

Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors Book List

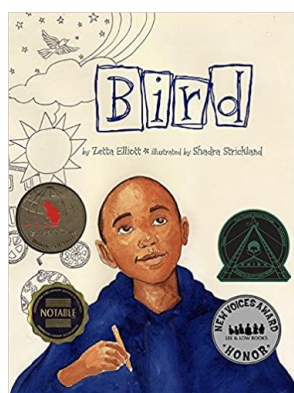
Livonia
PTSA Council

"Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created and recreated by the author. But if the light is right, the window becomes a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience."

- Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop

October 2021 Edition

This Month's Focus: National Poetry Day (October 1)



Bird

By Zetta Elliott, Illustrated by Shadra Strickland

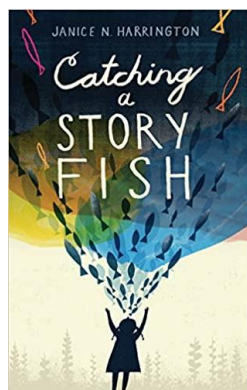
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Picture Book

Young Mekhai, better known as Bird, loves to draw. With drawings, he can erase the things that don't turn out right. In real life, problems aren't so easily fixed.

As Bird struggles to understand the death of his beloved grandfather and his older brothers drug addiction, he escapes into his art. Drawing is an outlet for Bird's emotions and imagination and provides a path to making sense of his world. In time, with the help of his grandfather's friend, Bird finds his own special somethin and wings to fly.

Told with spare grace, Bird is a touching look at a young boy coping with real-life troubles. Readers will be heartened by Bird's quiet resilience, and moved by the healing power of putting pencil to paper



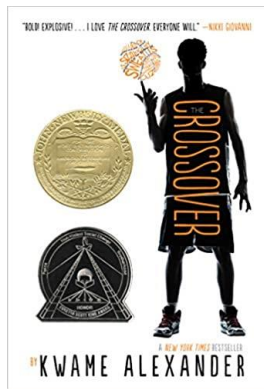
Catching a Story Fish

By Janice N. Harrington

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Keet knows the only good thing about moving away from her Alabama home is that she'll live near her beloved grandfather. When Keet starts school, it's even worse than she expected, as the kids tease her about her southern accent. Now Keet, who can "talk the whiskers off a catfish," doesn't want to open her mouth. Slowly, though, while fishing with her grandfather, she learns the art of listening. Gradually, she makes her first new friend. But just as she's beginning to settle in, her grandfather has a stroke, and even though he's still nearby, he suddenly feels ever-so-far-away. Keet is determined to reel him back to her by telling him stories; in the process she finds her voice and her grandfather again. This lyrical and deeply emotional novel-in-verse celebrates the power of story and of finding one's individual voice.



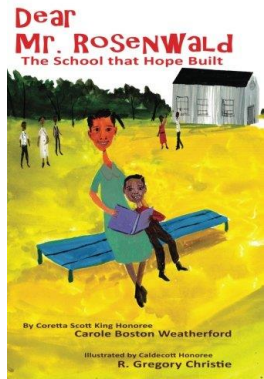
The Crossover

By Kwame Alexander

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

"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.



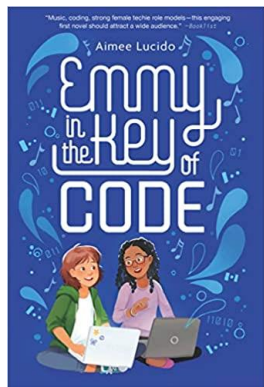
Dear Mr. Rosenwald

By Carole Boston Weatherford, Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie

Recommended Age: 7 to 10 years

Picture Book

Based on the true story of the Rosenwald schools built in the rural African-American South in the 1920s, award winning writer and poet Carol Boston Weatherford tells the lyrical story of third grader Ovella as her family and community help each other build a new, and much-prayed for, school. Renowned, award-winning illustrator Gregory Christie joins Weatherford with provocative gouache illustrations with this empowering story about an African-American community who builds their own school. Inspired by Booker T. Washington, Julius Rosenwald, the son of an immigrant and the president of Sears, Roebuck and Co., donated millions of dollars to build schools for African-American children in the rural South.



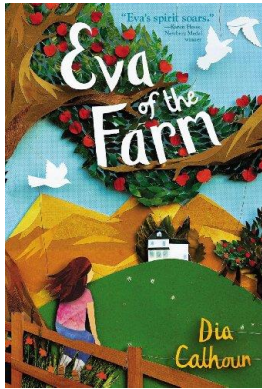
Emmy in the Key of Code

By Aimee Lucido

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

In a new city, at a new school, twelve-year-old Emmy has never felt more out of tune. Things start to look up when she takes her first coding class, unexpectedly connecting with the material—and Abigail, a new friend—through a shared language: music. But when Emmy gets bad news about their computer teacher and finds out Abigail isn't being entirely honest about their friendship, she feels like her new life is screeching to a halt. Despite these obstacles, Emmy is determined to prove one thing: that, for the first time ever, she isn't a wrong note, but a musician in the world's most beautiful symphony.



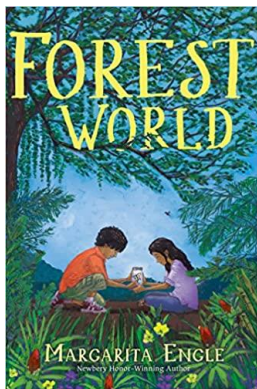
Eva of the Farm

By Dia Calhoun, Illustrated by Kate Slater

Recommended Age: 9 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Twelve-year-old Eva DeHart knows her family's farm is the best, most magical place in the whole world. The Farm has apple trees and sun daisies and a creek. The Farm has frightening things too—like cougars, bears, and a dead tree that Eva calls the Demon Snag. And everything at the Farm shoots out of Eva's fingertips into her poems. She dreams of being a heroine of shining deeds, but who ever heard of a heroine-poet? When a blight strikes the orchard and a letter from the bank arrives marked FORECLOSURE, Eva is given that very chance as she puts all the power of her imagination at work to save the Farm. From a booth at the farmer's market to the snowbound hills where the coyotes hunt, Eva discovers that we face our fears and find our courage in the most unexpected places. This novel by acclaimed author Dia Calhoun is about the transforming powers of imagination and hope, which can turn us all into heroes.



Forest World

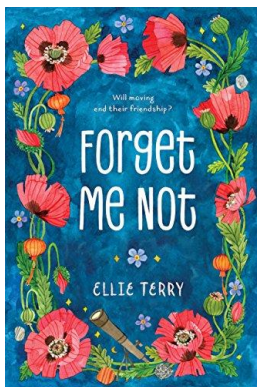
By Margarita Engle

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

Edver isn't happy about being shipped off to Cuba to visit the father he barely knows. The island is a place that no one in Miami ever mentions without a sigh, but travel laws have suddenly changed, and now it's a lot easier for divided families to be reunited. Technology in Cuba hasn't caught up with the times, though, and Edver is expecting a long, boring summer.

He was NOT expecting to meet a sister he didn't know he had. Luza is a year older and excited to see her little brother, until she realizes what a spoiled American he is. Looking for something—anything—they might have in common, the siblings sneak onto the Internet, despite it being forbidden in Cuba, and make up a fake butterfly. Maybe now their cryptozoologist mother will come to visit. But their message is intercepted by a dangerous poacher, and suddenly much more than their family is at stake. Edver and Luza have to find a way to overcome their differences to save the Cuban jungle that they both have grown to love.



Forget Me Not

By Ellie Terry

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

Astronomy-loving Calliope June has Tourette syndrome, so she sometimes makes faces or noises that she doesn't mean to make. When she and her mother move yet again, she tries to hide her TS. But it isn't long before the kids at her new school realize she's different. Only Calliope's neighbor, who is also the popular student body president, sees her as she truly is—an interesting person and a good friend. But is he brave enough to take their friendship public?

As Calliope navigates school, she must also face her mother's new relationship and the fact that they might be moving--again--just as she starts to make friends and finally accept her differences.



Full Cicada Moon

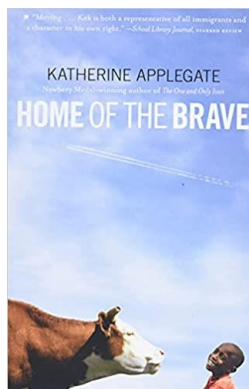
By Marilyn Hilton

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

It's 1969, and the Apollo 11 mission is getting ready to go to the moon. But for half-black, half-Japanese Mimi, moving to a predominantly white Vermont town is enough to make her feel alien. Suddenly, Mimi's appearance is all anyone notices. She struggles to fit in with her classmates, even as she fights for her right to stand out by entering science competitions and joining Shop Class instead of Home Ec. And even though teachers and neighbors balk at her mixed-race family and her refusals to conform, Mimi's dreams of becoming an astronaut never fade—no matter how many times she's told no.

This historical middle-grade novel is told in poems from Mimi's perspective over the course of one year in her new town, and shows readers that positive change can start with just one person speaking up.



Home of the Brave

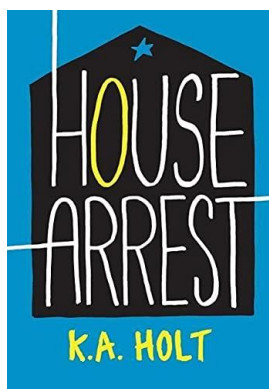
By Katherine Applegate

Recommended Age: 9 to 11 years

Middle Grade Novel

Kek comes from Africa. In America he sees snow for the first time, and feels its sting. He's never walked on ice, and he falls. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter – cold and unkind.

In Africa, Kek lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived, and now she's missing. Kek is on his own. Slowly, he makes friends: a girl who is in foster care; an old woman who owns a rundown farm, and a cow whose name means "family" in Kek's native language. As Kek awaits word of his mother's fate, he weathers the tough Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories, and belief in his new country.



House Arrest

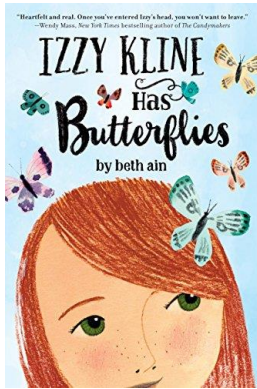
By K.A. Holt

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

Timothy is a good kid who did a bad thing. Now he's under house arrest for a whole year. He has to check in weekly with a probation officer and a therapist, keep a journal, and stay out of trouble. But when he must take drastic measures to help his struggling family, staying out of trouble proves more difficult than Timothy ever thought it would be.

Touching, humorous, and always original, House Arrest is a funny book for teens in verse about a good boy's hard-won path to redemption. The ideal addition to any young adult book collection, House Arrest will delight reluctant readers and provides teenage motivation when it's needed most.



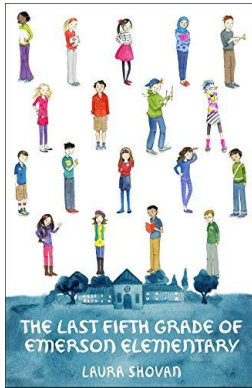
Izzy Kline Has Butterflies

By Beth Ain

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

It's a new school year, and Izzy Kline is having some feelings. There are plenty of reasons for the butterflies in her stomach to flap their wings. There's a new girl in her class who might be a new best friend. The whole grade is performing —and Izzy really wants a starring role. And new changes at home are making Izzy feel like her family is falling apart. First-day jitters, new friends, an audition . . . How many butterfly problems can one kid take?



The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary

By Laura Shovan

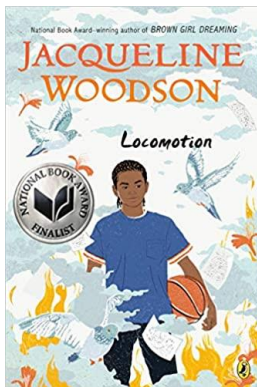
Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

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

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

Families change and new friendships form as these terrific kids grow up and move on in this whimsical novel-in-verse about finding your voice and making sure others hear it.



Locomotion

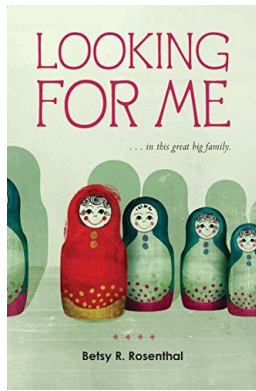
By Jacqueline Woodson

Recommended Age: 10 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

When Lonnie was seven years old, his parents died in a fire. Now he's eleven, and he still misses them terribly. And he misses his little sister, Lili, who was put into a different foster home because "not a lot of people want boys-not foster boys that ain't babies." But Lonnie hasn't given up. His foster mother, Miss Edna, is growing on him. She's already raised two sons and she seems to know what makes them tick. And his teacher, Ms. Marcus, is showing him ways to put his jumbled feelings on paper.

Told entirely through Lonnie's poetry, we see his heartbreak over his lost family, his thoughtful perspective on the world around him, and most of all his love for Lili and his determination to one day put at least half of their family back together. Jacqueline Woodson's poignant story of love, loss, and hope is lyrically written and enormously accessible.



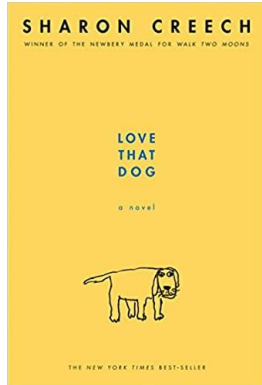
Looking for Me ...in This Great Big Family

By Betsy R. Rosenthal

Recommended Age: 10 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

One of 12 siblings growing up in depression-era Baltimore, Edith isn't quite sure of who she is. Between working at her father's diner, taking care of her younger siblings, and living in the shadow of her more mature sisters, Edith feels lost in a sea of siblings. When a kind teacher encourages Edith to be a teacher herself one day, Edith sees prospects for a future all her own. Full of joy, pain, humor, and sadness, this novel in verse is a wonderful look at the life of Edith Paul, the author's mother, and is an enduring portrait (complete with family photos and an author's note at the end) of one family's pursuit of the American dream.



Love That Dog

By Sharon Creech

Recommended Age: 9 to 11 years

Middle Grade Novel

Love That Dog shows how one boy named Jack finds his voice with the help of a teacher, a pencil, some yellow paper, and of course, a dog. Written as a series of free-verse poems from Jack's point of view, and with classic poetry included in the back matter, this novel is perfect for kids and teachers, too.

Jack hates poetry. Only girls write it and every time he tries to, his brain feels empty. But his teacher, Miss Stretchberry, won't stop giving her class poetry assignments—and Jack can't avoid them. But then something amazing happens. The more he writes, the more he learns that he does have something to say.

"I guess it does
look like a poem
when you see it
typed up
like that."



Minn and Jake

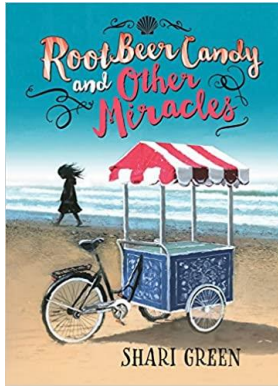
By Janet S. Wong, Illustrated by Genevieve Côté

Recommended Age: 7 to 10 years

Middle Grade Novel

A surprising friendship

Do you ever feel like you've somehow lost your true best friend? Minn feels this way. So does Jake. But Minn and Jake have no intention of being friends. Minn's a string bean. Jake's a shrimp. Minn's a girl. Jake's a boy. And in fifth grade, who wants a best friend of the opposite sex? But Minn and Jake are forced together by circumstances, which only strengthen their resistance . . . until Minn takes Jake lizard hunting. There are lots of good ways to choose a friend.



Root Beer Candy and Other Miracles

By Shari Green

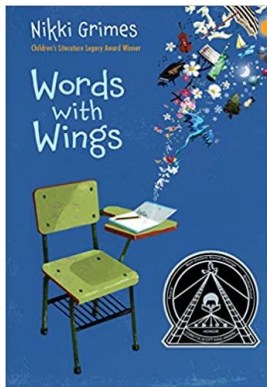
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Sent to stay with her estranged grandmother while her parents try to save their crumbling marriage, 11-year-old Bailey feels helpless and cast away. When a self-proclaimed prophet predicts “a stranger from the sea will change everything,” Bailey hopes this stranger can solve her problems—little suspecting her own ability to influence the world.

Eleven-year-old Bailey believes in miracles. She has to; it will take a miracle to keep her warring parents together. This summer they are at a Marriage Counselling camp, leaving Bailey and her little brother Kevin with their estranged grandmother in the island town of Felicity Bay. There, an eccentric deposed minister makes a prophecy that a stranger from the sea will change everything.

When Bailey discovers a mermaid-shaped piece of driftwood, she begins to believe that the mermaid is this stranger from the sea. Then, when a dolphin becomes stranded on the beach, Bailey forgets her own troubles and rouses the reluctant locals into action.



Words with Wings

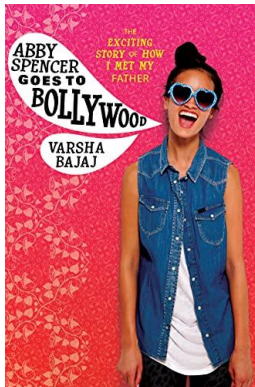
By Nikki Grimes

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Gabby's world is filled with daydreams. However, what began as an escape from her parents' arguments has now taken over her life. But with the help of a new teacher, 'Gabby the dreamer' might just become 'Gabby the writer' and the words that once carried her away might allow her to soar. Written in vivid, accessible poems, this remarkable verse novel is a celebration of imagination, of friendship, of one girl's indomitable spirit, and of a teacher's ability to reach out and change a life.

Other Books to Enjoy



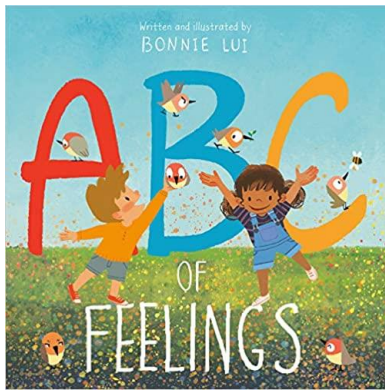
Abby Spencer Goes to Bollywood

By Varsha Bajaj

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

What thirteen-year-old Abby wants most is to meet her father. She just never imagined he would be a huge film star—in Bollywood! Now she's traveling to Mumbai to get to know her famous father. Abby is overwhelmed by the culture clash, the pressures of being the daughter of India's most famous celebrity, and the burden of keeping her identity a secret. But as she learns to navigate her new surroundings, she just might discover where she really belongs.

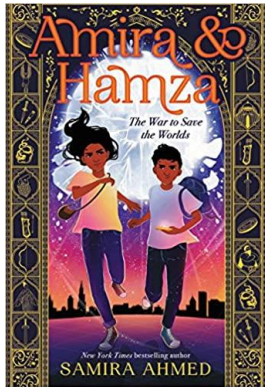


ABC of Feelings

Written & Illustrated by Bonnie Lui
Recommended Age: 3 to 7 years
Picture Book

The perfect way for kids to explore the wide range of emotions they feel every day--complete from A to Z with bright, bold illustrations!

From anxious to zany, kids experience a wide range of emotions, but they don't often have the language to explain how they're feeling. ABC of Feelings explains that it's perfectly okay--and normal!--to feel many different things, and gives both kids and parents the tools they need to make the abstract nature of feelings and emotions easier to discuss and understand.



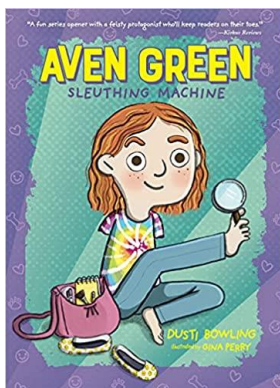
Amira & Hamza: The War to Save the Worlds

By Samira Ahmed
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years
Middle Grade Novel

On the day of a rare super blue blood moon eclipse, twelve-year-old Amira and her little brother, Hamza, can't stop their bickering while attending a special exhibit on medieval Islamic astronomy. While stargazer Amira is wowed by the amazing gadgets, a bored Hamza wanders off, stumbling across the mesmerizing and forbidden Box of the Moon. Amira can only watch in horror as Hamza grabs the defunct box and it springs to life, setting off a series of events that could shatter their world—literally.

Suddenly, day turns to night, everyone around Amira and Hamza falls under a sleep spell, and a chunk of the moon breaks off, hurtling toward them at lightning speed, as they come face-to-face with two otherworldly creatures: jinn.

The jinn reveal that the siblings have a role to play in an ancient prophecy. Together, they must journey to the mystical land of Qaf, battle a great evil, and end a civil war to prevent the moon—the stopper between realms—from breaking apart and unleashing terrifying jinn, devs, and ghuls onto earth. Or they might have to say goodbye to their parents and life as they know it, forever....

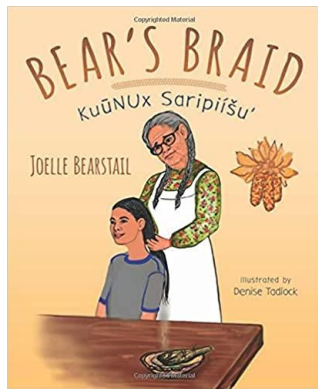


Aven Green: Sleuthing Machine

By Dusti Bowling, Illustrated by Gina Perry
Recommended Age: 6 to 8 years
Chapter Book

Third-grader Aven Green has been solving mysteries for a really long time—a whole month!

She's solved many important cases like The Mystery of the Cranky Mom, The Mystery of the Missing Ice Cream, and The Mystery of the Smelly Feet. Her record is nearly 100% (only The Mystery of the Cereal in My Underpants remains unsolved to this day). Aven asks all the right questions, wields her detective kit carefully, and follows up on every clue. Then her teacher's lunch bag (with her lunch still in it) is taken and Aven's great-grandma's beloved dog goes missing! Can this perceptive detective crack two cases at the same time? Luckily, Aven has a super-powered brain full of lots of extra brain cells to take on both cases. See, she was born without arms, so all of the cells that were supposed to make her arms went into making her brain instead. At least that's her working theory for The Mystery of Why I Have So Many Extra Brain Cells.



Bear's Braid

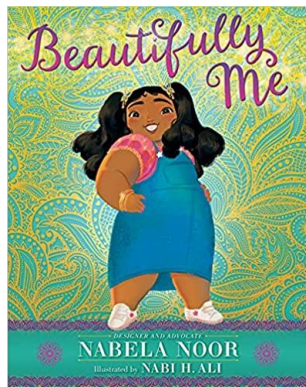
By Joelle Bearstail, Illustrated by Denise Tadlock

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

Bear and his friend Ben feel like they are living two lives: one, where native traditions—like long hair—are a crucial part of their identities, and the other, where indigenous expressions are mocked and treated with ignorance. When the boys encounter bullying because of the braids they wear, these two worlds collide.

Seeking guidance from his beloved grandma, Bear confides his doubts and questions himself and his heritage. Bear's grandma knows about the strength it takes to overcome hardships, and with her help, Bear and Ben develop a plan to strengthen their connection to their roots while also bridging the gap between their schoolmates and their families.



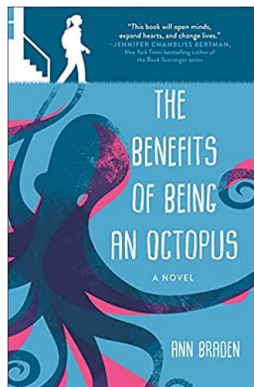
Beautifully Me

By Nabela Noor, Illustrated by Nabi H. Ali

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

Meet Zubi: a joyful Bangladeshi girl excited about her first day of school. But when Zubi sees her mother frowning in the mirror and talking about being "too big," she starts to worry about her own body and how she looks. As her day goes on, she hears more and more people being critical of each other's and their own bodies, until her outburst over dinner leads her family to see what they've been doing wrong—and to help Zubi see that we can all make the world a more beautiful place by being beautifully ourselves.



The Benefits of Being an Octopus

By Ann Braden

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Some people can do their homework. Some people get to have crushes on boys. Some people have other things they've got to do.

Seventh-grader Zoey has her hands full as she takes care of her much younger siblings after school every day while her mom works her shift at the pizza parlor. Not that her mom seems to appreciate it. At least there's Lenny, her mom's boyfriend—they all get to live in his nice, clean trailer.

At school, Zoey tries to stay under the radar. Her only friend Fuchsia has her own issues, and since they're in an entirely different world than the rich kids, it's best if no one notices them.

Zoey thinks how much easier everything would be if she were an octopus: eight arms to do eight things at once. Incredible camouflage ability and steady, unblinking vision. Powerful protective defenses.

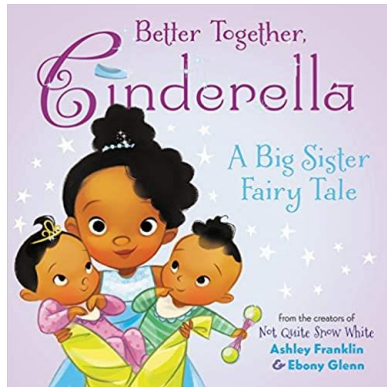
Unfortunately, she's not totally invisible, and one of her teachers forces her to join the debate club. Even though Zoey resists participating, debate ultimately leads her to see things in a new way: her mom's relationship with Lenny, Fuchsia's situation, and her own place in this town of people who think they're better than her. Can Zoey find the courage to speak up, even if it means risking the most stable home she's ever had?



Besties: Work It Out

By Kayla Miller & Jeffrey Canino, Illustrated by Kristina Luu
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years
Graphic Novel

Meet Beth and Chanda, two stylish best friends on their way to building their fashion empire! An unexpected business opportunity presents itself when the girls are asked to dogsit at Ms. Langford's luxurious house while she's away, but it quickly turns into a disaster after an accident leaves one of Ms. Langford's prized possessions in pieces! Now Beth and Chanda have to take on as many odd jobs as they can in order to afford a replacement. Car washing, book sales, interior decorating—you name it, Beth and Chanda are there! Will they be able to patch up their mistake in time?



Better Together, Cinderella: A Big Sister Fairy Tale

By Ashley Franklin, Illustrated by Ebony Glenn
Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years
Picture Book

Tameika can't seem to do anything right for her new twin siblings and struggles to find her place when they steal her spotlight. Luckily, she and her family are attending the community family ball. Tameika is sure a ball will make the perfect set to prove that she can be the best big sister ever.

But what if Tameika is wrong?

With some help from her beloved Uncle Derrick, this princess learns that a growing family is always better together!



Big Boned

By Jo Watson
Recommended Age: 12 to 17 years
Young Adult Novel

Can she be herself in a one-size-fits-all world?

Lori Palmer is the new girl at Bay Water High, where students prize glossy hair, "beach" bodies, and thigh gaps above all else, which is so not her. She misses her old school, where her artistic talent was more important to her peers than a chia smoothie recipe ever was.

Uncomfortable in her own size-sixteen skin, Lori decides to survive senior year as best she can by blending into the background while she melts in the summer heat. But her plans go completely awry when she discovers popular jock Jake volunteering at her brother Zac's school. When her brother befriends Jake's sister, Lori is suddenly thrust into Jake's unfamiliar world of water polo, parties, and stargazing.

As she grows closer to Jake, and her relationship with her mother starts to deteriorate, Lori's old anxieties resurface and she throws herself into her art. It's a wildly new direction for Lori, and through it she realizes that finding her voice might get her into a world of trouble, but standing up for what she believes in is as important as standing up for herself.



The Bright Family

By Matthew Cody & Carol Burrell, Illustrated by Derick Brooks

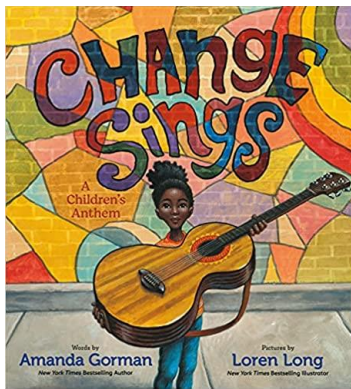
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Graphic Novel

Meet the brilliant, overachieving Bright Family: While Mom's off-planet literally saving the world and Dad's holed up in his laboratory, 12-year-old Nia's trying to win every robotics competition, and her younger brother, Jayden...well, actually, Jayden's just trying to avoid doing his homework so has more time to daydream about kaiju and design giant robots.

But when a dimensional portal sends Mom and Dad who-knows-where, it's up to Nia and Jayden (and their robot nanny, Dusty) to bring their parents home. The question is, where in the multiverse could they possibly be?

Through their travels, the Brights—kids and parents alike—learn how one person's actions can lead to consequences that affect the whole family, and sometimes even the entire multiverse!



Change Sings: A Children's Anthem

By Amanda Gorman, Illustrated by Loren Long

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

"I can hear change humming
In its loudest, proudest song.
I don't fear change coming,
And so I sing along."

In this stirring, much-anticipated picture book by presidential inaugural poet and activist Amanda Gorman, anything is possible when our voices join together. As a young girl leads a cast of characters on a musical journey, they learn that they have the power to make changes—big or small—in the world, in their communities, and in most importantly, in themselves.



City of Dragons: The Awakening Storm

By Jaimal Yogis, Illustrated by Vivian Truong

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Graphic Novel

Grace and her friends must protect a newly hatched dragon from mysterious evildoers. When Grace moves to Hong Kong with her mom and new stepdad, her biggest concern is making friends at her fancy new boarding school. But when a mysterious old woman gifts her a dragon egg during a field trip, Grace discovers that the wonderful stories of dragons she heard when she was a young girl might actually be real—especially when the egg hatches overnight.

The dragon has immense powers that Grace has yet to understand. And that puts them both in danger from mysterious forces intent on abusing the dragon's power. And now it's up to Grace and her school friends to uncover the sinister plot threatening the entire city!



Cookie & Milk: A Scientifically Stunt-tastic Sisterhood

By Michele McAvoy, Illustrated by Jessica Gibson

Recommended Age: 5 to 7 years

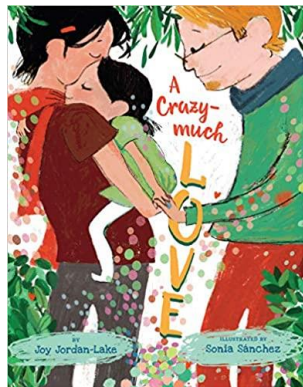
Picture Book

Cookie is a genius—Milk, a daredevil. Cookie loves math and science while Milk loves sports and adrenaline. They are opposites. But they're also best friends.

Without Milk, Cookie couldn't imagine her best inventions. And without Cookie, Milk couldn't do the cool stuff that she loves to do.

But can smart and sporty really go together?

Follow this dynamic duo through their skateboard stunts and tubular-tastic surfs to discover what lies beneath true friendship.



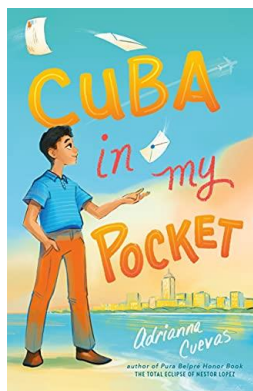
A Crazy-Much Love

By Joy Jordan-Lake, Illustrated by Sonia Sánchez

Recommended Age: 3 to 7 years

Picture Book

"How MUCH is the crazy-much love?" This simple question is answered as two parents recount the journey of adopting their daughter and the many milestone moments that follow. From the child's first bath and first time riding a tricycle, all the way to her boarding that big yellow bus, the crazy-much love grows SO MUCH that it spills out the windows and busts down the doors. A warm, lyrical celebration of the deep love parents hold for their children, and a comforting message for kids about how there can be only one special YOU.



Cuba in my Pocket

By Adrianna Cuevas

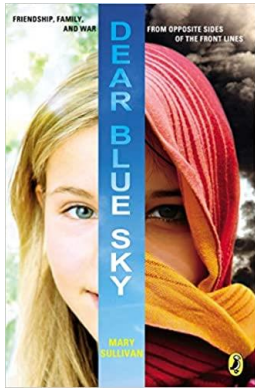
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

"I don't remember. Tell me everything, Pepito. Tell me about Cuba."

When the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 solidifies Castro's power in Cuba, twelve-year-old Cumba's family makes the difficult decision to send him to Florida alone. Faced with the prospect of living in another country by himself, Cumba tries to remember the sound of his father's clarinet, the smell of his mother's lavender perfume.

Life in the United States presents a whole new set of challenges. Lost in a sea of English speakers, Cumba has to navigate a new city, a new school, and new freedom all on his own. With each day, Cumba feels more confident in his new surroundings, but he continues to wonder: Will his family ever be whole again? Or will they remain just out of reach, ninety miles across the sea?



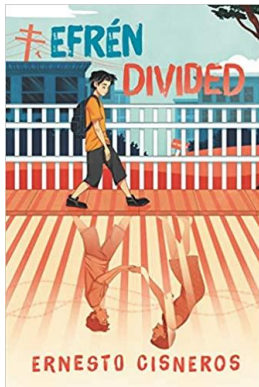
Dear Blue Sky

By Mary Sullivan

Recommended Age: 10 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Ever since her brother Sef left for Iraq, Cassie has felt like her life is falling apart. Her parents are fighting over her brother having gone to war. Her smart, beautiful sister is messing up. Her little brother, who has Down syndrome, is pretending he's a Marine. And her best friend no longer has time for her. In her loneliness Cassie turns to a surprising source of comfort: Blue Sky, an Iraqi girl she meets through her blog. The girls begin a correspondence and Cassie learns that when Blue Sky says "I want my life back," she means something profound, as she can no longer venture out in her destroyed city. Cassie takes strength from Blue Sky's courage and is inspired to stop running away from the pain, and to reclaim her life.



Efrén Divided

By Ernesto Cisneros

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

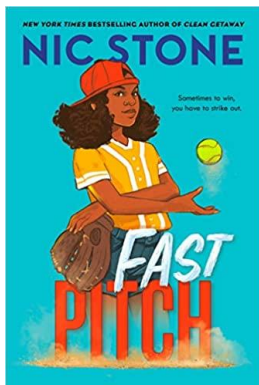
Middle Grade Novel

Efrén Nava's Amá is his Superwoman—or Soperwoman, named after the delicious Mexican sopes his mother often prepares. Both Amá and Apá work hard all day to provide for the family, making sure Efrén and his younger siblings Max and Mía feel safe and loved.

But Efrén worries about his parents; although he's American-born, his parents are undocumented. His worst nightmare comes true one day when Amá doesn't return from work and is deported across the border to Tijuana, México.

Now more than ever, Efrén must channel his inner Soperboy to help take care of and try to reunite his family.

A glossary of Spanish words is included in the back of the book.



Fast Pitch

By Nic Stone

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

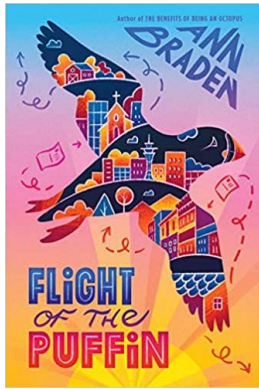
Shenice Lockwood, captain of the Fulton Firebirds, is hyper-focused when she steps up to the plate. Nothing can stop her from leading her team to the U12 fast-pitch softball regional championship. But life has thrown some curveballs her way.

Strike one: As the sole team of all-brown faces, Shenice and the Firebirds have to work twice as hard to prove that Black girls belong at bat.

Strike two: Shenice's focus gets shaken when her great-uncle Jack reveals that a career-ending—and family-name-ruining—crime may have been a setup.

Strike three: Broken focus means mistakes on the field. And Shenice's teammates are beginning to wonder if she's captain-qualified.

It's up to Shenice to discover the truth about her family's past—and fast—before secrets take the Firebirds out of the game forever.



Flight of the Puffin

By Ann Braden

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

Libby comes from a long line of bullies. She wants to be different, but sometimes that doesn't work out. To bolster herself, she makes a card with the message You are amazing. That card sets off a chain reaction that ends up making a difference in the lives of some kids who could also use a boost—be it from dealing with bullies, unaccepting families, or the hole that grief leaves. Receiving an encouraging message helps each kid summon up the thing they need most, whether it's bravery, empathy, or understanding. Because it helps them realize they matter—and that they're not flying solo anymore.



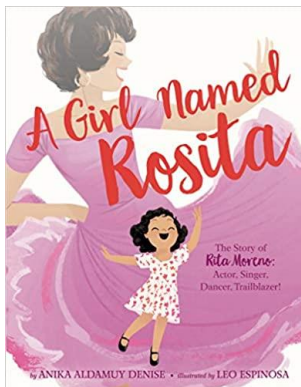
Garvey's Choice

By Nikki Grimes

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Garvey's father has always wanted Garvey to be athletic, but Garvey is interested in astronomy, science fiction, reading—anything but sports. Feeling like a failure, he comforts himself with food. Garvey is kind, funny, smart, a loyal friend, and he is also overweight, teased by bullies, and lonely. When his only friend encourages him to join the school chorus, Garvey's life changes. The chorus finds a new soloist in Garvey, and through chorus, Garvey finds a way to accept himself, and a way to finally reach his distant father—by speaking the language of music instead of the language of sports.



A Girl Named Rosita: The Story of Rita Moreno: Actor, Singer, Dancer, Trailblazer!

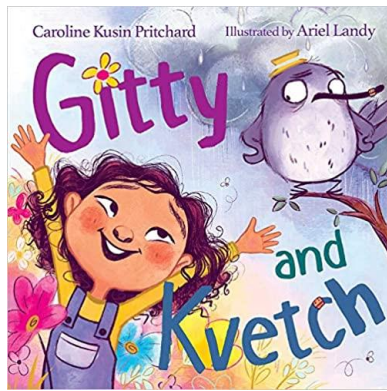
By Anika Aldamuy Denise, Illustrated by Leo Espinosa

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Non-Fiction Picture Book

When young Rosita moved from Puerto Rico to the mainland United States, she didn't know what to expect—but she knew she loved to sing and dance. Working to overcome the language barrier and bullying she experienced in a strange new country, Rita eventually made her way to Hollywood with a dream to be a star. There, she fought to be seen and heard and eventually reached the pinnacle of success, landing her iconic role in West Side Story and, finally, winning her groundbreaking Oscar.

Brought to life by Leo Espinosa's bold and vibrant illustrations and Anika Aldamuy Denise's lyrical text, this gorgeous tribute to the life and career of the first Latinx person to have earned an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony award will inspire little dreamers everywhere.



Gitty and Kvetch

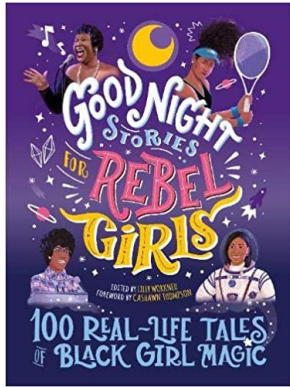
By Caroline Kusin Pritchard, Illustrated by Ariel Landy

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Gitty and her feathered-friend Kvetch couldn't be more different: Gitty always sees the bright side of life, while her curmudgeonly friend Kvetch is always complaining and, well, kvetching about the trouble they get into.

One perfect day, Gitty ropes Kvetch into shlepping off on a new adventure to their perfect purple treehouse. Even when Kvetch sees signs of impending doom everywhere, Gitty finds silver linings and holds onto her super special surprise reason for completing their mission.

But when her perfect plan goes awry, oy vey, suddenly it's Gitty who's down in the dumps. Can Kvetch come out of his funk to lift Gitty's spirits back up?



Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real Life Tales of Black Girl Magic

Edited by Lilly Workneh

Recommended Age: 6 years & up

Middle Grade Non-Fiction

Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real-Life Tales of Black Girl Magic, edited by award-winning journalist Lilly Workneh with a foreword by #BlackGirlMagic originator CaShawn Thompson, is dedicated to amplifying and celebrating the stories of Black women and girls from around the world; features the work of over 60 Black female and non-binary authors, illustrators, and editors; is designed to acknowledge, applaud, and amplify the incredible stories of Black women and girls from the past and present; and celebrates Black Girl Magic around the world.

Amongst the women featured from over 30 countries are tennis player Naomi Osaka, astronaut Jeanette Epps, author Toni Morrison, filmmaker Ava DuVernay; aviator Bessie Coleman, Empress Taytu Betul, journalist Ida B. Wells, and many other inspiring leaders, champions, innovators, and creators. Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls: 100 Real-Life Tales of Black Girl Magic is the fourth volume of the New York Times bestselling Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls series which originally launched in 2016.



Home Is In Between

By Mitali Perkins, Illustrated by Lavanya Naidu

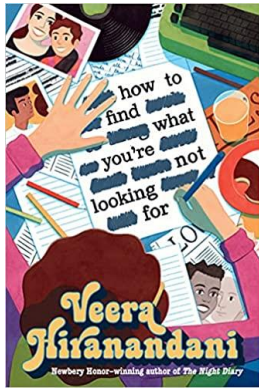
Recommended Age: 3 to 6 years

Picture Book

Shanti misses the warm monsoon rains in India. Now in America, she watches fall leaves fly past her feet.

Still, her family's apartment feels like a village: Mama cooking luchi, funny stories in Bangla, and Baba's big laugh. But outside, everything is different – trick-or-treating, ballet class, and English books.

Back and forth, Shanti trudges between her two worlds. She remembers her village and learns her new town. She watches Bollywood movies at home and Hollywood movies with her friends. She is Indian. She is also American. How should she define home?



How to Find What You're Not Looking For

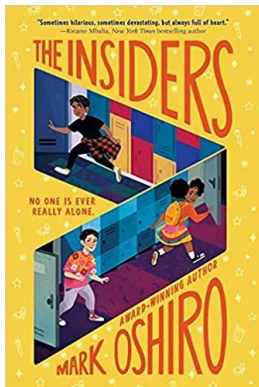
By Veera Hiranandani

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

New historical fiction from a Newbery Honor–winning author about how middle schooler Ariel Goldberg's life changes when her big sister elopes following the 1967 Loving v. Virginia decision, and she's forced to grapple with both her family's prejudice and the antisemitism she experiences, as she defines her own beliefs.

Twelve-year-old Ariel Goldberg's life feels like the moment after the final guest leaves the party. Her family's Jewish bakery runs into financial trouble, and her older sister has eloped with a young man from India following the Supreme Court decision that strikes down laws banning interracial marriage. As change becomes Ariel's only constant, she's left to hone something that will be with her always--her own voice.



The Insiders

By Mark Oshiro

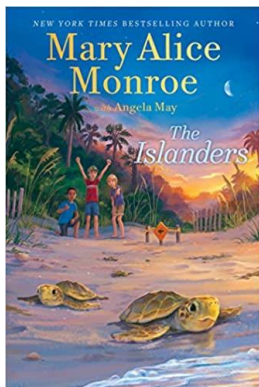
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Three kids who don't belong. A room that shouldn't exist. A year that will change everything.

San Francisco and Orangevale may be in the same state, but for Héctor Muñoz, they might as well be a million miles apart. Back home, being gay didn't mean feeling different. At Héctor's new school, he couldn't feel more alone.

Most days, Héctor just wishes he could disappear. And he does. Right into the janitor's closet. (Yes, he sees the irony.) But one day, when the door closes behind him, Héctor discovers he's stumbled into a room that shouldn't be possible. A room that connects him with two new friends from different corners of the country—and opens the door to a life-changing year full of friendship, adventure, and just a little bit of magic.



The Islanders

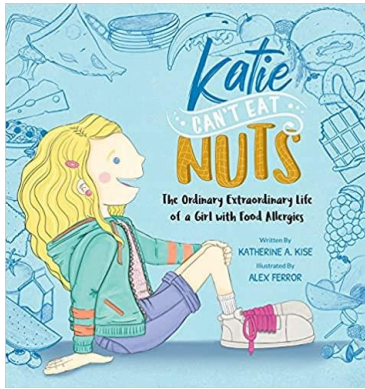
By Mary Alice Monroe & Angela May

Recommended Age: 9 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

Eleven-year-old Jake's life has just turned upside-down. His father was wounded in Afghanistan, and his mother is going to leave to care for him. That means Jake's spending the summer on tiny Dewees Island with his grandmother. The island is a nature sanctuary—no cars or paved roads, no stores or restaurants. To make matters worse, Jake's grandmother doesn't believe in cable or the internet. Which means Jake has no cell phone, no video games...and no friends. This is going to be the worst summer ever!

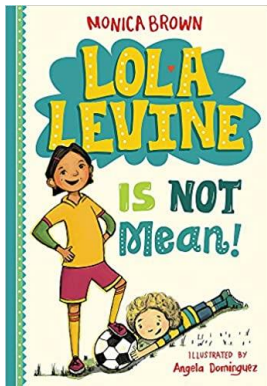
He's barely on the island before he befriends two other kids—Macon, another "summer kid," and Lovie, know-it-all who lives there and shows both Jake and Macon the ropes of life on the island. All three are struggling with their own family issues and they quickly bond, going on adventures all over Dewees Island. Until one misadventure on an abandoned boat leads to community service. Their punishment? Mandatory duty on the Island Turtle Team. The kids must do a daily dawn patrol of the beach on the hunt for loggerhead sea turtle tracks. When a turtle nest is threatened by coyotes, the three friends must find a way to protect it. Can they save the turtle nest from predators? Can Jake's growing love for the island and its inhabitants (be they two-legged, four-legged, feathered, or finned) help to heal his father?



Katie Can't Eat Nuts: The Ordinary Extraordinary Life of a Girl with Food Allergies

By Katherine Kise, Illustrated by Alex Ferrer
Recommended Age: 6 to 12 years
Picture Book

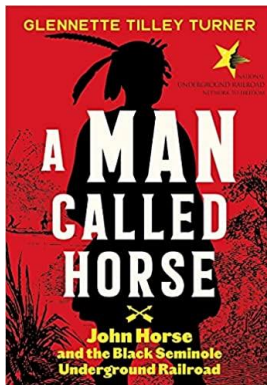
Katie is a girl who loves to play soccer. She's a ballerina, too. And she happens to be allergic to nuts. Join her to meet her family and friends, and learn about how she lives her amazing life. This delightful book, with gorgeous illustrations and fun activities, enables parents and children to have a discussion about food allergies. Come and experience Katie's ordinary extraordinary life!



Lola Levine Is Not Mean!

By Monica Brown, Illustrated by Angela Dominguez
Recommended Age: 6 to 10 years
Chapter Book

Lola Levine likes writing in her diario, sipping her mom's cafe con leche, eating her dad's matzo ball soup, and playing soccer with her team, the Orange Smoothies. So what if she doesn't always fit in? Lola is fierce on the field, but when a soccer game during recess gets too competitive, she accidentally hurts her classmate, Juan Gomez. Now everyone is calling her Mean Lola Levine! Lola feels terrible, but with the help of her family, her super best friend, Josh Blot, and a little "pencil power," she just might be able to turn it all around. In this first book in a series, young readers will be inspired by Lola's big heart and creative spirit as she learns to navigate the second grade in true Lola style!



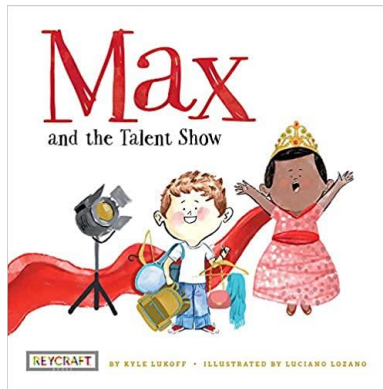
A Man Called Horse: John Horse and the Black Seminole Underground Railroad

By Glennette Tilley Turner
Recommended Age: 10 to 14 years
Middle Grade Non-Fiction

John Horse (c. 1812–1882, also known as Juan Caballo) was a famed chief, warrior, tactician, and diplomat who played a dominant role in Black Seminole affairs for half a century. His story is central to that of the Black Seminoles—descendants of Seminole Indians, free Blacks, and escaped slaves who formed an alliance in Spanish Florida. A political and military leader of mixed Seminole and African heritage, Horse defended his people from the US government, other tribes, and slave hunters.

A Man Called Horse focuses on the little-known life of Horse while also putting into historical perspective the larger story of Native Americans and especially Black Seminoles, helping to connect the missing “dots” in this period. After fighting during the Second Seminole War (1835–1842), one of the longest and most costly Native American conflicts in US history, Horse negotiated terms with the federal government and later became a guide and interpreter. Forced to relocate, he led a group of Black Seminoles to find a new home, first heading westward to Texas and later to Mexico.

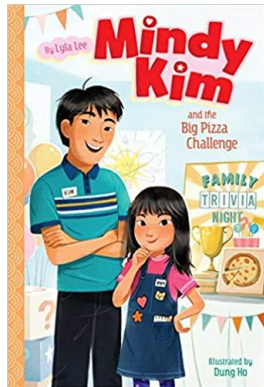
Turner worked with descendants of Horse, who provided oral histories as well as many photographs and other artifacts. Her expertly researched and vetted biography depicts Horse as a complex, fascinating figure who served in many varied roles, including as a counselor of fellow Seminole leaders, an agent of the US government, and a captain in the Mexican army. But no matter the part he played, one thing remained constant: whether in battle or at the negotiating table, Horse fought tirelessly to help his people survive. The story of John Horse is a tale of daring, intrigue, and the lifelong quest for freedom.



Max and the Talent Show

By Kyle Lukoff, Illustrated by Luciano Lozano
Recommended Age: 5 to 8 years
Picture Book

Max's friend Stephen is great at many things. But more than anything else, Stephen can tell a story. His stories have the ability to change listeners' initial impressions of people and situations. When Stephen signs up for the school's talent show, Max signs up to be his assistant. After selecting that just-right dress and those just-right shoes for the show, the moment arrives. Stephen steps onto the stage. The lights shine brightly in his face. He looks out into the crowd knowing he has prepared everything, except the one thing that matters most – his performance. What will Max, standing in the wings, do to help his friend?

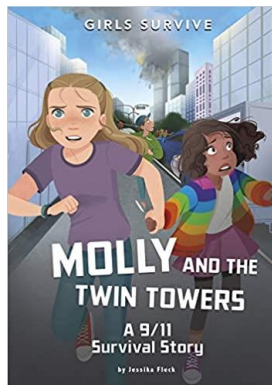


Mindy Kim and the Big Pizza Challenge

By Lyla Lee, Illustrated by Dung Ho
Recommended Age: 6 to 9 years
Chapter Book

Mindy Kim loves food—from her beloved Korean staples to pizza! When a local pizza place advertises a trivia competition, Mindy can't believe that the big prize is unlimited pizza for a whole year!

Mindy is confident she and her dad can take the top spot. But Dad is worried he might not understand all the cultural references. And he wants Mindy to know that the most important thing is to always try your best, even if you don't win. Can Mindy and her dad have fun together, win or lose?



Molly and the Twin Towers: A 9/11 Survival Story

By Jessika Fleck, Illustrated by Jane Pica
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years
Middle Grade Novel

Life in lower Manhattan is normal for Molly, her dads, and younger sister. But on September 11, 2001, everything changes. Molly and her younger sister, Adeline, are at school when the first plane hits the World Trade Center. When the Twin Towers fall, the city is thrown into chaos. Papa, a pilot, is flying, Dad can't be reached, and Gran, an EMT with the New York Fire Department, is at Ground Zero. It's up to Molly to find her sister and navigate a city she no longer recognizes.

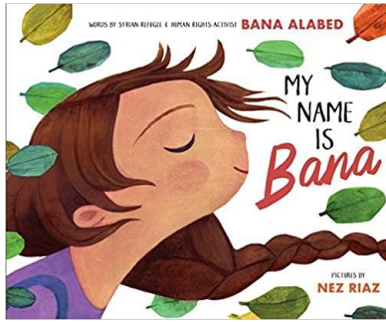


Ms. Marvel: Stretched Thin

By Nadia Shammas, Illustrated by Nabi H. Ali
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years
Graphic Novel

Kamala Khan (a.k.a Ms. Marvel) is stretched too thin – literally. She's having a hard time balancing schoolwork with being a good friend, being there for her family, becoming the best fanfic writer this side of the Hudson River ... and, you know, becoming a Super Hero. She's tired and just barely keeping control, BUT she's handling it. Totally.

But when a mysterious robot tries to infiltrate Avengers Tower, it'll be up to Ms. Marvel to (again, literally) pull herself together, learn to ask for help, and fix the mess she's made before anyone gets hurt!



My Name is Bana

By Bana Alabed, Illustrated by Nez Riaz

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

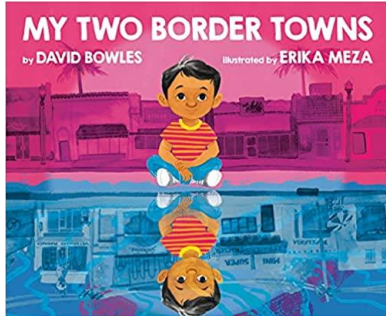
Picture Book Memoir

A poignant picture book memoir from Bana Alabed, the seven-year-old Syrian girl from Aleppo whose messages to the world have turned her into a global symbol and advocate for refugee rights.

"I just want to live without fear." —Bana Alabed, Twitter, October 12, 2016

When seven-year-old Bana Alabed took to Twitter to describe the horrors she and her family were experiencing in war-torn Syria, her heartrending messages touched the world and gave a voice to millions of innocent children.

Written in Bana's own words, this picture book offers a uniquely intimate child's perspective on one of the biggest humanitarian crises in history. Bana has lost her best friend, her school, her home, and her homeland. But she has not lost her hope—for herself and for other children around the world who are victims and refugees of war and deserve better lives.



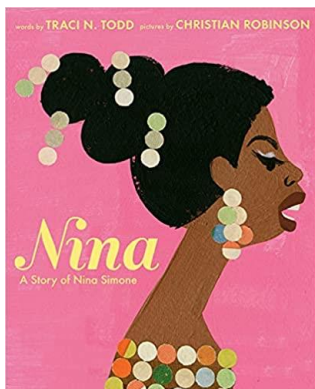
My Two Border Towns

By David Bowles, Illustrated by Erika Meza

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

Early one Saturday morning, a boy prepares for a trip to The Other Side/El Otro Lado. It's close--just down the street from his school--and it's a twin of where he lives. To get there, his father drives their truck along the Rio Grande and over a bridge, where they're greeted by a giant statue of an eagle. Their outings always include a meal at their favorite restaurant, a visit with Tío Mateo at his jewelry store, a cold treat from the paletero, and a pharmacy pickup. On their final and most important stop, they check in with friends seeking asylum and drop off much-needed supplies.



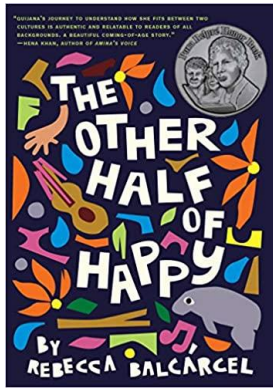
Nina: A Story of Nina Simone

By Traci N. Todd, Illustrated by Christian Robinson

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Non-Fiction Picture Book

Born Eunice Kathleen Waymon in small town North Carolina, Nina Simone was a musical child. She sang before she talked and learned to play piano at a very young age. With the support of her family and community, she received music lessons that introduced her to classical composers like Bach who remained with her and influenced her music throughout her life. She loved the way his music began softly and then tumbled to thunder, like her mother's preaching, and in much the same way as her career. During her first performances under the name of Nina Simone her voice was rich and sweet but as the Civil Rights Movement gained steam, Nina's voice soon became a thunderous roar as she raised her voice in powerful protest in the fight against racial inequality and discrimination.



The Other Half of Happy

By Rebecca Balcarcel

Recommended Age: 10 years & up

Middle Grade Novel

One-half Guatemalan, one-half American: When Quijana's Guatemalan cousins move to town, her dad seems ashamed that she doesn't know more about her family's heritage.

One-half crush, one-half buddy: When Quijana meets Zuri and Jayden, she knows she's found true friends. But she can't help the growing feelings she has for Jayden.

One-half kid, one-half grown-up: Quijana spends her nights Skyping with her ailing grandma and trying to figure out what's going on with her increasingly hard-to-reach brother.

Quijana must figure out which parts of herself are most important, and which pieces come together to make her whole.

This is a heartfelt poetic portrayal of a girl growing up, fitting in, and learning what it means to belong.



Partly Cloudy

By Tanita S. Davis

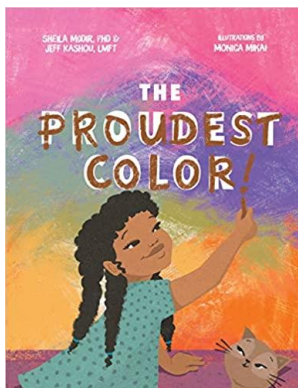
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Lightning couldn't strike twice, could it? After a terrible year, Madalyn needs clear skies desperately. Moving in with her great-uncle, Papa Lobo, and switching to a new school is just the first step.

It's not all rainbows and sunshine, though. Madalyn discovers she's the only Black girl in her class, and while most of her classmates are friendly, assumptions lead to some serious storms.

Papa Lobo's long-running feud with neighbor Mrs. Baylor brings wild weather of its own, and Madalyn wonders just how far things will go. But when fire threatens the community, Madalyn discovers that truly being neighborly means more than just staying on your side of the street—it means weathering tough conversations—and finding that together a family can pull through anything.



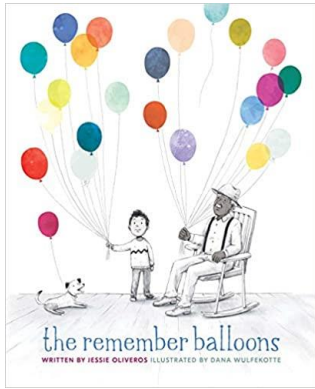
The Proudest Color

By Sheila Modir and Jeffrey Kashou, Illustrated by Monica Mikai

Recommended Age: 5 to 8 years

Picture Book

Zahra sees the world in vivid color. When she's happy, she feels a razzle-dazzle pink in her hands. When she's sad, she feels a deep blue behind her eyes. But she isn't quite sure how to feel about the color of her skin. Kids at school tell her she is different, but her mother tells her to be proud!



The Remember Balloons

By Jessie Oliveros, Illustrated by Dana Wulfekotte

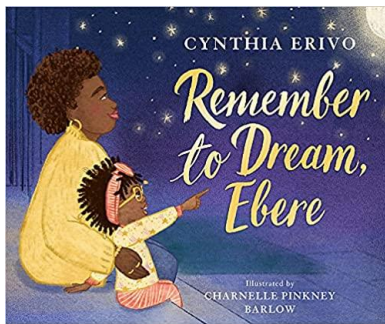
Recommended Age: 5 to 9 years

Picture Book

James's Grandpa has the best balloons because he has the best memories. He has balloons showing Dad when he was young and Grandma when they were married. Grandpa has balloons about camping and Aunt Nelle's poor cow. Grandpa also has a silver balloon filled with the memory of a fishing trip he and James took together.

But when Grandpa's balloons begin to float away, James is heartbroken. No matter how hard he runs, James can't catch them. One day, Grandpa lets go of the silver balloon — and he doesn't even notice!

Grandpa no longer has balloons of his own. But James has many more than before. It's up to him to share those balloons, one by one.



Remember to Dream, Ebere

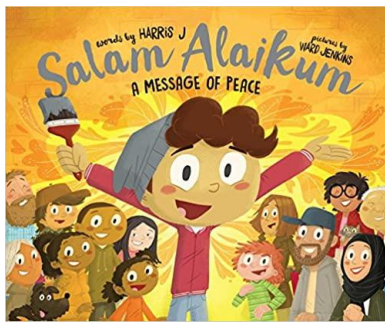
By Cynthia Erivo, Illustrated by Charnelle Pinkney Barlow

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

When Ebere's mother puts her to bed at night, she always says, "Remember to dream, Ebere." And dream, Ebere does! Encouraged by her mother to make her dreams as big as possible, Ebere imagines herself as the captain of a rocket ship with the ability to go anywhere in the universe.

A message of hope and possibility, award-winning star of stage and screen Cynthia Erivo's debut picture book is an ode to a child's imagination, a parent's love, and the big dreams shared by both.



Salam Alaikum: A Message of Peace

By Harris J, Illustrated by Ward Jenkins

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

Salam Alaikum means "Peace be upon you." It is the greeting that Muslims around the world use to say "hello" and "good-bye." International music sensation Harris J has taken that greeting and created a call to action.

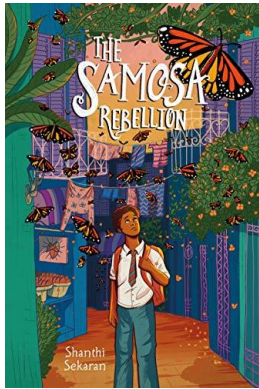
Spread peace on the earth...

Treasure the love, let it surround us

Always be kind, always remind one another

Peace on the earth every day

Using the lyrics to the hit song of the same name, and accompanied by heartwarming illustrations that depict the power of paying it forward, this sweet and charming picture book celebrates kindness and community.



The Samosa Rebellion

By Shanthi Sekaran

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Before his grandmother moved from India to the island of Mariposa, Muki Krishnan's life was good. But now? He has to share his bedroom with Paati, his grandmother, who snores like a bulldozer and wakes him up at dawn to do yoga.

Paati's arrival coincides with even bigger changes in Mariposa. The president divides citizens into Butterflies—families who have lived in Mariposa for three generations—and Moths, who, like Muki's family, are more recent immigrants. The changes are small at first. But then Muki and his friends find a camp being built to imprison Moths before sending them away. Soon after, his Paati is captured and taken there.

While devising Paati's escape, Muki discovers that a secret rebellion is underway, and as he digs deeper, he realizes that rescuing Paati will be the fight of his life.



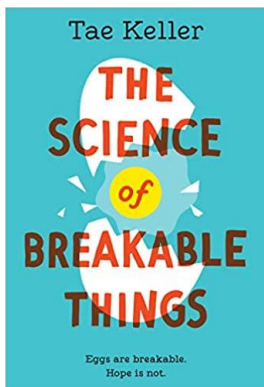
Saturday at the Food Pantry

By Diane O'Neill, Illustrated by Brizida Magro

Recommended Age: 4 to 7 years

Picture Book

Molly and her mom don't always have enough food, so one Saturday they visit their local food pantry. Molly's happy to get food to eat until she sees her classmate Caitlin, who's embarrassed to be at the food pantry. Can Molly help Caitlin realize that everyone needs help sometimes?



The Science of Breakable Things

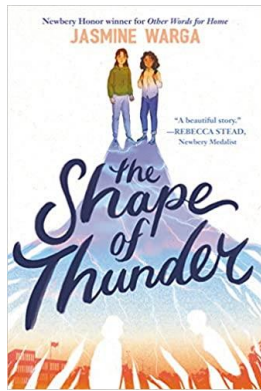
By Tae Keller

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

When Natalie's science teacher suggests that she enter an egg drop competition, she thinks it could be the perfect solution to all of her problems. With the prize money, she can fly her botanist mother to see the miraculous Cobalt Blue Orchids—flowers with the resilience to survive against impossible odds. Her mother has been suffering from depression, and Natalie is positive that the flowers' magic will inspire her mom to fall in love with life again.

But she can't do it alone. Her friends step up to show her that talking about problems is like taking a plant out of a dark cupboard and exposing it to the sun. With their help, Natalie begins an unforgettable journey to discover the science of hope, love, and miracles.



The Shape of Thunder

By Jasmine Warga

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

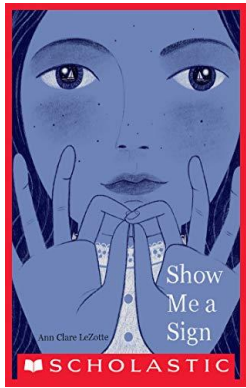
Middle Grade Novel

Cora hasn't spoken to her best friend, Quinn, in a year.

Despite living next door to each other, they exist in separate worlds of grief. Cora is still grappling with the death of her beloved sister in a school shooting, and Quinn is carrying the guilt of what her brother did.

On the day of Cora's twelfth birthday, Quinn leaves a box on her doorstep with a note. She has decided that the only way to fix things is to go back in time to the moment before her brother changed all their lives forever—and stop him.

In spite of herself, Cora wants to believe. And so the two former friends begin working together to open a wormhole in the fabric of the universe. But as they attempt to unravel the mysteries of time travel to save their siblings, they learn that the magic of their friendship may actually be the key to saving themselves.



Show Me a Sign

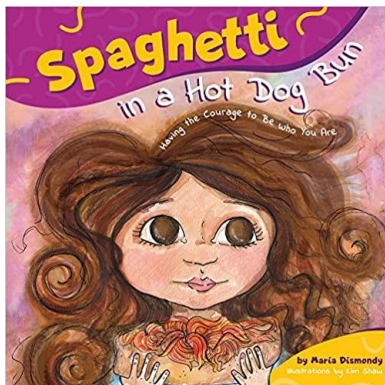
By Ann Clare LeZotte

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected on her beloved island of Martha's Vineyard. Her great-great-grandfather was an early English settler and the first deaf islander. Now, over a hundred years later, many people there -- including Mary -- are deaf, and nearly everyone can communicate in sign language. Mary has never felt isolated. She is proud of her lineage.

But recent events have delivered winds of change. Mary's brother died, leaving her family shattered. Tensions over land disputes are mounting between English settlers and the Wampanoag people. And a cunning young scientist has arrived, hoping to discover the origin of the island's prevalent deafness. His maniacal drive to find answers soon renders Mary a "live specimen" in a cruel experiment. Her struggle to save herself is at the core of this penetrating and poignant novel that probes our perceptions of ability and disability.



Spaghetti in a Hot Dog Bun: Having the Courage To Be Who You Are

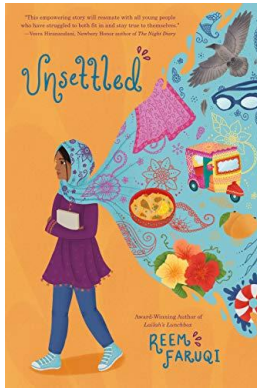
By Maria Dismondy, Illustrated by Kim Shaw

Recommended Age: 4 to 7 years

Picture Book

Lucy has big hair, eats fun foods and is teased by a boy named Ralph at school because she is different. She tries to be brave but she wishes the teasing would stop. What should I do? she asks herself over and over.

Lucy's Papa Gino reminds her to do the right thing and treat people with kindness. So when Ralph gets stuck on the playground and needs help, will Lucy use this chance to teach Ralph a lesson? Or will she have the courage to be true to herself and make the right choice with an act of kindness?



Unsettled

By Reem Faruqi

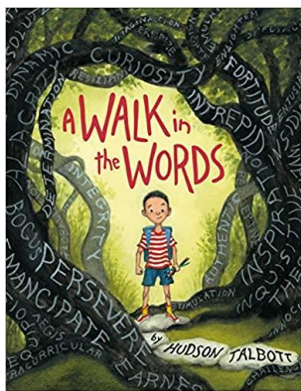
Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

When her family moves from Pakistan to Peachtree City, all Nurah wants is to blend in, yet she stands out for all the wrong reasons. Nurah's accent, floral-print kurtas, and tea-colored skin make her feel excluded, until she meets Stahr at swimming tryouts.

And in the water Nurah doesn't want to blend in. She wants to win medals like her star athlete brother, Owais—who is going through struggles of his own in the U.S. Yet when sibling rivalry gets in the way, she makes a split-second decision of betrayal that changes their fates.

Ultimately Nurah slowly gains confidence in the form of strong swimming arms, and also gains the courage to stand up to bullies, fight for what she believes in, and find her place.



A Walk in the Words

Written & Illustrated by Hudson Talbott

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book Memoir

When Hudson Talbott was a little boy, he loved drawing, and it came naturally to him. But reading? No way! One at a time, words weren't a problem, but long sentences were a struggle. As his friends moved on to thicker books, he kept his slow reading a secret. But that got harder every year. He felt alone, lost, and afraid in a world of too many words.

Fortunately, his love of stories wouldn't let him give up. He started giving himself permission to read at his own pace, using the words he knew as stepping-stones to help draw him into a story. And he found he wasn't so alone—in fact, lots of brilliant people were slow readers, too. Learning to accept the fact that everyone does things in their own unique way, and that was okay, freed him up and ultimately helped Hudson thrive and become the fabulous storyteller he is today.



Walking in Two Worlds

By Wab Kinew

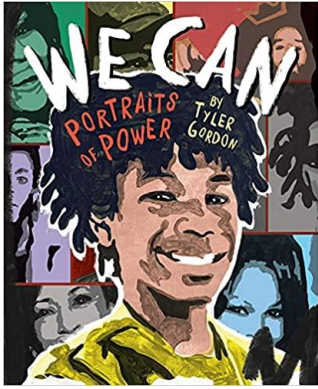
Recommended Age: 12 to 17 years

Young Adult Novel

Bugz is caught between two worlds. In the real world, she's a shy and self-conscious Indigenous teen who faces the stresses of teenage angst and life on the Rez. But in the virtual world, her alter ego is not just confident but dominant in a massively multiplayer video game universe.

Feng is a teen boy who has been sent from China to live with his aunt, a doctor on the Rez, after his online activity suggests he may be developing extremist sympathies. Meeting each other in real life, as well as in the virtual world, Bugz and Feng immediately relate to each other as outsiders and as avid gamers. And as their connection is strengthened through their virtual adventures, they find that they have much in common in the real world, too: both must decide what to do in the face of temptations and pitfalls, and both must grapple with the impacts of family challenges and community trauma.

But betrayal threatens everything Bugz has built in the virtual world, as well as her relationships in the real world, and it will take all her newfound strength to restore her friendship with Feng and reconcile the parallel aspects of her life: the traditional and the mainstream, the east and the west, the real and the virtual.



We Can: Portraits of Power

By Tyler Gordon

Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Non-Fiction Picture Book

Fifteen-year-old Tyler Gordon's journey from a regular kid growing up in San Jose, California, to a nationally recognized artist wasn't without its challenges. For the first six years of his life, he was fully deaf, which led to a stutter and bullying. Art gave him a creative outlet for his pain. Then, after painting a portrait of Kamala Harris and posting it on social media, he received a call from the vice president herself! Soon his art was everywhere. He had an interview with The Today Show. He was the youngest artist featured in the Beverly Center. His portrait of LeBron James graced the cover of TIME Magazine. And that was only the beginning!

Here is a debut picture book by partially deaf prodigy Tyler Gordon, featuring his bold paintings of over 30 icons—musicians, artists, writers, civils rights leaders, sports legends, change-makers, record-setters, and more—alongside short explanations of how these people inspire him.

If Tyler can make art and follow his dreams, you can, too. We all can.



What About Will

By Ellen Hopkins

Recommended Age: 10 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Twelve-year-old Trace Reynolds has always looked up to his brother, mostly because Will, who's five years older, has never looked down on him. It was Will who taught Trace to ride a bike, would watch sports on TV with him, and cheer him on at Little League. But when Will was knocked out cold during a football game, resulting in a brain injury – everything changed. Now, seventeen months later, their family is still living under the weight of "the incident," that left Will with a facial tic, depression, and an anger he cannot always control, culminating in their parents' divorce. Afraid of further fracturing his family, Trace begins to cover for Will who, struggling with addiction to pain medication, becomes someone Trace doesn't recognize. But when the brother he loves so much becomes more and more withdrawn, and escalates to stealing money and ditching school, Trace realizes some secrets cannot be kept if we ever hope to heal.



Words to Make a Friend: A Story in Japanese and English

By Donna Jo Napoli, Illustrated by Naoko Stoop

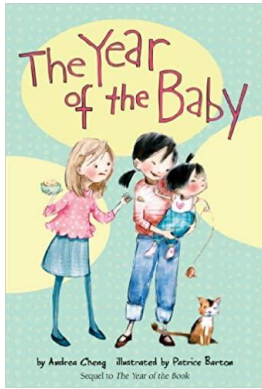
Recommended Age: 4 to 8 years

Picture Book

When a young Japanese girl moves into her new house, she is happy to see a girl her age playing in the snow just outside her window. The only problem is the Japanese girl doesn't speak English and the American girl doesn't speak Japanese.

How will these two girls have any fun at all? As it turns out, it's not that hard when both girls are looking for a friend! What starts with a simple "hello" and "konnichiwa" becomes a day filled with fun in the snow.

Each girl's love of play, snow, and making a new friend transcends the need to speak the same language, and by using simple words in their own languages, along with a bit of charades, the girls find they have all they need to build a snow creature.



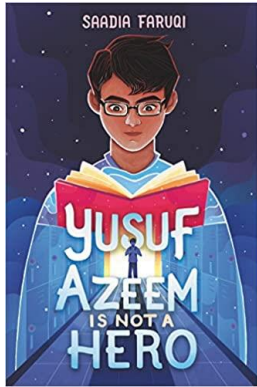
The Year of the Baby

By Andrea Cheng, Illustrated by Patrice Barton

Recommended Age: 6 to 9 years

Chapter Book

Last year, Anna learned how to be a good friend. Now that her family has adopted a baby girl from China, she wants to learn how to be a good sister. But the new year proves challenging when the doctor warns that the baby isn't thriving. Can Anna and her best friends, Laura and Camille, create a science project that saves the day? In this heartwarming sequel to *The Year of the Book*, readers will be just as moved by Anna's devotion to her new sister as they will be inspired by her loving family and lasting friendships.



Yusuf Azeem Is Not a Hero

By Saadia Faruqi

Recommended Age: 8 to 12 years

Middle Grade Novel

Yusuf Azeem has spent all his life in the small town of Frey, Texas—and nearly that long waiting for the chance to participate in the regional robotics competition, which he just knows he can win.

Only, this year is going to be more difficult than he thought. Because this year is the twentieth anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, an anniversary that has everyone in his Muslim community on edge.

With “Never Forget” banners everywhere and a hostile group of townspeople protesting the new mosque, Yusuf realizes that the country's anger from two decades ago hasn't gone away. Can he hold onto his joy—and his friendships—in the face of heartache and prejudice?