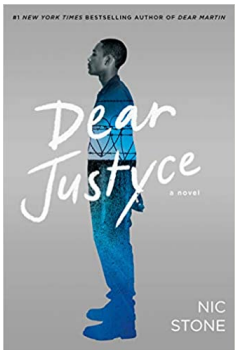
***Dear Martin* - Nic Stone (JS – for more mature readers)**

Raw, captivating, and undeniably real, Nic Stone joins industry giants Jason Reynolds and Walter Dean Myers as she boldly tackles American race relations in this stunning *New York Times* bestselling debut, a William C. Morris Award Finalist.

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates.

Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out.

Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

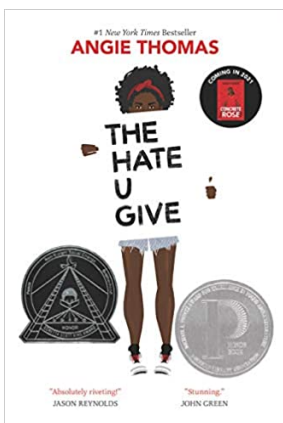


***Dear Justyce* - (JS – for more mature readers)** In the highly anticipated sequel to her *New York Times* bestseller, Nic Stone delivers an unflinching look into the flawed practices and silenced voices in the American juvenile justice system.

Vernell LaQuan Banks and Justyce McAllister grew up a block apart in the Southwest Atlanta neighborhood of Wynwood Heights. Years later, though, Justyce walks the illustrious halls of Yale University . . . and Quan sits behind bars at the Fulton Regional Youth Detention Center.

Through a series of flashbacks, vignettes, and letters to Justyce--the protagonist of *Dear Martin*--Quan's story takes form. Troubles at home and misunderstandings at school give rise to police encounters and tough decisions. But then there's a dead cop and a weapon with Quan's prints on it. What leads a bright kid down a road to a murder charge? Not even Quan is sure.

***The Hate U Give* - Angie Thomas (JS – for more mature readers)**



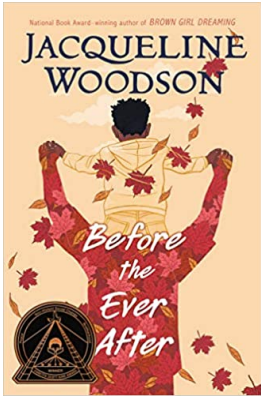
Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a white police officer. Khalil was unarmed.

Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to

know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does—or does not—say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life.

****If you liked this book, check out the author’s new book, *On the Come Up* (for mature readers).**

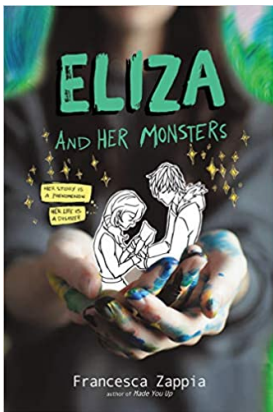
***Before the Ever After* - Jacqueline Woodson (MJ - clean read)**



National Book Award winner Jacqueline Woodson's stirring novel-in-verse explores how a family moves forward when their glory days have passed and the cost of professional sports on Black bodies.

For as long as ZJ can remember, his dad has been everyone's hero. As a charming, talented pro football star, he's as beloved to the neighborhood kids he plays with as he is to his millions of adoring sports fans. But lately life at ZJ's house is anything but charming. His dad is having trouble remembering things and seems to be angry all the time. ZJ's mom explains it's because of all the head injuries his dad sustained during his career. ZJ can understand that—but it doesn't make the sting any less real when his own father forgets his name. As ZJ contemplates his new reality, he has to figure out how to hold on tight to family traditions and recollections of the glory days, all the while wondering what their past amounts to if his father can't remember it. And most importantly, can those happy feelings ever be reclaimed when they are all so busy aching for the past?

***Eliza and Her Monsters* – Francesca Zappia (JS – clean read)**

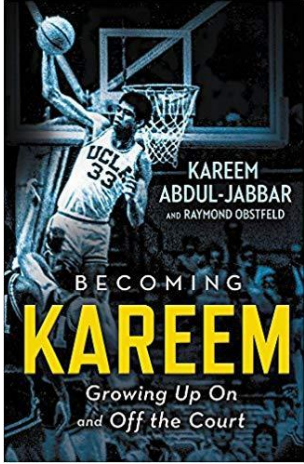


Eighteen-year-old Eliza Mirk is the anonymous creator of *Monstrous Sea*, a wildly popular webcomic, but when a new boy at school tempts her to live a life offline, everything she's worked for begins to crumble.

In the real world, Eliza Mirk is shy, weird, smart, and friendless. Online, Eliza is Lady Constellation, the anonymous creator of a popular webcomic called *Monstrous Sea*. With millions of followers and fans throughout the world, Eliza's persona is popular. Eliza can't imagine enjoying the real world as much as she loves her digital community. Then Wallace Warland transfers to her school, and Eliza begins to wonder if a life offline might be worthwhile. But when Eliza's secret is accidentally shared with the world, everything she's built—her story, her relationship with Wallace, and even her sanity—begins to fall apart.

7th and 8th Grade Nonfiction

***Becoming Kareem: Growing Up On and Off the Court* – Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (MJS)**

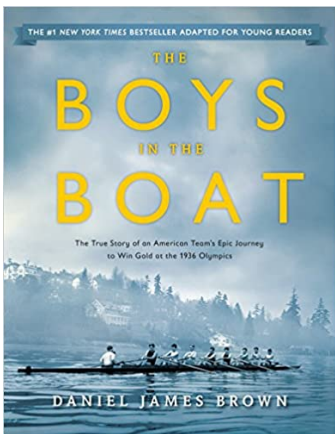


At one time, Lew Alcindor was just another kid from New York City with all the usual problems: He struggled with fitting in, with pleasing a strict father, and with overcoming shyness that made him feel socially awkward. But with a talent for basketball and an unmatched team of supporters, Lew Alcindor was able to transform and to become Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

From a childhood made difficult by racism and prejudice to a record-smashing career on the basketball court as an adult, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's life was packed with "coaches" who taught him right from wrong and led him on the path to greatness. His parents, coaches Jack Donahue and John Wooden, Muhammad Ali, Bruce Lee, and many others played important roles in Abdul-Jabbar's life and sparked him to become an activist for social change and advancement. The inspiration from those around him, and his drive to find his own path in life, are highlighted in this personal and awe-inspiring journey.

Written especially for young readers, *Becoming Kareem* chronicles how Kareem Abdul-Jabbar becomes the icon and legend he is today, both on and off the court.

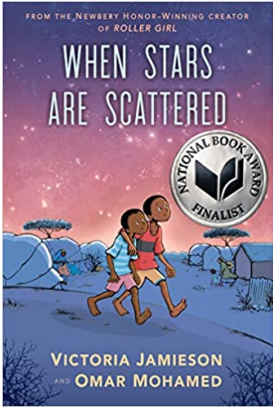
***The Boys in the Boat* - Daniel James Brown (JS)**



The #1 *New York Times* bestseller adapted for the next generation, new content including an author Q&A and never-before-seen photographs - Inspiration for the PBS American Experience Documentary 'The Boys of '36'

For readers of *Unbroken*, out of the depths of the Great Depression comes the astonishing tale of nine working-class boys from the American West who at the 1936 Olympics showed the world what true grit really meant. With rowers who were the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew was never expected to defeat the elite East Coast teams, yet they did, going on to shock the world by challenging the German boat rowing for Adolf Hitler.

At the center of the tale is Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, whose personal quest captures the spirit of his generation—the generation that would prove in the coming years that the Nazis could not prevail over American determination and optimism. This deeply emotional yet easily accessible young readers adaptation of the award-winning #1 *New York Times* bestseller features never-before-seen photographs, highly visual back matter, and an exclusive new introduction.



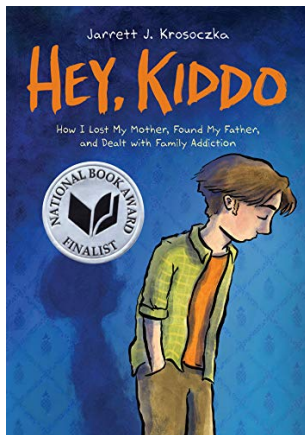
***When Stars Are Scattered* - Victoria Jamieson & Omar Mohamed (MJ)**

A National Book Award Finalist, this remarkable graphic novel is about growing up in a refugee camp, as told by a former Somali refugee to the Newbery Honor-winning creator of *Roller Girl*.

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day.

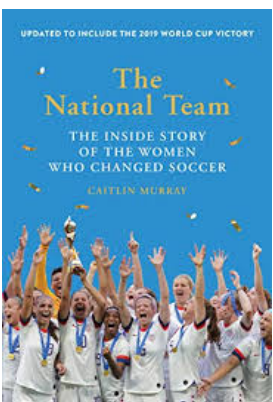
Heartbreak, hope, and gentle humor exist together in this graphic novel about a childhood spent waiting, and a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings. It's an intimate, important, unforgettable look at the day-to-day life of a refugee, as told to *New York Times* Bestselling author/artist Victoria Jamieson by Omar Mohamed, the Somali man who lived the story.

***Hey Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction* - Jarrett J. Krosoczka (JS - for more mature readers)**



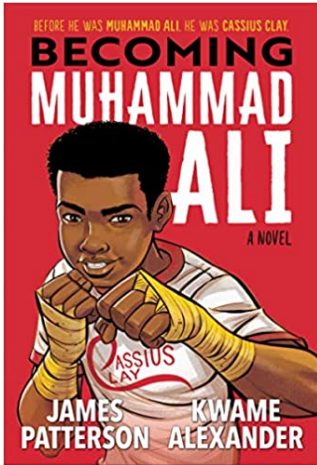
In kindergarten, Jarrett Krosoczka's teacher asks him to draw his family, with a mommy and a daddy. But Jarrett's family is much more complicated than that. His mom is an addict, in and out of rehab, and in and out of Jarrett's life. His father is a mystery -- Jarrett doesn't know where to find him, or even what his name is. Jarrett lives with his grandparents -- two very loud, very loving, very opinionated people who had thought they were through with raising children until Jarrett came along. Jarrett goes through his childhood trying to make his non-normal life as normal as possible, finding a way to express himself through drawing even as so little is being said to him about what's going on. Only as a teenager can Jarrett begin to piece together the truth of his family, reckoning with his mother and tracking down his father. *Hey, Kiddo* is a profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction and finding the art that helps you survive.

***The National Team: The Inside Story of the Women Who Changed Soccer* - Caitlin Murray (JS)**



The U.S. Women's National Soccer Team has won four World Cups and four Olympic gold medals, set record TV ratings, drawn massive crowds, earned huge revenues for FIFA and U.S. Soccer, and helped to redefine the place of women in sports. But despite their dominance, and their rosters of superstar players, they've endured striking inequality: low pay, poor playing conditions, and limited opportunities to play in professional leagues. The National Team, from leading soccer journalist Caitlin Murray,

tells the history of the USWNT in full, from their formation in the 1980s to the run-up to the 2019 World Cup, chronicling both their athletic triumphs and less visible challenges off the pitch. Murray also recounts the rise and fall of U.S. professional leagues, including the burgeoning National Women's Soccer League, an essential part of the women's game. Through nearly 100 exclusive interviews with players, coaches, and team officials, including Alex Morgan, Carli Lloyd, Hope Solo, Heather O'Reilly, Julie Foudy, Brandi Chastain, Pia Sundhage, Tom Sermanni, and Sunil Gulati, Murray takes readers inside the locker rooms and board rooms in engrossing detail. A story of endurance and determination, *The National Team* is a complete portrait of this beloved and important team.



***Becoming Muhammad Ali* – James Patterson and Kwame Alexander (MJ – clean read)**

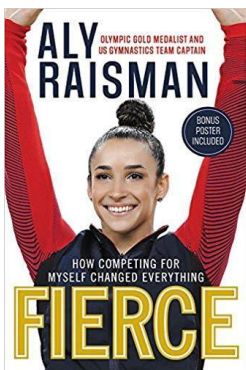
From two heavy-hitters in children's literature comes a critically acclaimed biographical novel of cultural icon Muhammad Ali. Five starred reviews!

*"This utterly delightful story about Ali's childhood is a smash hit." --School Library Journal (starred review)

Before he was a household name, Cassius Clay was a kid with struggles like any other. Kwame Alexander and James Patterson join forces to vividly depict his life up to age seventeen in both prose and verse, including his childhood friends, struggles in school, the racism he faced, and his discovery of boxing. Readers will learn about Cassius' family and neighbors in Louisville, Kentucky, and how, after a thief stole his bike, Cassius began training as an amateur boxer at age twelve. Before long, he won his first Golden Gloves bout and began his transformation into the unrivaled Muhammad Ali.

Fully authorized by and written in cooperation with the Muhammad Ali estate, and vividly brought to life by Dawud Anyabwile's dynamic artwork, *Becoming Muhammad Ali* captures the budding charisma and youthful personality of one of the greatest sports heroes of all time.

***Fierce* – Aly Raisman (JS)**



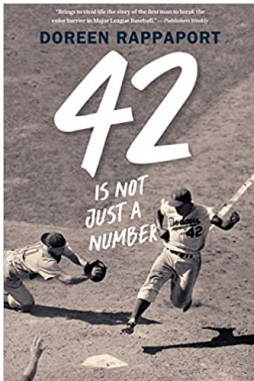
Discover Aly Raisman's inspiring story of dedication, perseverance, and learning to think positive even in the toughest times on her path to gold medal success in two Olympic Games--and beyond.

Aly Raisman first stepped onto a gymnastics mat as a toddler in a "mommy & me" gymnastics class. No one could have predicted then that sixteen years later, she'd be standing on an Olympic podium, having achieved her dreams.

Aly's road to success was full of hard work, perseverance, and victories, but not without its hardships. Aly faced many obstacles, from naysayers who said she'd never make it in

gymnastics to classmates who shamed her for her athletic body to a devastating betrayal of trust. Through it all, Aly surrounded herself with supportive family, friends, and teammates and found the inner strength to remain positive and believe in herself. Now, in her own words, Aly shows what it takes to be a champion on and off the floor, and takes readers on a behind-the-scenes journey before, during, and after her remarkable achievements in two Olympic Games--through her highest highs, lowest lows, and all the moments in between.

Honest and heartfelt, frank and funny, Aly's story is enhanced with never-before-published photos, excerpts from the personal journals she's kept since childhood that chronicle memorable moments with her teammates, and hard-won advice for readers striving to rise above challenges, learn to love themselves, and make their own dreams come true.

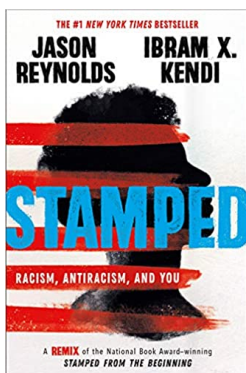


***42 Is Not Just a Number* – Doreen Rappaport (MJ)**

An eye-opening look at the life and legacy of Jackie Robinson, the man who broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball and became an American hero.

Baseball, basketball, football — no matter the game, Jackie Robinson excelled. His talents would have easily landed another man a career in pro sports, but such opportunities were closed to athletes like Jackie for one reason: his skin was the wrong color. Settling for playing baseball in the Negro Leagues, Jackie chafed at the inability to prove himself where it mattered most: the major leagues. Then in 1946, Branch Rickey, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, recruited Jackie Robinson. Jackie faced cruel and sometimes violent hatred and discrimination, but he proved himself again and again, exhibiting courage, determination, restraint, and a phenomenal ability to play the game. In this compelling biography, award-winning author Doreen Rappaport chronicles the extraordinary life of Jackie Robinson and how his achievements won over — and changed — a segregated nation.

***Stamped* – Jason Reynolds & Ibram X. Kendi (JS)**

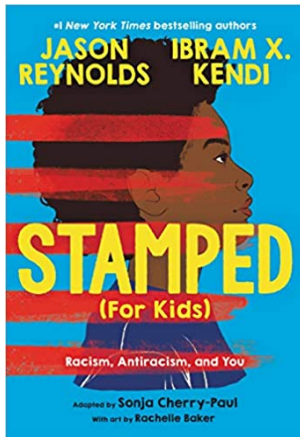


The #1 *New York Times* bestseller and a *USAToday* bestseller! A timely, crucial, and empowering exploration of racism--and antiracism--in America (reading age 12 and up)

This is NOT a history book. This is a book about the here and now. A book to help us better understand why we are where we are. A book about race.

The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited.

Through a gripping, fast-paced, and energizing narrative written by beloved award-winner Jason Reynolds, this book shines a light on the many insidious forms of racist ideas--and on ways readers can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their daily lives.



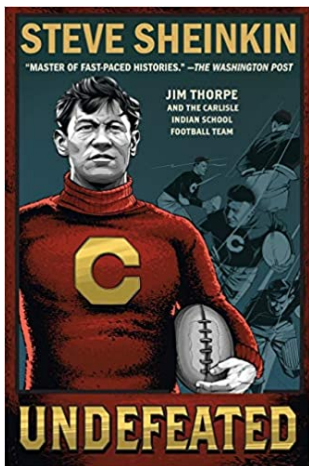
This chapter book edition of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller by luminaries Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds is an essential introduction to the history of racism and antiracism in America (reading age 6-10 EM)

RACE. Uh-oh. The R-word. But actually talking about race is one of the most important things to learn how to do.

Adapted from the groundbreaking bestseller *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*, this book takes readers on a journey from present to past and back again. Kids will discover where racist ideas came from, identify how they impact America today, and meet those who have fought racism with antiracism. Along the way, they'll learn how to identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their own lives.

Ibram X. Kendi's research, Jason Reynolds's and Sonja Cherry-Paul's writing, and Rachelle Baker's art come together in this vital read, enhanced with a glossary, timeline, and more.

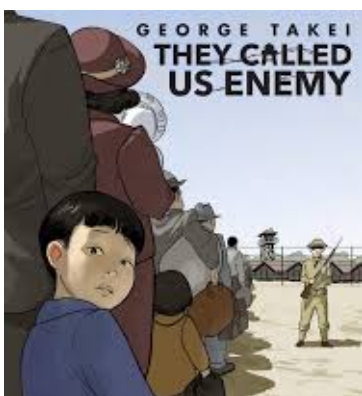
***Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team* – Steve Sheinkin (MJS)**



Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team is an astonishing underdog sports story—and more. It's an unflinching look at the U.S. government's violent persecution of Native Americans and the school that was designed to erase Indian cultures. Expertly told by three-time National Book Award finalist Steve Sheinkin, it's the story of a group of young men who came together at that school, the overwhelming obstacles they faced both on and off the field, and their absolute refusal to accept defeat.

Jim Thorpe (super athlete, Olympic gold medalist) and Glenn Pop Warner (indomitable coach, football mastermind) - Before these men became legends, they met in 1907 at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where they forged one of the winningest teams in American football history. Called "the team that invented football," they took on the best opponents of their day, defeating much more privileged schools such as Harvard and the Army in a series of breathtakingly close calls, genius plays, and bone-crushing hard work.

***They Called Us Enemy*- George Takei (JS)**



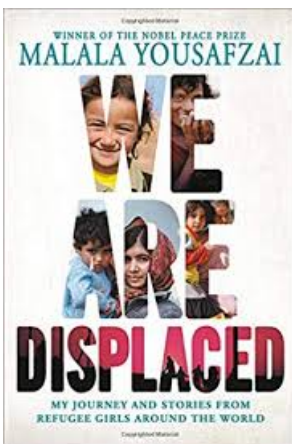
New York Times Bestseller! A stunning graphic memoir recounting actor/author/activist George Takei's childhood imprisoned within American concentration camps during World War II. Experience the forces that shaped an American icon -- and America itself -- in this gripping tale of courage, country, loyalty, and love.

George Takei has captured hearts and minds worldwide with his captivating stage presence and outspoken commitment to equal rights. But long before he braved new frontiers in Star Trek, he woke up as a four-year-old boy to find his own birth country at war with his father's -- and their entire family forced from their home into an uncertain future.

In 1942, at the order of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, every person of Japanese descent on the west coast was rounded up and shipped to one of ten "relocation centers," hundreds or thousands of miles from home, where they would be held for years under armed guard.

They Called Us Enemy is Takei's firsthand account of those years behind barbed wire, the joys and terrors of growing up under legalized racism, his mother's hard choices, his father's faith in democracy, and the way those experiences planted the seeds for his astonishing future.

What does it mean to be American? Who gets to decide? When the world is against you, what can one person do? To answer these questions, George Takei joins co-writers Justin Eisinger & Steven Scott and artist Harmony Becker for the journey of a lifetime.



***We Are Displaced* - Malala Yousafzai (JS - for more mature readers)**

"A stirring and timely book." --*New York Times Book Review* *After her father was murdered, Maria escaped in the middle of the night with her mother. Zaynab was out of school for two years as she fled war before landing in America. Her sister, Sabreen, survived a harrowing journey to Italy. Ajida escaped horrific violence, but then found herself battling the elements to keep her family safe.*

In her powerful new book, Nobel Peace Prize winner and *New York Times*-bestselling author **Malala Yousafzai** introduces some of the people behind the statistics and news stories about the millions of people displaced worldwide.

Malala's experiences visiting refugee camps caused her to reconsider her own displacement -- first as an Internally Displaced Person when she was a young child in Pakistan, and then as an international activist who could travel anywhere in the world except to the home she loved. In *We Are Displaced*, which is part memoir, part communal storytelling, Malala not only explores her own story, but she also shares the personal stories of some of the incredible girls she has met on her journeys -- girls who have lost their community, relatives, and often the only world they've ever known.

In a time of immigration crisis, war, and border conflicts, *We Are Displaced* is an important reminder from one of the world's most prominent young activists that every single one of the 68.5 million currently displaced is a person -- often a young person -- with hopes and dreams. For more mature readers.