

Capitol Choices 2008



Noteworthy Books for Children Published During 2007

www.CapitolChoices.org

Criteria

Our mission is to identify each year's best books and introduce them to children and young people. We consider books and audiobooks published in the current calendar year for readers through age 16. We look not only for those books and audiobooks that are obviously remarkable but also for those whose charm, art, information, or depth of feeling may enhance a young person's world. We especially look for books that may not find an audience without some special attention.

What does Capitol Choices mean by "the best"? "Best" of the year? "Best" by this author? "Best" of its type? Our discussions become quite heated at times, but in the end, the titles we choose meet all of these criteria. For this reason, we include titles that we believe have child or teen appeal in addition to the qualities that mark good books: clarity, accuracy, credibility, and, that most elusive quality of all, distinguished writing and illustration.

Who We Are

The first edition of Capitol Choices was built on the work of Margaret Coughlan at the Children's Literature Center of the Library of Congress, who for many years edited an annual list entitled "Books for Children." Many of the members of the Capitol Choices group also worked on the earlier list, and we thank them and the Library of Congress for providing us with the opportunity to hone our critical skills during those years. The wise counsel of Maria Salvadore, formerly of the District of Columbia Public Library, also helped us as we clarified the goals of this new group.

Capitol Choices now includes librarians, teachers, booksellers, children's literature specialists, and magazine editors who work in cities, in suburbs, and in rural areas in and around Washington, D.C. Most of us work directly with young people, and all of us share a passion for books and a commitment to pairing children with books.

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Up To Seven



Ajmera, Maya

GLOBAL BABIES

Charlesbridge

Board: 9781580891745; \$6.95

"Babies everywhere are beautiful, special, and loved." This gentle message combined with colorful close-up photographs of infants from seventeen different cultures creates a board book perfect for little hands. A great introduction to the global neighborhood.



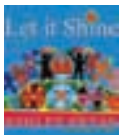
Bean, Jonathan

AT NIGHT

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Trade: 9780374304461; \$15.00

Beckoned by moonlight, a young girl ventures out from under the covers onto a city rooftop to snuggle down in an impromptu bed under the stars. A diminutive size, muted watercolors, minimal text, and a mother's watchful eye keep this adventure cozy.



Bryan, Ashley

LET IT SHINE: THREE FAVORITE SPIRITUALS

Atheneum

Trade: 9780689847325; \$16.99

Never has construction paper seemed as incandescent as it does when illuminating these three familiar spirituals. A vibrant palette, hand-lettered musical scores (plus lyrics), and a passionate afterword entitled "Come Let Us Sing" complete this beautiful collection.



Calmenson, Stephanie

Illustrated by Jan Ormerod

MAY I PET YOUR DOG? THE HOW-TO GUIDE FOR KIDS MEETING DOGS (AND DOGS MEETING KIDS)

Clarion

Trade: 9780618510344; \$9.95

Trusty dachshund Harry explains to young humans and their parents the proper etiquette for meeting unfamiliar dogs. Simple watercolor illustrations and a question and answer format make these lessons engaging, encouraging, and accessible.



Coffelt, Nancy

Illustrated by Tricia Tusa

FRED STAYS WITH ME!

Little, Brown

Trade: 9780316882699; \$16.99

Traveling to and from her divorced parents' houses, a young girl's one constant is her dog, Fred. When Fred barks too much or eats all the socks, she firmly reminds everyone in this gentle, empowering story that "Fred stays with ME!"



Daly, Niki

PRETTY SALMA: A LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD STORY FROM AFRICA

Clarion

Reinforced: 9780618723454; \$16.00

Shopping list in hand, pretty Salma dons her blue scarf, white beads, stripy ntama, and yellow sandals, and starts off for market. Before you can say "don't go through the wild side of town," tricky Mr. Dog is wearing all of Salma's finery.



Dillon, Leo and Diane
**MOTHER GOOSE:
 NUMBERS ON THE LOOSE**

Harcourt
 Reinforced: 9780152056766; \$17.00

Characters that literally parade across the pages, vibrant gouache and pencil illustrations, and Mother Goose verses featuring numbers combine in this perfect nursery book.



Floca, Brian
LIGHTSHIP

Richard Jackson
 Trade: 9781416924364; \$16.99

This on-board view of a lightship gives readers a peek at one of the now-vanished floating beacons that have guarded treacherous waterways since the mid-eighteenth century. Young eyes will spy the ship's orange cat in almost all the pictures.



Gleeson, Libby
 Illustrated by Freya Blackwood
HALF A WORLD AWAY

Arthur A. Levine
 Trade: 9780439889773; \$15.99

"Coo-ee!" calls Louie when his best friend, Amy, moves half a world away. Does his call really re-shape the clouds? Does Amy really hear him in her sleep? Delicate watercolor illustrations make deft use of color to connect the parted chums.



Gravett, Emily
**ORANGE PEAR APPLE
 BEAR**

Simon & Schuster
 Trade: 9781416939993; \$12.99

Using the four title elements and just five words, Gravett plays with language in a book suited to beginning readers or storytime sharing. The watercolor and pencil illustrations have a loose, scrawly line perfectly suited to this simple, funny story.



Harrington, Janice N.
 Illustrated by Shelley Jackson
**THE CHICKEN-CHASING
 QUEEN OF LAMAR
 COUNTY**

Melanie Kroupa
 Trade: 9780374312510; \$16.00

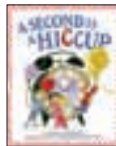
"If you make those girls crazy, they won't lay eggs," warns Big Mama as a young girl practices to be the best chicken chaser in the county. Rollicking storytelling and exuberant collage illustrations showcase this sly and sassy heroine.



Henkes, Kevin
A GOOD DAY

Greenwillow
 Trade: 9780061140181; \$16.99
 Library: 9780061140198; \$17.89

Watercolor pictures and a spare, almost poetic text reveal four small animals and four minor mishaps followed by four minor triumphs. Candy-bright colors, sensuously fat lines, expressive faces, and revealing postures turn breathtakingly simple into practically perfect.



Hutchins, Hazel
 Illustrated by Kady MacDonald Denton
**A SECOND IS A HICCUP: A
 CHILD'S BOOK OF TIME**

Arthur A. Levine
 Trade: 9780439831062; \$16.99

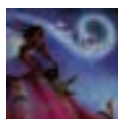
A gracefully rhymed text and delicate watercolor sketches reveal the fullness of time in child-sized terms. "How long is a day? / Twenty-four hours by the clock. / Starting when the sun comes up / A day needs filling, like a cup."



McCarty, Peter
FABIAN ESCAPES

Henry Holt
Trade: 9780805077131; \$16.95

McCarty's signature soft pencil drawings follow two old friends on a new adventure. This time it's Fabian's turn to explore the world beyond the front door. Subtle humor and evocative art create an adventure that is both beautiful and funny.



Morales, Yuyi
LITTLE NIGHT

Neal Porter
Trade: 9781596430884; \$16.95

Lush, highly stylized, dreamy illustrations and a palette that modulates from sunset reds and pinks to deepest blue evoke the timelessness of this story about a little girl who doesn't want to go to bed. Also published in Spanish as NOCHECITA.



Newgarden, Mark, and Megan
Montague Cash
BOW-WOW BUGS A BUG

Harcourt
Reinforced: 9780152058135; \$12.95

In this wordless comic-style picture book, a blue-collared canine doggedly tracks a tiny dot of a bug around the block until a jumbo-size bug-and-dog combo turns the tables on them.



Rylant, Cynthia, and Diane Goode
ALLIGATOR BOY

Harcourt
Reinforced: 9780152060923; \$16.00

Sometimes it's more fun to be someone else, as a little boy discovers when he dons an alligator head and tail that help him make new friends and fend off a bully. An old-fashioned setting and silly rhymes add to the charm.



Seeger, Laura Vaccaro
DOG AND BEAR: TWO FRIENDS, THREE STORIES

Neal Porter
Reinforced: 9781596430532; \$12.95

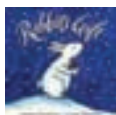
Three stories of friendship between two distinct personalities, Dog and Bear, will delight even the youngest reader. Bold, bright illustrations on white backgrounds emphasize the characters' bonds, capturing each moment and focusing the reader's eye.



Seeger, Laura Vaccaro
FIRST THE EGG

Neal Porter
Trade: 9781596432727; \$14.95

Neither asking nor answering the eternal question of which came first, lushly colored and textured illustrations combine with precisely designed die-cuts to illustrate a variety of processes: from egg to chick, tadpole to frog, seed to flower, and finally, word to story.



Shannon, George
Illustrated by Laura Dronzek
RABBIT'S GIFT

Harcourt
Trade: 9780152060732; \$16.00

Rabbit finds two turnips and shares one with a friend. That friend shares the turnip with another friend. And so it goes until the turnip comes full circle and the friends gather to enjoy their bounty. Beautifully illustrated in acrylics, this folktale shines.



Sherry, Kevin
I'M THE BIGGEST THING IN THE OCEAN

Dial
Trade: 9780803731929; \$16.99

An exuberant giant squid is puffed with pride at being bigger than any of the sea's inhabitants until he meets an enormous and less-friendly creature. Sherry's collage and watercolor illustrations, layered on Plexiglas, are full of humor and surprise.



Stein, David Ezra
LEAVES

Putnam
Trade: 9780399246364; \$15.99

From falling leaves to hibernation, vibrant watercolors and a simple story that respects a young child's sense of wonder chronicle a young bear's first experience with the changing seasons.



Wheeler, Lisa
Illustrated by R. Gregory Christie
JAZZ BABY

Harcourt
Trade: 9780152025229; \$16.00

The entire family joins in an impromptu dance party when Daddy puts his vinyl record on the turntable. Lively, brightly colored gouache paintings are a perfect match for the rhyming text which exudes the joyous rhythms of jazz.



Willems, Mo
**KNUFFLE BUNNY TOO:
A CASE OF MISTAKEN
IDENTITY**

Hyperion
Trade: 9781423102991; \$16.99

Trixie takes Knuffle Bunny to preschool and finds that someone else has a Knuffle Bunny, too! A mix-up is discovered at 2:30 a.m. What's a parent to do? Comic-book style art and photographs create the perfect backdrop for this second bunny romp.



Willems, Mo
**I AM INVITED TO A PARTY:
AN ELEPHANT & PIGGY
BOOK**

Trade: 9781423106876; \$8.99



**MY FRIEND IS SAD: AN
ELEPHANT & PIGGY BOOK**

Trade: 9781423102977; \$8.99



**THERE IS A BIRD ON YOUR
HEAD: AN ELEPHANT &
PIGGY BOOK**

Trade: 9781423106869; \$8.99



**TODAY I WILL FLY! AN
ELEPHANT & PIGGY BOOK**

Trade: 9781423102953; \$8.99
Hyperion

Gloomy Gerald elephant and joyful, optimistic Pig entertain early readers in each of these four books containing minimalist paintings and spare texts. The two irresistible friends encounter quirky problems and triumph over each one with totally unpredictable solutions.



Yolen, Jane,
and Andrew Fusek Peters
Illustrated by Polly Dunbar
**HERE'S A LITTLE POEM:
A VERY FIRST BOOK OF
POETRY**

Candlewick
Trade: 9780763631413; \$21.99

Old favorites and new discoveries abound in this cheerful collection that speaks to a young child's world. Exuberantly colored illustrations set against patterned pages invite sharing on a lap or in a group.

Seven To Ten



Aston, Dianna Hutts
Illustrated by Sylvia Long
A SEED IS SLEEPY

Chronicle
Trade: 9780811855204; \$16.95

From seeds “as small as a freckle” to ones weighing 60 pounds, this exploration of dormancy and germination bursts with colorful illustrations and equally colorful facts.



Bang-Campbell, Monika
Illustrated by Molly Bang
LITTLE RAT MAKES MUSIC

Harcourt
Trade: 9780152053055; \$15.00

Little Rat wants her violin playing to sound as beautiful as what she hears in the orchestra, but she hates to practice. Jewel-toned, whimsically detailed illustrations evoke a tiny but entire world.



Bishop, Nic
NIC BISHOP SPIDERS

Scholastic
Trade: 9780439877565; \$17.99

Highly magnified, close-up photos of more than a dozen spider species jump off the page while a brief text provides information about eating, mating, and birthing. An appendix explains how Bishop hand-raised the spiders to get the best shots.



Carroll, Lewis
Illustrated by Christopher Myers
JABBERWOCKY: THE CLASSIC POEM FROM LEWIS CARROLL'S THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS, AND WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE

Jump at the Sun
Trade: 9781423103721; \$15.99

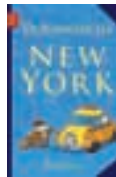
This familiar poem is reset on a city basketball court where the Jabberwock is a gigantic player, and the ball goes “snicker-snack” as it drains the basket. Intense fiery colors, black silhouettes, and a bold typeface add excitement and drama.



Clements, Andrew
Illustrated by Mark Elliott
NO TALKING

Simon & Schuster
Trade: 9781416909835; \$15.99

After two students squabble, fifth grade girls and boys at Laketon Elementary vie to see who can say the fewest words for two days, a contest causing consternation among both teachers and families.



Egan, Tim
DODSWORTH IN NEW YORK

Houghton Mifflin
Trade: 9780618777082; \$15.00

Before Dodsworth departs on vacation, his customary breakfast at Hodges' Café turns out to be a bad mistake. From the moment Hodges' crazy duck hears his plans, Dodsworth is doomed. Deadpan writing and flat cartoon illustrations coalesce into a perfect comedy.



Gershator, Phillis
Illustrated by Holly Meade
SKY SWEEPER
Melanie Kroupa
Reinforced: 9780374370077; \$16.00

Takeboki, the “Flower Keeper” for the temple gardens, spends his life quietly sweeping up leaves and blossoms, to create beauty and order. Collage illustrations made from Japanese papers complement this Buddhist-inspired original fable.



Gifford, Peggy
Illustrated by Valorie Fisher
MOXY MAXWELL DOES NOT LOVE STUART LITTLE
Schwartz & Wade
Trade: 9780375839153; \$12.99
Library: 9780375939150; \$15.99

Hour by hour, minute by minute, excuse by excuse, Moxy has not done her summer reading and it's the last day of vacation. Short chapters, wacky “photographs” taken by her brother, and a cheeky heroine add zippy appeal to this beginning chapter book.



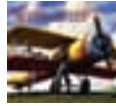
Issa, Kobayashi
Illustrated by G. Brian Karas
**TODAY AND TODAY:
HAIKU BY ISSA**
Scholastic
Trade: 9780439590785; \$16.99

Sixteen poems reflect the progression of the seasons and illustrate a year in the life of a family including the death of a beloved grandfather. Gentle, textured illustrations evoke the natural world from which haiku comes.



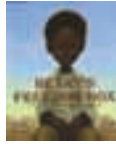
Jenkins, Steve
DOGS AND CATS
Houghton Mifflin
Trade: 9780618507672; \$16.00

Read one half of the book about dogs, then turn it upside down and learn about cats. Careful placement of the tactile paper collages draws attention to biology, evolution, and behavior.



Johnson, Angela
Illustrated by Loren Long
WIND FLYERS
Simon & Schuster
Trade: 9780689848797; \$16.99

Vivid oil pastels paint a bright sky-filled world and tell the story of one boy's uncle, a former Tuskegee airman, who misses the days he spent soaring above the earth.



Levine, Ellen
Illustrated by Kadir Nelson
**HENRY'S FREEDOM BOX:
A TRUE STORY FROM
THE UNDERGROUND
RAILROAD**
Scholastic
Trade: 9780439777339; \$16.99

Rich with the interplay of light and shadow, dramatic oil paintings enhance the true story of Henry “Box” Brown and his successful attempt to mail himself from slavery in the South to freedom in the North.



Offill, Jenny
Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
**17 THINGS I'M NOT
ALLOWED TO DO
ANYMORE**
Schwartz & Wade
Trade: 9780375835964; \$15.99
Library: 9780375935961; \$17.99

The exploits of an incorrigible little girl create an entertaining list of rule-breaking antics brought to life through playful and inventive mixed-media illustrations.



Pennypacker, Sara
Illustrated by Marla Frazee
**THE TALENTED
CLEMENTINE**
Hyperion
Library: 9780786838707; \$14.99

With the talent show looming and the class brimming over with ideas, Clementine struggles to find her own hidden gifts. Loosely limned line drawings add the perfect comic touch to this second story about the irrepressible imp.



Pinkney, Jerry
LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Little, Brown
Trade: 9780316013550; \$16.99

Both traditional and fresh, lively and literary, this retelling features a brown-skinned child who travels through the winter woods to visit her ailing grandmother. Gorgeously detailed illustrations on oversized double-paged spreads are full of touches that extend the familiar story.



Prévert, Jacques
Illustrated and translated by
Mordicai Gerstein
**HOW TO PAINT THE
PORTRAIT OF A BIRD**

Roaring Brook
Reinforced: 9781596432154; \$16.95

A mystical text tells a young artist how to attract a bird using only his paintbrush and patience. Pale illustrations gradually accumulate color and texture as he succeeds.



Urban, Linda
**A CROOKED KIND OF
PERFECT**

Harcourt
Trade: 9780152060077; \$16.00

Zoe wants to play at Carnegie Hall, but first she must convince her parents to provide both piano and lessons. The would-be prodigy faces multiple surprises in this warm, funny chapter book.

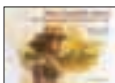


Winter, Jeanette
**THE TALE OF PALE MALE:
A TRUE STORY**

Harcourt
Reinforced: 9780152059729; \$16.00

When two red-tailed hawks build a nest atop a New York City apartment building, they enrapture bird lovers but enrage residents. Winter's pastel acrylics and simple shapes give this true story a timeless character.

Ten To Fourteen



Alexander, Elizabeth,
and Marilyn Nelson
Illustrated by Floyd Cooper
**MISS CRANDALL'S
SCHOOL FOR YOUNG
LADIES & LITTLE MISSES
OF COLOR**

Wordsong
Trade: 9781590784563; \$17.95

Twenty-four beautifully crafted sonnets evoke Miss Crandall's mid-nineteenth century school in Connecticut: the students' fervor, the local vigilantes, and the school's ultimate fiery end. Subdued illustrations complement this important and little-known story.



Alexander, Lloyd
**THE GOLDEN DREAM OF
CARLO CHUCHIO**

Henry Holt
Trade: 9780805083330; \$18.95

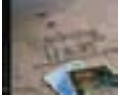
When he finds a map hidden in an old book, Carlo, a natural daydreamer, launches himself on a picaresque treasure hunt filled with danger, adventure, romance, and a cast of colorful characters.



Bauer, Michael Gerard
DON'T CALL ME ISHMAEL

Greenwillow
Trade: 9780061348341; \$16.99
Library: 9780061348358; \$17.89

Unlike underdog Ishmael, new student James—quirky and independent—turns the tables on the class bully instead of avoiding him. An intrepid English teacher and some unlikely comrades round out this cheeky but touching Australian tale.



Burns, Loree Griffin
**TRACKING TRASH:
 FLOTSAM, JETSAM, AND
 THE SCIENCE OF OCEAN
 MOTION**

Houghton Mifflin
 Trade: 9780618581313; \$18.00

Rubber ducks and hockey gloves are just some of the flotsam that scientists have tracked across the seas to learn about ocean currents. This fascinating story shows how scientific inquiry often reveals startling realities and leads to surprising conclusions.



Compestine, Ying Chang
**REVOLUTION IS NOT A
 DINNER PARTY: A NOVEL**

Henry Holt
 Trade: 9780805082074; \$16.95

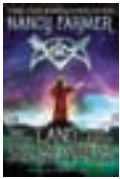
In this novel set during the Chinese Communist Revolution and based on the author's own experiences, a young girl discovers within herself a steely core of self-respect after losing almost everything she ever knew, including her family.



Curtis, Christopher Paul
ELIJAH OF BUXTON

Scholastic
 Trade: 9780439023443; \$16.99

Elijah, the first child born in a settlement of former slaves in Canada, finds his uneventful life disrupted when he attempts to locate the corrupt preacher who has stolen funds intended to purchase a family's freedom.



Farmer, Nancy
**THE LAND OF THE SILVER
 APPLES**

Richard Jackson
 Trade: 9781416907350; \$18.99

When elves take Jack's younger sister, he searches for her with Pega, the slave he has freed, in Elfland. Ancient English legends, Pictish symbols, early Christianity, and even earlier religions blend in this lively sequel.



Fleischman, John
**BLACK AND WHITE
 AIRMEN: THEIR TRUE
 HISTORY**

Houghton Mifflin
 Trade: 9780618562978; \$20.00

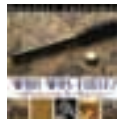
Two men, one black and one white, grew up in the same neighborhood and had parallel military careers but never met until they were in their seventies. This true story illuminates both World War II and the nature of race in America.



Fletcher, Charlie
STONEHEART

Hyperion
 Trade: 9781423101758; \$16.99

Twelve-year-old George and mysterious Edie team up in this action-packed fantasy set in the streets of London where gargoyles, "taints," "spits," and statues all come alive.



Freedman, Russell
**WHO WAS FIRST?
 DISCOVERING THE
 AMERICAS**

Clarion
 Trade: 9780618663910; \$19.00

Before Columbus, explorers from many parts of the world arrived in the Americas. Freedman's clear, readable account suggests that history is an ever-changing landscape.



George, Jessica Day
DRAGON SLIPPERS

Bloomsbury
 Trade: 9781599900575; \$16.95

Although her aunt gave her to a dragon, Creel negotiates her freedom along with a curious pair of shoes which bring her a new friend but also spark a war in this clever fairy tale that mixes medieval and modern elements.



Hale, Shannon
Illustrated by James Noel Smith
BOOK OF A THOUSAND DAYS

Bloomsbury
Trade: 9781599900513; \$17.95

This captivating fantasy is told through the diary pages of a young peasant girl imprisoned in a tower. Romance, mistaken identities, danger, a monster, and an engaging pet cat will leave readers sighing with contentment.



Hampton, Wilborn
WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST, A REPORTER'S STORY: BLACK SEPTEMBER AND THE YOM KIPPUR WAR

Candlewick
Trade: 9780763624934; \$19.99

A reporter provides vivid descriptions of his experiences covering Black September and the Yom Kippur War in 1973 for a U.S. wire service. His timely insights guide readers through the continuing conflicts in the Middle East.



Holm, Jennifer L.
Illustrated by Elicia Castaldi
MIDDLE SCHOOL IS WORSE THAN MEATLOAF: A YEAR TOLD THROUGH STUFF

Ginee Seo
Trade: 9780689852817; \$12.99

"Stuff," including post-it notes, school assignments, to-do lists, diary entries, and more reveal Ginny's navigation through a typical bumpy year of seventh grade. This "graphic fiction" will intrigue readers who enjoy piecing together a story.



Marsh, Katherine
THE NIGHT TOURIST

Hyperion
Trade: 9781423106890; \$17.99

After an accident, motherless Jack is sent to New York to see a specialist. There he is pulled into a ghostly underworld where he hopes to reunite with his mother. This new take on the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice makes rewarding reading.



Rowling, J. K.
Illustrated by Mary Grandpré
HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS

Arthur A. Levine
Trade: 9780545010221; \$34.99
Library: 9780545029360; \$39.99

The last installment brings the Harry Potter series to a satisfying conclusion. Will Harry survive and what will happen to Voldemort? All the intricate plot lines come together as we say a final goodbye to the boy wizard.



Schlitz, Laura Amy
Illustrated by Robert Byrd
GOOD MASTERS! SWEET LADIES! VOICES FROM A MEDIEVAL VILLAGE

Candlewick
Trade: 9780763615789; \$19.99

Nineteen monologues, two dialogues, and six explanatory interludes bring to life the world of young people in a medieval manor in England in 1255. Pen-and-ink drawings reminiscent of manuscript decoration illustrate this useful and engaging read.



Schmidt, Gary D.
THE WEDNESDAY WARS

Clarion
Trade: 9780618724833; \$16.00

Holling Hoodhood's weekly afternoons reading Shakespeare with his teacher become the catalyst for the seventh grader to stand up for himself amid the tumultuous events both in the sixties and in his own family.



Selznick, Brian
THE INVENTION OF HUGO CABRET: A NOVEL IN WORDS AND PICTURES

Scholastic
 Trade: 9780439813785; \$22.99

Alternating sections of words and bold pictures show how orphaned Hugo, hidden above a Paris train station in 1931, discovers the secret of a broken automaton and its surprising connection to the history of early movies.



Sís, Peter
THE WALL: GROWING UP BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

Frances Foster
 Trade: 9780374347017; \$18.00

A highly visual memoir describes growing up in Czechoslovakia in the Iron Curtain years. Sís loved to draw, admired things western, and learned very early that his country hid information before he finally defected to the West.



Smith, Roland
PEAK

Harcourt
 Trade: 9780152024178; \$17.00

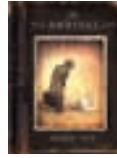
Caught in the act of scaling a skyscraper, 14-year-old Peak goes to Thailand with his mountain-climbing father, a man determined to lead the youngest-ever climber to the top of Mount Everest. Nail-biting suspense and terrific climbing details abound.



Stewart, Trenton Lee
 Illustrated by Carson Ellis
THE MYSTERIOUS BENEDICT SOCIETY

Megan Tingley
 Trade: 9780316057776; \$16.99

Four young recruits infiltrate the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened and disable the source of secret subliminal messages which have made people fearful about their world.



Tan, Shaun
THE ARRIVAL

Arthur A. Levine
 Trade: 9780439895293; \$19.99

This wordless graphic novel hauntingly portrays the universality of the immigrant experience as an unnamed man journeys to an unknown land. Surreal sepia-toned images full of imagination and mystery form a visual tone poem inviting multiple interpretations.



Thompson, Kate
THE NEW POLICEMAN

Greenwillow
 Trade: 9780061174278; \$16.99
 Library: 9780061174285; \$17.89

What J. J.'s mother wants for her birthday is more time, so he sets off to the enchanted land of Tir na n'Og to find her present. Faerie lore and Irish fiddle tunes add mystery to the clever plot.



Woodson, Jacqueline
FEATHERS

Putnam
 Trade: 9780399239892; \$15.99

As sixth-grader Frannie tries to understand a poem assigned by her teacher, another challenge arrives in the form of a new boy. His appearance triggers questions of racial identity and spirituality among Frannie and her friends.

Fourteen And Up



Abdel-Fattah, Randa
DOES MY HEAD LOOK BIG IN THIS?

Orchard
 Trade: 9780439919470; \$16.99

When 16-year old Australian-Palestinian Amal decides to wear the traditional Muslim head scarf, she faces many emotional, practical, and social issues. Humorous and unpreachy, this contemporary story is full of music, fashion, and chatter.



Alexie, Sherman
Illustrated by Ellen Forney
**THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE
DIARY OF A PART-TIME
INDIAN**

Little, Brown
Trade: 9780316013680; \$16.99

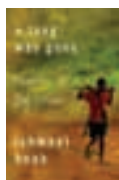
To avoid the hopelessness endemic to his tribe and family, Arnold (aka Junior) makes a tough choice to attend high school off the “rez.” Cartoons that he draws in his diary reveal his struggle with both racist white classmates and angry Indian friends.



Aronson, Marc
**RACE: A HISTORY BEYOND
BLACK AND WHITE**

Ginee Seo
Trade: 9780689865541; \$18.99

This important work explores the history of prejudice, making the case that racial definitions have changed through time and that contemporary classifications are more fluid than we think.



Beah, Ishmael
**A LONG WAY GONE:
MEMOIRS OF A BOY
SOLDIER**

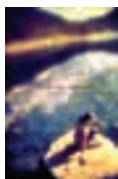
Sarah Crichton
Trade: 9780374105235; \$22.00

In plain but inspiring prose, this heart-rending account of a boy soldier’s life during the civil war in Sierra Leone is distinguished by a matter-of-fact approach to horrific circumstances which makes the events powerfully real.



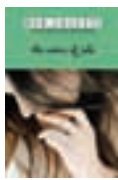
Brooks, Kevin
BEING
Chicken House
Trade: 9780439899734; \$16.99

As the anesthesia wears off in the middle of a routine endoscopy, Robert inadvertently discovers his insides are not normal or even human. This edge-of-the-seat thriller combines Robert’s search for identity with nonstop action and a thought-provoking conclusion.



Brooks, Martha
MISTIK LAKE
Melanie Kroupa
Trade: 9780374349851; \$16.00

During her summer working and falling in love at Mistik Lake in Manitoba, Odella uncovers secrets about her employer, her mother, and her great-aunt, revelations that unexpectedly change her life.



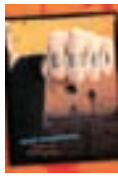
Caletti, Deb
THE NATURE OF JADE
Simon & Schuster
Trade: 9781416910053; \$16.99

Jade, an anxious 17-year-old, finds solace in caring for the elephants at the Seattle Zoo even as her parents’ marriage comes undone and her attraction to Sebastian, a single father, grows.



Cameron, Peter
**SOMEDAY THIS PAIN WILL
BE USEFUL TO YOU**
Frances Foster
Trade: 9780374309893; \$16.00

Set in upscale Manhattan after September 11, 2001, this first-person account finds 18-year-old James curious about another man while his strained relationships with his parents create a counterpoint filled with longing and despair.



Castellucci, Cecil
BEIGE
Candlewick
Trade: 9780763630669; \$16.99

Canadian Katy hates spending summer in Los Angeles with “Rat,” her estranged drummer Dad. Children of Rat’s friends find Katy uninteresting but help her uncover her own hippie heritage as well as her father’s punk rock fame.



Castellucci, Cecil, and Jim Rugg
Illustrated by Jared K. Fletcher

THE PLAIN JANES

Minx
Paper: 9781401211158; \$9.99

Injured in an explosion, Jane moves to suburbia with her parents where she finds her “tribe,” a group of arty girl outcasts in this coming-of-age graphic novel.



Downham, Jenny

BEFORE I DIE

David Fickling
Trade: 9780385751551; \$15.99
Library: 9780385751582; \$18.99

When 16-year-old Tessa learns she has terminal leukemia, she makes a list of ten things she is determined to experience before her days are through.



Felin, M. Sindy

TOUCHING SNOW

Atheneum
Trade: 9781416917953; \$16.99

Seventh-grader Karina and other members of her Haitian immigrant family hide her stepfather’s violence until one terrible episode threatens to expose all and send the tyrant they call “the Daddy” to jail.



Heneghan, James

PAYBACK

Groundwood
Trade: 9780888997012; \$16.95

Newly arrived in Canada, Irish immigrant Charley fends off taunts and ignores the bullies when they transfer their derision to effeminate Benny. When Benny’s anguish leads to suicide, Charley must find a way to atone for his own inaction.



Kephart, Beth

UNDERCOVER

Laura Geringer
Trade: 9780061238932; \$16.99
Library: 9780061238949; \$17.89

Elisa, a contemporary Cyrano d’Bergerac, writes letters to help boys attract other girls. Things change, however, when she falls for one of her “clients” who is trying to woo her nemesis. Complex, well-rounded characters and poetic metaphors create a compelling story.



Koja, Kathe

KISSING THE BEE

Frances Foster
Trade: 9780374399382; \$16.00

Carefully denying her increasing interest in Emil, her best friend’s boyfriend, Dana works assiduously on her biology project about bees. When Emil wants to observe the bee hives with her, Dana strives to hide her feelings from him.



Kostick, Conor

EPIC

Viking
Trade: 9780670061792; \$17.99

On tightly controlled New Earth, violence has been banned, and the fantasy computer game, Epic, settles all disputes. When a group of teens challenges the ruling order, they find themselves facing the power-hungry Game Masters, and the game becomes real.



Lockhart, E.

DRAMARAMA

Hyperion
Trade: 9780786838158; \$15.99

Sarah and her friend Demi leave their dull Ohio town for a summer at Wildewood Drama Academy where drama abounds offstage as well as on.



Lyga, Barry
BOY TOY

Houghton Mifflin
Trade: 9780618723935; \$16.95

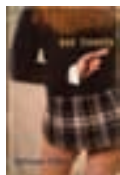
Josh's "flickers" of memory gradually grow to a full-fledged retelling of how his seductive 24-year-old teacher molested him when he was twelve. Readers will feel as titillated and uncomfortable as Josh himself in this credible, compelling story most suitable for 16 years old and up.



McCaughrean, Geraldine
THE WHITE DARKNESS

HarperTempest
Trade: 9780060890353; \$16.99
Library: 9780060890360; \$17.89

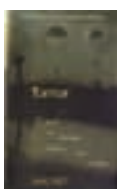
When her "Uncle" Victor takes 14-year-old Sym to Antarctica, his mad search for the entrance to a mythical underworld turns into a desperate race for survival in a real and hostile environment where she has only an imaginary companion for support.



O'Dell, Kathleen
BAD TICKETS

Knopf
Trade: 9780375838019; \$15.99
Library: 9780375938016; \$18.99

Arriving at Sacred Heart Academy in 1967, 16-year-old Jane introduces sedate Mary Margaret to a different lifestyle that includes cutting class and smoking pot. Each learns from the other as they strive to make sense of their relationships and emerging independence.



Peet, Mal
TAMAR: A NOVEL OF ESPIONAGE, PASSION, AND BETRAYAL

Candlewick
Trade: 9780763634889; \$17.99

Narratives that shift between the 1990s and Nazi-occupied Holland in 1944 reveal a young girl's search for the truth about her grandfather. A riveting tale of wartime intrigue, romance and betrayal offers older teens a challenging and emotionally gripping read.



Rabb, Margo
CURES FOR HEARTBREAK

Delacorte
Trade: 9780385734028; \$15.99
Library: 9780385904148; \$18.99

Mia's darkly humorous voice recounts her mother's death from cancer, her father's heart attack, her own Jewish history, and her crushes and friendships, even as she contemplates larger questions about life, love, and loss.



St. James, James
FREAK SHOW

Dutton
Trade: 9780525477990; \$18.99

Flamboyant Billy Bloom is the star of this humorous novel for older teens. Arriving at a new school in Florida, Billy despairs of finding acceptance until he forms an unlikely friendship with Flip Kelly, the star quarterback.



Shusterman, Neal
UNWIND

Simon & Schuster
Trade: 9781416912040; \$16.99

In a society where abortion is illegal, parents can unwind their children by donating their body parts to those in need. Challenging assumptions about life and death, this breakneck thriller invites readers to wrestle with important questions.



Strasser, Todd
BOOT CAMP

Simon & Schuster
Trade: 9781416908487; \$15.99

When Garrett goes well beyond the limits set by his parents, they send him to Harmony Lake Boot Camp. There, fellow “campers” literally beat him into submission in this fast-paced, chilling novel which includes a listing of actual similar cases.

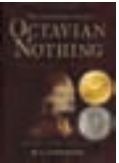


Zarr, Sara
STORY OF A GIRL

Little, Brown
Trade: 9780316014533; \$16.99

Now 16, Deanna struggles with the consequences of an earlier sexual encounter that has left her an outcast both in school and at home. Emotionally charged language reflects her intense feelings of anger and isolation.

Audiobooks



Anderson, M. T.
Narrated by Peter Francis James
THE ASTONISHING LIFE OF OCTAVIAN NOTHING, TRAITOR TO THE NATION: VOLUME I, THE POX PARTY

Listening Library
CD: 9780739348468; \$55.00

Sold into slavery, Octavian and his mother, an African princess, only gradually come to realize the truth about their new life: they are part of a scientific experiment. James’ deliberate pace and formal enunciation capture the time period perfectly and connect the dots of the episodic plot as it gathers gradually toward a horrifying turning point that spins Octavian’s life off in a different direction entirely.



Klages, Ellen
Narrated by Julie Dretzin
THE GREEN GLASS SEA

Recorded Books
CD: 9781428146396; \$77.75

When 11-year-old Dewey Kerrigan moves west to be with her father we are plunged into the chaos of 1943. Narrator Julie Dretzin takes us to Los Alamos to find Dewey’s father working on a top secret “gadget.” Dretzin’s soft voice mimics the innocence of the time while simultaneously hinting at the drama of the science being created in the desert.



McKissack, Patricia C.
Narrated by Pamella D’Pella, Adenrele Ojo, and Mirron Willis
PORCH LIES: TALES OF SLICKSTERS, TRICKSTERS, AND OTHER WILY CHARACTERS

Listening Library
CD: 9780739361672; \$24.00

From sly and creepy to wildly hilarious, these nine original stories seem written to be read aloud. Pull up a virtual rocking chair, sit back, and let the voices of three master storytellers transport you to a vanished time and place.



Murdock, Catherine Gilbert
Narrated by Natalie Moore
THE OFF SEASON

Listening Library
CD: 9780739351062; \$45.00

When D. J. Schwenk begins her first season as a football player, she grapples with a push-me-pull-you relationship with Brian, the opposing QB; learns more about the lives of her parents and what it takes to be an adult; and copes with a tragedy that changes her world in less than a second. Moore carries her splendid performance of the first volume straight on into this one.



Patron, Susan
Narrated by Cassandra Campbell
THE HIGHER POWER OF LUCKY

Listening Library
CD: 9780739348512; \$30.00

From bisou to la vache, Campbell breathes life and individuality into the quirky cast of characters who inhabit Hard Pan, California. Brigitte is charming and oh-so-French, Miles's peskiness is simultaneously irritating and heartbreaking, and Lucky's voice veers from wonder to anger to fear and back again in the space of a paragraph.



Pennypacker, Sara
Narrated by Jessica Almasy
CLEMENTINE

Recorded Books
CD: 9781428145894; \$30.75

Okay fine, I love Clementine, which means I may not be totally the best unbiased person to talk about this audio which is a big adult way of saying "don't take my word for it." Anyway, Jessica Almasy has the P-E-R-F-E-C-T perfect voice and you will think so too, because it's pretty spectacularful, especially the ceiling snakes.



Pullman, Philip
Narrated by James Goode
ALADDIN AND THE ENCHANTED LAMP

Recorded Books
CD: 9781428147195; \$15.75

James Goode superbly voices a fresh and humorous retelling of an old classic that wafts us back to its original locale, China. When Aladdin uses the lamp to win Princess Badr-al-Budur as his bride, he must deal with the angry Moor who comes after it. A perfect audio for family listening.



Tarshis, Lauren
Narrated by Mamie Gummer
EMMA-JEAN LAZARUS FELL OUT OF A TREE

Listening Library
CD: 9780739351222; \$24.00

Excessively logical and detached about people, 12-year-old Emma-Jean tries to use her analytical mind to solve interpersonal problems among her classmates—with surprising results. Gummer's reading captures Emma-Jean's bewildered attitude toward illogical behavior, and her youthful voice creates a winsome portrait of an unusual girl on the brink of adolescence.



Werlin, Nancy
Narrated by Daniel Passer
THE RULES OF SURVIVAL

Listening Library
CD: 9780739351154; \$38.00

In sometimes horrifying detail, 17-year-old Matthew writes a letter to his younger sister explaining their traumatic childhood with an erratic, even dangerous, mother. Passer's flat tone and matter-of-fact delivery speak volumes about damaged emotions and equally damaged lives.

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