

Pittsburg State University

## Pittsburg State University Digital Commons

---

Open Educational Resources - English and  
Modern Languages

Open Educational Resources

---

1-5-2021

### Professor Franklin's Annotated Bibliography of Young Adult Literature, 2019–20

John Franklin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/oer-lang-lit>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

Professor Franklin's Annotated Bibliography of  
Young Adult Literature  
2019--20

including notes for  
220 authors, editors & illustrators;  
243 titles; and,  
80, 230 pages of reading

by

John Franklin, PhD

Director, English Education

Department of English and Modern Languages

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

Guide to acronyms:

PF=Professor Franklin's recommended reading level  
ELEM=elementary; MS=middle school; HS=high school; U=college

**HBL19:** a Heartland Committee to Promote Lifelong Reading Big List book in 2019

**LITFEST19:** the author presented this book at the 2019 Literature Festival

**HBL20:** A Heartland Committee to Promote Lifelong Reading Big List book in 2020  
(The 2019 and 2020 Heartland recommendations are on page 43 of this document)

A companion list of authors/editors and titles may be found in Pittsburg State University's  
Axe Library Digital Commons; or, is available upon request: [ifranklin@pittstate.edu](mailto:ifranklin@pittstate.edu)

Creative Commons Attribution-- NonCom-Share Alike (CC BY-NC-SA)

This work—in whole or in part—may be used for noncommercial purposes so long as the original is  
credited; and, so long as any new creations are also licensed under these identical terms.

Abbot, Tony. *Junk Boy*. 2020. *Bobby lives in a junkyard house with a drunken dad and a missing mother. Rachel's abusive mother, artistic talent and assertive personality bring them—and their adolescent conflicts—together. A Thoreauvian priest helps everyone find resolution. The written-in-verse narrative replicates the haphazard scattershot setting.* [349 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL19**Acevedo, Elizabeth. *The Poet X*. 2018. *NYC high school student escapes her repressive Dominican I-really-wannabe-a-nun mother via poetry. Like one of Rowell's heroines, she's recognized as a linguistic genius. No surprise: this is a novel in verse.* [357 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Acevedo, Elizabeth. *With the Fire on High*. 2019. *Romantic in the vein of Rainbow Rowell's Fangirl, this novel takes Emoni Santiago through her senior year at a Philadelphia charter school where she enrolls in a culinary arts class that showcases her kitchen skills. Emoni overcomes obstacles that would daunt a lesser protagonist, living the life of a teen mom reared by her Puerto Rican grandmother. A week in the south of Spain learning more about cooking with her classmates provides enlightenment, respite and romance. Acceptance to college provides pride.* [388 pages]

PF: HS

Acevedo, Elizabeth. *Clap When You Land*. 2020 *The Story in verse of a man with a family in NYC and one in the Dominican Republic. In America lives daughter Yahaira; in DR lives daughter Camino, each 16 going on 17. When he dies flying from the US to DR the families and cultures initially clash then eventually coalesce.* [417 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL19**Adeyemi, Toni. *Children of Blood and Bone*. 2018. *Zelie is magic in a kingdom where that's dangerous. She leads her brother and a rebellious princess on a quest to return magic to its rightful heirs. Modern teenspeak and teen love lengthen the novel. Wonderfully overwritten. Like many of its ilk: inadequately edited. Cut 100 pages to make a better book.* [525 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Ahmed, Samira. Internment. 2019. *This novel purposefully reverberates with literary allusions to giants like Whitman and Shakespeare. But unlike the Macbeth assigned to AP Lit, this story is not a tragedy: it's a romance: the girl and boy get together at the end. The spunky female protagonist resonates with Rainbow Rowell-like qualities: she's a rebel with a cause who overcomes her nemesis (in the case of American-born Muslim Layla it's the internment camp director/prison warden). Her cause is to protest the suppression of American Civil Liberties in the name of politics veneered with national security. Layla does so from within an internment camp reminiscent of Manzanar, infamous as a landing spot in response to 1942's Executive Order 9066 which prejudices Japanese-Americans, relocating them to the California desert. Snappy dialogue, arguments with parents and sympathetic friends add to the atmosphere.* [373 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Alexander, Zeno. The Library of Ever. 2019. *Lonely eleven-year-old Lenora, ignored by her parents and her inattentive nanny, discovers a job in a fantasy world where librarians are revered, leading to time travel, global adventures and learning and sharing knowledge.* [191 pages]

PF: MS

Almond, David. The Color of the Sun. 2018. *Davie lives in Tyneside, Scotland. When he goes outside one day for a bit of a wander a friend asks if he wants to see a dead body. They think they see one that attracts the police and good bit of gossip in a village where the Craigs and the Killens have it in for each other. Since it's a Killen on the ground, it's assumed a Craig did the deed. Davie heads for the hills through magic both drawn and spoken, with tales and characters that connect Christianity and paganism, friendship and family, love and resurrection with kissing gates and ghosties along the way.* [218 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Anderson, Laurie Halse. Speak: The Graphic Novel. Artwork by Emily Carroll. Text 1999. Pictures 2018. *Powerful, tough to read as you see adults miss the signs while adolescents childishly ostracize the silent victim. Relationships are vividly depicted.* [372 pages]

PF: MS/HS *some may think MS is too young, but given that the protagonist is raped as a high school freshman I see it as potentially cautionary*

**HBL20**Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Shout: A Poetry Memoir*. 2019. *The author continues to advocate in favor of wisdom to replace the ignorance and shame that contribute to sexual abuse of innocent boys and girls. At times the storyline reminds me of Glass Castles as the author waxes poetic about her parents' emotional challenges and her struggle to escape them through school and travel and finding good people. The section where she goes to Denmark as a high school exchange student are quite good reading. A lot of the book is tough reading, though, with heartbreaking stories of victims of sexual predators.* [291 pages]

PF: MS/HS *some may think MS is too young, but the author complains of administrators who hide truth behind their desire to keep children ignorant*

Anderson, M. T. *Whales on Stilts*. 2005. *Chums Lily, Katie and Jasper use brains, fame and grit to defeat a cetaceous menace. Shades of [Lemony] Snicket with dashes of [Nancy] Drew!* [188 pages]

PF: MS

Anderson, M. T. *The Clue of the Linoleum Lederhosen*. 2006. *Lily, Katie and Jasper take an old-style resort vacation, complete with has-been heroes of children's books. What would it be without a mystery or two?* [243 pages]

PF: MS

Anderson, M. T. *Jasper Dash and the Flame Pits of Delaware*. 2009. *Lily, Katie and Jasper venture to Delaware to confront gangsters and rescue monks while confronting Jasper's nemesis: Bobby Spandrel. Who knew Delaware was closer to Transylvania than to New Jersey?* [423 pages]

PF: MS

Anderson, M. T. *Agent Q, or the Smell of Danger*. 2010. *Still in Delaware, Lily, Katie and Jasper make contact with the Resistance to effect an escape with Drgnan the monk. In the face of a bewildering local culture reminiscent of totalitarian paranoia, New Jersey never looked so good.* [290 pages]

PF: MS

Anderson, M. T. *Zombie Mommy*. 2011. *The "Pals in Peril" series continues when Lily's mom returns from a trip to Todburg as a changed woman. Dad approves; Lily looks askance and asks Jasper, Katie and Katie's snobby NY cousin Madigan to help her investigate. Brother Drgnan—the Delaware monk—joins them on their journey to the most haunted town in America.* [220 pages]

PF: MS

Anderson, M. T. He Laughed with His Other Mouths. 2014. *Jasper Dash disobeys his mother and teleports himself in search of his father, said to be a beam of information near the Horsehead Nebula. The truth is much worse. Lily and Katie and Mom follow. Companion WWII father and son story is footnoted.* [297 pages]

PF: MS

Asebedo, Miranda. The Deepest Roots. 2018. *Rome, Lux and Mercy are witchy but not witches: as daughters of Cottonwood Hollow, KS, they have powers provided by a foremother who grants different powers to different girls. When they discover her diary—delivered courtesy of a Kansas cyclone—they search for buried treasure so that one may escape poverty while another escapes an abusive stepfather. An evil descendant/slumlord is the antagonist.* [305 pages]

PF: HS

Asebedo, Miranda. A Constellation of Roses. 2019. *The author's theme of empowered women continues as street child Trix, abandoned by her mother, gets caught and given a choice: live with her heretofore unknown family on her never know father's side in Rocksaw, KS (near Cottonwood Hollow) or stand trial for thievery. When she chooses family, Trix discovers that her great-aunt, aunt and cousin all have "gifts" and that in their community they are rock stars. Like Dorothy of The Wizard of Oz Trix finds her way home with the help of cousin Ember, Aunt Mia and great aunt Auntie, along with new friend Jasper, himself a griever. All the talk about pie will make you want some.* [326 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Atta, Dean. The Black Flamingo. 2020. *Michael's father is Jamaican. Michael's father abandons him in infancy. Michael's father's family does not abandon him. Michael's mother is Greek Cypriot. Michael's sister Anna's father is not his father. Michael has a friend. Her name is Daisy. Michael and his mom and his sister and Daisy visit Michael's mother's family in Greece. Michael is gay. He has drama in school (high and uni). He has drama out of school (clubs and costumes). He has sex. This is a novel in verse. The writing is monotonic.* [403 pages]

PF: HS

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Orig. 1813. *Venerable, beloved novel of the Bennett sisters—particularly oldest Jane, next oldest Elizabeth and most foolish Lydia—and their romantic adventures on the way to wedded bliss. The two older siblings do well: Elizabeth's trial-and-error coming-of-age courtship with Darcy (love the letters!) is the stuff of video legend; meanwhile, foolish Lydia (she takes after her mom) gets what she deserves, as does shy Jane, who overcomes her admirer's jealous siblings to marry happily. Recommended by Madeline Woolsey of Valley Falls High School as part of our Reverberations project.* [212 pages]

PF: HS

Ayers, Eleanor. *Parallel Journeys*. 1995. *Separate but connected stories of Helen Wohlfarth Waterford—Holocaust survivor—and Alfons Heck—Hitler Youth member. Recommended by Janamarie Jorgenson* [228 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Azad, Nafiza. *The Candle and the Flame*. 2019. *Fatima Ghazala has power to protect against malevolent Djinn as well as the power to attract benevolent Djinn. Through love and duty she navigates from adoptive family to destruction to salvation in the desert as she faces down an abusive ex-husband to assume her role as Name Giver.* [391 pages]

PF: HS

Baillet, Blue. *The Danger Box*. 2010. *Left on the doorstep of his paternal grandparents, biracial baby Zoomy grows to early adolescence without knowledge of his mother or father. A "secret within a secret," he learns the value of three Oaks community as family when his dad shows up in a stolen truck and a dangerous box containing Charles Darwin's missing field notebook.* [320 pages]

PF: MS

Bardugo, Leigh. *King of Scars*. 2019. *She had me at Six of Crows: Leigh Bardugo continues to be my most favorite writer of fantasy. This latest installment of the Grishaverse is Narnian in scope if not allegory, with a return to the Fold to battle the Darkling at the level of Saint. But, give her a chance. . . . Nikolai is as charmingly washbuckling as ever and the supporting cast (especially Grisha-as-spy Nina and Grisha-as-general Zoya) do more than yeoman's service. The author's writing is especially elegant at the sentence level: there are some well-wrought passages in this novel. A real page turner that has me eager to read the next installment.* [511 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Bardugo, Leigh. *Ninth House*. 2019. *Because Galaxy (Alex) Stern can see ghosts she's recruited to Yale where she joins Lethe, a campus organization that polices Houses dabbling in magic for fame and fortune. Her world turns dangerous when her mentor goes missing and a drug-dealing town girl is murdered. Such a great last paragraph: "So," she said as the wind picked up, shaking the new leaves on their branches, moaning over the gravestones like a mourner lost to grief. "Who's ready to go to hell?"*[450 pages]

PF: HS

Barnes, Jennifer Lynn. *The Inheritance Games*. 2020. *Avery Kylie Grambs moves from desperately poor in Connecticut to fabulously rich in Texas, the result of a billionaire's attempt to reconcile a family rift. Targeted by those to the manor born as well as self-serving outsiders, this actuary-in-the-making takes on the beyond-death tasks plotted by Tobias Hawthorne.* [327 pages]

PF: HS

Beatty, Robert. *Serafina and the Seven Stars*. 2019. *Serafina and Braden are at it again, opening a rift in turn-of-the-century Biltmore that transforms a seasonal hunting holiday into an early 20<sup>th</sup> century apocalypse.* [340 pages]

PF: MS

Bellairs, John. *The Curse of the Blue Figurine*. 1983. *Johnny Dixon lives with his grandparents across the street from a professor in Korean-War-era, small-town Massachusetts. While hiding from a bully he enters a scary part of his church, finds a box left behind by a priest who haunts the church and takes it home. Though he shouldn't have done that, undoing evil is thrilling.* [200 pages]

PF: MS

Blake, Kendare. *Anna Dressed in Blood*. 2011. *Theseus Cassio (Cas) Lowood's mom is a white witch, widowed when her ghost-killing husband got done in down in Baton Rouge, LA. Son follows father's career path to Thunder Bay, Ontario, intent on laying Anna to rest. They fall in love. But, he doesn't know he's pursued.* [316 pages]

PF: MS/ HS

Blake, Kendare. *Girl of Nightmares*. 2012. *Cas can't get Anna out of his mind. Motivated by love, assisted by friends Thomas and Carmel, he journeys to Scotland and Hell to rescue her, putting her spirit to rest.* [332 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blake, Kendare. *Three Dark Crowns*. 2016. *A set of triplets yields a threesome of queens for the island of Fennbirn: Katharine, fostered by poisoners; Arsinoe, fostered by naturalists; and, Mirabella, fostered by elementals. Each has distinct powers. One will become queen, at the expense of her sisters. Machiavellian skullduggery that would do Shakespeare proud abounds as each faction asserts its desire to rule through their "daughter."* [403 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blake, Kendare. *One Dark Throne*. 2017. *Competition among the three sister queens of Fennbirn becomes increasingly deadly for scheming bystanders. Mirabella and Arsinoe are captured by Katharine. Then they escape as she ascends.* [448 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blake, Kendare. *Two Dark Reigns*. 2018. *Arsinoe has nightmares. They lead her, Mirabella and Billy from the Mainland back to Fennbirn where they bump into a rebellion determined to unseat sister Katharine, the Undead Queen.* [447 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blake, Kendare. *The Queens of Fennbirn*. 2018. *Two novellas: The Young Queens about youthful Mirabella, Katharine, Arsinoe and Jules; and, The Oracle Queen about the ascension of the poisoner Arrons at the expense of Queen Elsabet.* [232 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blake, Kendare. *Five Dark Fates*. 2019. *The Fennbirn series ends as Mirabella attempts to play peacemaker between rebel queen Arsinoe and Crowned Queen Katharine.* [443 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Blasco, Serena. *The Case of the Missing Marquess*. 2015. *Graphic version of the original Enola Holmes novel by Nancy Springer. The Secret Notebook appendix is quite useful as it includes "The Language of Flowers" and "The Ideal Corset" both of which explain Enola's escape plan.* [64 pages]

PF: ELEM/MS

Breid, Erin, ed. *Noisemakers*. 2020. *Twenty-five graphic artists present twenty-five women role models to encourage girls to grow, tinker, play, create, rally and explore.* [219 pages]

PF: MS

Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Orig 1847; this ed. 2009. *English orphan makes her way through family and work, suffering bitterly before creating happiness with her one truest love*. [453 pages]

PF: HS

Bugge, Carole. *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Star of India. Assassination in the name of independence, an invaluable gem and Victoria's oldest son, the Prince of Wales, all glued with Moriarty*. [206 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Bui, Thi. *The Best We Could Do*. 2018. *Graphic memoir of one family's life in--and escape from--Vietnam. Like the Anne Frank authorized graphic biography, this includes a good deal of cultural and personal history; like Maus I and II, this is an attempt to understand the writer's father*. [329 pages]

PF: HS

Burson, Ty. *You Can't Teach an Old Dragon New Tricks*. 2019. *In the third book of the Modern Dragon Chronicles we have left middle school behind in favor of 12<sup>th</sup> grade where Steve—who has a driver's license—assumes a persona reminiscent of Percy Jackson in order to save the human species from demon evil, replacing the dragons originally tasked with protecting people. Early in the narrative Joy and Justin begin to be interesting as they relate to other teens, but character development is dropped in favor of plot. Fan favorites Granny, Shou and TJ re-appear. Setting continues to be strong with beautiful exposition of northern California, a trippy trip to pre-Westernized Mexico and a climactic clash in contemporary Iceland. The author still needs another editor as grammar and word choice appear to default to software, creating writing that is sometimes hilarious, sometimes maddening, often confusing: "Live stalk roaming" (p. 112) and "Shou pointed her can into the air" (p. 229) do not belong in a series as ambitious as this*. [370 pages]

PF: MS

Calejo, Ryan. *Charlie Hernandez & the League of Shadows*. 2018. *Rick Riordanesque as quick-witted, smart-mouthed Charlie discovers he was born special, attracts outcast friends and teams up with a spunky girl to defeat sinister forces from Hispanic myths. Sure to be the first book in a series*. [321 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Caletti, Deb. *A Heart in a Body in the World*. 2018. *How do you mend a heart broken by an unspeakable tragedy? In the case of Annabelle Agnelli, you run. From Seattle, Washington, to Washington, DC. And on this quest—supported by Italian grandpa Ed, nuclear family and friends back home plus random strangers—two of whom grow close—you recover. Well worth re-reading.* [355 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Cervantes, Angela. 2018. *Me, Frida and the Secret of the Peacock Ring*. 2018. *Twelve-year-old Paloma Marquez travels from Kansas to Mexico City for a month so her mother can study. They live in the same neighborhood as Casa Azula, Frida Kahlo's home which is now a museum. A fan of fictional sleuth Lulu Pennywhistle, Paloma finds crime and companions while compiling memories of the country where her father was born.* [220 pages]

PF: MS

Chee, Traci. *We are Not Free*. 2020. *Fourteen American citizens aged 13—20 from San Francisco's Japantown are relocated to internment camps where culture and family are fractured. Very well written at the level of voice, the pain of alienation, discrimination, loss and shattered dreams is sharp enough to wield the punctum of disbelief to good effect. I found Twitchy's death as a member of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team on a mission to save the Lost Battalion in WWII France particularly poignant.* [375 pages]

PF: HS

Chmakova, Svetlana. *Awkward*. 2015. *Sixth-grader Penelope—Peppi—loves the Art Club. She also tries to navigate Berrybrook Middle School. She discovers that members of the Art Club and the Science Club detest each other. When the principal says they have to get along or else, Peppi and noncompetitive middle school scientist Jaime resolve the conflicts. I love this book: lots of personalities + a useful analysis of the graphic lit process as an appendix.* [210 pages]

PF: MS

Chmakova, Svetlana. *Brave*. 2017. *Berrybrook MS Art club member Jensen doesn't know he's bullied until he starts hanging out with journalists Jenny and Akilah. They teach him about Lizard brain behavior and share self-esteem, encouraging him to confront bullies and continue dreaming of being an astronaut.* [240 pages]

PF: MS

Chmakova, Svetlana. Crush. 2018. *Berrybrook MS's cast of characters continues with Jorge, Liv and Jazmine stepping up to the spotlight to illuminate cliques, cyberbullying and friendship.* [235 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL20**Cho, Kate. Wicked Fox. 2019. *Miyong is a magical offspring: her father is a Seoul, Korea, police detective while her mother is a nine-tailed fox who—like her daughter—can assume human form. Her between-the-worlds balancing act is made awkward by her relationship with Jihoon, a high school classmate. Blending Korean folklore and pop culture, the novel addresses broken families and perceptions of good versus evil. A very helpful glossary enriches the culture and the setting.* [420 pages]

PF: HS

Chokshi, Roshani. Aru Shah and the End of Time. 2018. *First book in a series of Rick Riordan Presents Hindu mythology follows Aru and Mini, reincarnated Pandava brothers on a quest to foil the Sleeper.* [355 pages, incl Glossary]

PF: MS

Chokshi, Roshani. Aru Shah and the Song of Death. 2019. *Rick Riordan and Disney continue to present Hindu mythology via the story of the Pandavas. This time the quest is to retrieve a magic bow and arrow.* [381 pages, including Glossary]

PF: MS

Clayton, Dhonielle. The Belles. 2018. *In the fantasy queendom of Orleans, beauty is addictively desired. Belles are bred to manipulate arcanas to meet the desires of addicts, the worst of whom is Princess Sophia, bad girl supreme who lies to Camellia—the favorite Belle—to seize the throne from her ailing mother and sleeping beauty sister.* [434 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Colfer, Chris. Struck by Lightning. 2012. *Carson Phillips has a dream: to attend Northwestern, become an award-winning even feared journalist and eventually edit The New Yorker. But first he's got to get in, which means something spectacular on his application. He chooses a literary magazine, with contributions from his high school's clique leaders, all of whom submit because he's blackmailing them.* [258 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Colfer, Eoin, Andrew Donkin, Giovanni Rigano. *Illegal*. 2018. *Graphic novel about Ebo, a Ghanaian child who follows his brother Kwame who is following their sister Sisi to Europe. First, Ebo finds Kwame and they travel across the Sahara to the northern coast of Africa before setting across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. Then, after enduring life in the streets and being at the mercy of smugglers, Kwame is not there when Ebo and Sisi reunite in an Italian refugee camp.* [130 pages]

PF: MS

Condie, Ally. *The Last Voyage of Poe Blythe*. 2019. *Presumably the first book in a series as 17-year-old Captain Blythe takes on the Admiral and his quest for gold to finance Palingenesis, a relocation project. Poe's need for vengeance is believable; some of her actions: not so much.* [324 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL19**Connor, Leslie. *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle*. 2018. *Mason has a learning disability; he is also suspected of killing his best friend in a treehouse prank gone wrong. Pipsqueak nerdy Calvin moves into the subdivision developed from the Buttle family apple orchard. They bond while battling bullies. Reminiscent of Freak the Mighty.* [326 pages]

PF: MS

Corthron, Kara Lee. *Daughters of Jubilation*. 2020. *It's the early 1960s in South Carolina and 16-year-old Evalene discovers that she has hidden powers in her DNA—a force that enables black women to combat white male oppressors. She bonds with her maternal grandmother to learn how to control the magic, how to avenge murder and how to manage grief.* [342 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Craft, Jerry. *New Kid*. 2019. *Artistically gifted middle schooler Jordan Banks is sent to a high-dollar private school by his mother, a corporate climber who wants her son to learn the rules of success in privileged white culture. He transitions from Washington Heights to Riverside each school day where he meets little diversity and much prejudice, a good deal of it unthinking. However, he survives. Readers who like Awkward will like this.* [249 pages]

PF: MS

Creech, Sharon. *Absolutely Normal Chaos*. 1990. *The further adventures of Mary Lou Finney who previously walked two moons. This time she keeps a summertime journal as an English assignment, writing about pre-teen romance, Odysseus and her cousin Carl Ray from West Virginia.* [230 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Crutcher, Chris. *Losers Bracket*. 2018. *Some of his best writing since Whale Talk, as Crutcher uses a variety of forums (basketball tournaments, books clubs, coffee breaks, swim meets, therapy sessions) to address and impart observations regarding adolescent counseling, creative writing, drug-and-alcohol abuse, dysfunctional families (both lower and middle class) the plight of social workers and sports. Annie Boots is created to be a memorable character, and she is.* [250 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Dare, Abi. *The Girl with the Louding Voice: A Novel*. 2020. *Freshly escaped from her bondage as a child bride of 14, Nigerian adolescent Adunni becomes a victim of human trafficking, working as housemaid to an abusive millionaire and her lecherous husband. Education sets her free. The local version of English adds to the atmosphere.* [366 pages]

PF: HS

Davies, David Stuart. *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Ripper Legacy. A monarch begot a son with one of Jack the Ripper's victims; Sherlock was originally put off the case; now he's on the scent and determined to solve the mystery.* [234 pages]

PF: HS

Day, Anna. *The Fandom*. 2018. *At Comic.Con four London teens are earthquaked into the universe of The Gallows Dance where they try to canon their way home from the dystopian conflict between Gems and Imps. Tricky with refs to pop YAL and the power of fanfic.* [404 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Dessen, Sarah. *The Rest of the Story*. 2019. *About-to-be high school senior Emma Saylor Payne spends some summertime with her deceased mother's family on the poorer, traditional side of North Lake. She connects with her past and creates a future that reconciles death, divorce, blended families and socio-economic differences. I love the grandmothers' names: the rich, paternal one is Nana; the working class, maternal one is Mimi. Another satisfying novel great for leisurely reading.* [440 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Diaz, Alexandra. *The Only Road*. 2016. *When his cousin is murdered by gangsters for refusing to join them, Jamie joins Angela—his cousin's sister—in escaping from Guatemala to join his older brother in the US. Their families' financial sacrifice and love are heart-felt; their perilous adventures highlight the danger; the other teenagers and adults they meet add character to the novel. A useful glossary helps navigate the language.* [277 pages]

PF: MS

DiCamillo, Kate. *Because of Winn-Dixie*. 2000. *Opal is befriended by Winn-Dixie, a stray mongrel who follows her into a grocery store, helps her make friends in her new town, and heals her father—the preacher—'s heart. Themes of abandonment—Opal's mama left when she was three—and community are established in this novel, the author's first.* [182 pages]

PF: ELEM

DiCamillo, Kate. *The Tiger Rising*. 2001. *Like a caged tiger, Rob Horton's sadness for his mother's death paces interminably. Bullied at his new school, Rob's emotion is freed by fellow newbie Sistine, abandoned by her father.* [116 pages]

PF: ELEM

DiCamillo, Kate. *Beverly, Right Here*. 2019. *In 1979, Beverly Tapinski, 14 years old, buries her dead dog buddy and hits the road to Tamaray Beach, FL, where she gets a job clearing tables at Mr C's fish café, a place to stay with retiree Iola in a wee trailer, and a Dartmouth-bound 16-year-old boyfriend Elmer who works at Zoom City, a discount store. When she feels better she calls friend Raymie Nightingale to come get her and take her home.* [241 pages]

PF: MS

DiCamillo, Kate. *Stella Endicott and the Anything-Is-Possible Poem*. 2020. *Second grader Stella learns about metaphors, conflict and resolution.* [90 pages]

PF: ELEM

Dionne, Erin. *Lights Camera Disaster*. 2018. *Hester is failing the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. People—especially her Language Arts teacher--can't comprehend her lack of effort. Her friends shun her after she melts down. Then, her older brother says "storyboard" The Giver. It all comes together.* [260 pages]

PF: MS

Donnelly, Jennifer. *Stepsister*. 2019. *Restorative justice as two characters: a crone named Fate and a dandy named Chance play games with Cinderella's stepsister Isabella. A fairy godmother/fox (the same one who turned pumpkins into a carriage and mice into horses for the prince's ball) intervenes as Izzy repairs her heart, forsaking beauty for bravery. A very nice take on the classic fairy tale; a page-turner written by someone who treats the tale with reverence and respect.* [342]

PF: MS/HS

Dos Passos, John. *The 42<sup>nd</sup> Parallel*. 1930, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937. This edition 1946. *The first book in the USA trilogy introduces characters via narratives, conceits such as Newsreel and the Camera Eye and themes: biographical essays of influential Americans, geography, immigrants, labor versus capital, politics (especially isolationism versus global expansion) and revolutions both industrial and socialist taking us to the cusp of American's entry into World War I.* [481 pages]

PF: HS

Dos Passos, John. *Nineteen Nineteen*. 1930, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937. This edition 1946. *The second book of the USA trilogy is mostly set in Europe as it takes us through WWI while continuing characters (many of whom meet), conceits and themes of the first book.* [545 pages]

PF: HS

Dos Passos, John. *The Big Money*. 1930, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937. This edition 1946. *The third book in the USA trilogy highlights mobility and power through airplanes, cars, finance and industry while strengthening its exposition of class conflict.* [645 pages]

PF: HS

Douglas, Stuart. *The Albino's Treasure*. 2015. *Another volume in The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes series, this one is mistitled. While the Albino may be a villain to rival Moriarty, the treasure is a document—discovered via detection—of Charles I.* [245 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL19**Draper, Sharon. *Blended*. 2018. *An inside-out look at interracial marriage turned dysfunctional, with excellent exposition of the effects of divorce on a middle-school-aged girl. Arresting adults: bio mom (white); bio dad (black); bio mom's boyfriend →fiancee (white) bio dad's girlfriend →fiancee (black) and her high school-aged son. Acts of hatred and a scene near the end reminiscent of The Hate U Give, lend grit to the novel, while acts of love show that the human species is capable of forgiveness and learning.* [308 pages]

PF: MS

Eshbaugh, Julie. *Crown of Oblivion*. 2019. *A page-turning knock-off of Hunger Games with magic standing in for skill as Astrid signs up for the Oblivion Race to raise her status from whipping girl for a mischievous princess to citizen, a change that will provide healthcare for her Outcast family members. Some plot points are best viewed through squinty eyes so as to avoid questions like: How did all those bombs get placed into the palace at the end?* [470 pages]

PF: HS

Femollera, Natalie Sanmartin. *The Awakening of Miss Prim*. 2013. *Prudencia Prim—lover of Little Women—takes on the task of organizing the library of The man in the wing chair, cofounder of San Ireneo, an intellectual community whose citizens talk about child rearing, education, gender roles, marriage and religion all the while citing thinkers and their texts as their experiences and their ideas clash.* [258 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL19**Fordham, Fred. *To Kill a Mockingbird: A Graphic Novel* adapted from the book by Harper Lee. 2018. *Reverential treatment of the classic coming-of-age novel with Scout, Jem, Dill, Atticus, Calpurnia and Boo Radley visually rendered, this is a worthy addition to the verbal and cinematic versions of the story. Much of the original text is incorporated into the graphics. Pages are conveniently—thankfully—numbered, making for excellent use of quotes.* [273 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL20**Fox, Helena. *How It Feels to Float*. 2019. *Ambitious portrayal of a teen girl Biz, for Elizabeth, beset by mental illness in the wake of her Dad's death. In the mix: bullying, sexual infidelity, and a wonderful look at differentiated learning: photography helps. Of help to me would be more about Australia.* [370 pages]

PF: HS

**LITFEST19**Frank, Steven. *Class Action*. 2018. *A middle school legal romance (literally: if you look up Warren v Board of Education then you'll read about drug testing for teachers) as 6<sup>th</sup> grader Sam builds an anti-homework team composed of his high school-aged sister, her debate-team boyfriend, his three best friends and the retired lawyer across the street. They take their case to the Supreme Court; because this is a romance you know what happens.* [251 pages]

PF: MS

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*. Illus. David McKean. 2008. *Inspired by Kipling's The Jungle Books, this is the story of Nobody Owens (Bod), infant survivor of a homicidal attack on his family. Bod is brought up by the inhabitants of an English cemetery and its sometime visitors. As Kipling promotes survival and vengeance with assistance, so, too, does Gaiman.* [307 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Gandalfi, Silvana. *Run for Your Life*. 2010. Trans. Lynne Sharon Schwartz. 2018. *Seven-year-old Santino witnesses his father and grandfather being murdered by Mafia in Sicily. He speaks against them, leaves the island goes into witness protection then bizarrely returns with his sister where he recognizes the remaining gunman and helps bring him to justice.* [275 pages]

PF: MS

Gansworth, Eric. *Give Me Some Truth*. 2018. *Alternating chapters between Carson and Maggie, citizens of a Reservation near Niagara Falls tell the story of forbidden love (fifteen-year-old Maggie and a thirty-something white guy who wants her virginity) and big dreams (Carson tries to get a band together so that they can take the grand prize at a Battle of the Bands and go to New York City. The Beatles are their inspiration.) Friends, family members and community members both on-and-off the Rez serve as minor characters help provide conflict and setting.* [403 pages]

PF: HS

Gansworth, Eric. *Apple Skin to the Core: A Memoir in Words and Pictures*. 2020. *The author--who leaves (escapes?) the Rez via popular culture (comics: Batman/Fantastic Four; music: Bowie/The Beatles; TV: game shows/sitcoms) and college--revisits via memories and pictures. The section called Dog Street mimics Abbey Road with song-by-song poems not unlike drivel.* [338 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Garrett, Camryn. *Full Disclosure*. 2019. *Adolescent sexual liberation in the post-AIDS world (ie treatable) set against the backdrop of a high school production of Rent. Protagonist Simone (adopted as an AIDS baby by two gay men) endures ostracism from classmates as she wavers between bi or straight; and, the consequences of revealing her medical condition.* [290 pages]

PF: HS

Gewirtz, Adina Rishe. *Blue Window*. 2018. *Five children (one boy four girls, all related) ranging in age from elementary to middle school fall from home through a window into another world where people-like creatures are just different enough to be frightening. So is the conflict between the Genius (leader of the beast-like people) and the Guide (leader of the smooth people). The siblings have power and a prophecy, both of which are realized before they return home. Each child has a section of the book.* [560 pages]

PF: MS

Goldstein, Lori. Screen Queens. 2019. *STEM-centric Girl Power abides in Silicone Valley as a "three-member-adolescent-Me-Too team" brings down an a sexually abusive tech star. Collaboration, competition, mentoring, gender roles, parenting and history are lessons learned.* [355 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Gratz, Alan. Allies. 2019. *The Normandy Invasion from various points-of-view, including American soldiers and British tankmen on Omaha Beach, French civilians a bit inland, and Canadian paratroopers. A variety of faiths, nationalities and races add to the kaleidoscopic, chaotic day. Because I once-upon-a-time cycled through Normandy, the book is special. I saw the tapestry in Bayeux, I remember German bunkers, I have been to the cemetery.* [322 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Greenwald, Tom. Game Changer. 2018. *Thirteen-year-old Edward Youngblood is seriously injured in summer football camp. As he lies comatose, the tradition of high school hazing is revealed through counseling transcripts, dialogue of visitors, email among students, his interior monologue and newspaper articles.* [287 pages]

PF: MS

Griffiths, Andy and Terry Denton, illustrator. The 117-Story Treehouse. 2019. *When the big-nosed publisher demands the next book in the series, Andy and Terry turn to Beatrix Potter, Maurice Sendak and Dr. Seuss for inspiration.* [371 pages]

PF: ELEM

Grisham, John. Calico Joe. 2012. *Warren Tracey denies intentionally hitting Joe Castle in the head with a fast ball. He also denies ruining his first family's lives as well as Joe's career in major league baseball. However, pancreatic cancer and a stubborn son help him face death bed responsibility. Chicago Cubs and New York Mets seasons of 1973 are interwoven into the plot.* [194 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. Greystone Secrets: The Strangers. 2019. *First in a series. Chess, Emma and Finn learn that they are refugees from an alternate universe to which their single-parent mother returns to make things right for her doppelganger.* [405 pages]

PF: MS

Halberstam, David. October, 1964. 1994. *Brought to my attention by Professor Virgil Albertini, this is the story of the cultural, financial, personal and racial events that became the World Series, won by the St. Louis Cardinal 4 games to 3 over the N Y Yankees.* [373 pages]

PF: HS

Hawkins, April. School Spirits. 2013. *Isolde Brannick is a monster fighter who goes to high school for the first time so that she may quash a ghost.* [293 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Hawkins, Rachel. Her Royal Highness. 2019. *Twelfth-grade Texan Millie Quint gets a full scholarship to a demanding school in the Highlands. Her roommate is the bad-girl child of the Queen of Scotland. They fall in love. Nice local color, especially of the Isle of Skye.* [274 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Heidicker, Christian McKay. Scary Stories for Young Foxes. 2019. *Modern-day Aesopian morality prevails as inclusive family trumps murderous patriarchy with overtones of Roald Dahl. Kits (young foxes) Mia and Uly are separated from their vixen mothers in a series of interconnected picaresque stories of their adventures on the road. Beatrix Potter makes an unflattering appearance as do alligators, badgers, rabbits, rabies, raccoons and other fauna. A storyteller spins the narratives to a group of contemporary kits who dwindle one by one as the night-time tales terrify them.* [314 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Hicks, Deron. The van Gogh Deception. 2017. *Thirteen-year-old boy with trauma-induced amnesia is found in the National Gallery of Art. Through a series of adventures shared with a newfound friend, he chases his identity through Washington, DC, while being chased by criminals. A van Gogh painting is central to this caper.* [306 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Stormbreaker. 2000. *When Uncle Ian is murdered by a ruthless multimillionaire computer mogul, his nephew Alex is recruited by MI6 to complete his mission. So it's off to Cornwall where Alex infiltrates and uncovers the plot to kill British schoolchildren with biological warfare; he foils the plot in London.* [234 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Point Blank. 2001. *Fourteen-year-old orphan Alex Rider was born to be a spy. So British intelligence agency MI6 puts him to work infiltrating a boarding school isolated in the Alps, run by a villain creating adolescent clones designed to take over the global infrastructure.* [274 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Skeleton Key. 2002. *Alex Rider is on loan to the CIA which wants to thwart a rogue Russian who's got his hands on a nuclear bomb. Alex moves from Wimbledon to Cornwall to Miami to an island near Cuba to Murmansk's atomic submarine graveyard on a mission to save the world.* [264 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Scorpia. 2004. *Sabotage. Corruption. Intelligence. Assassination. Scorpia's global network of crime for hire—led by Welshwoman Julia Rothman—plans to murder British schoolchildren. Alex Rider infiltrates the gang.* [388 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Eagle Strike. 2005. *This time it's Alex rider versus Damian Cray, pop singer turned video game maker out to save the world by launching American missiles at global drug producing locations.* [322 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Ark Angel. 2006. *Teenage spy Alex rider rockets into space to save DC (Washington, not the comic book empire).* [323 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Snakehead. 2007. *Major Winston Yu—Anglophile and Asian board member for Scorpia—steals a bomb to create a tsunami to wreck a peace conference and wreak havoc on western Australia. Alex Rider joins the Australian Secret Service to help thwart the plot.* [385 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. Crocodile Tears. 2009. *Desmond McCain—hypocritical minister—raises millions for disaster relief. Convinced that money = power, he engineers a genetic mutation that will destroy Africa's food supply, starving millions. His charity will be first in line to serve and to solicit funds. Alex rider is all who stands in his way.* [383 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. *Scorpio Rising (The Final Mission)*. 2011. *An eccentric billionaire's deathbed wish is to have the Elgin marbles returned to his homeland, Greece. Scorpio takes the job. Alex goes to school in Cairo to see what's up.* [402 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. *Russian Roulette: The Story of an Assassin*. 2013. *Dickensian narrative of Yassen Gregorovich who escapes his anthrax-infected village to become a small-time Moscow street thief to serve a malevolent Russian gangster to training as an assassin for Scorpio.* [405 pages]

PF: MS

Horowitz, Anthony. *Moriarty*. 2014. *James Moriarty, having faked his death at Reichenbach Falls, poses as a Pinkerton agent who works with Scotland Yard to defeat an American gang.* [285 pages]

PF: HS

Horowitz, Anthony. *Magpie Murders*. 2017. *Mystery within a whodunnit as editor Susan Ryeland searches for both the missing chapters of Magpie Murders and the killer of its author Alan Conway.* [477 pages]

PF: HS

Horowitz, Anthony. *Alex Rider: Secret Weapon*. 2019. *Seven short stories featuring the teenaged British spy, including characters from the novels.* [329 pages]

PF: MS

Hostetter, Joyce Moyer. *Drive*. 2018. *Identical twins Ellie and Ida begin high school in Hickory, NC, in the year 1952 with atom bomb anxiety, car wrecks, Eisenhower, Korea, NASCAR, polio, their WWII-vet Daddy's PTSD, and students at Fred T. Hoard HS including one on whom they have identical crushes.* [347 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Hur, June. *The Silence of Bones*. 2020. *In early 19<sup>th</sup> century Korea a royal grab for power traps Asian Christians in political intrigue. Persecuted, tortured and executed, when a noble one is murdered it attracts the attention of law enforcement investigators. Seol—a 16-year-old doma—female servant—and her estranged brother Inspector Han are on the case.* [319 pages]

PF: HS

Hutchison, Shaun David. The State of Us. 2020. *White high school senior Dean's mom—a Medal of Honor winner—is running for President. As a Republican. Mexican-American high school senior Dre's dad is running for President. As a Democrat. Dre is a gay; Dean's not sure. They fall in love.* [406 pages]

PF: HS

Iftin, Abdi Nor. Call Me American: The Extraordinary True Story of a Young Somali Immigrant. 2020. *Born the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Rahawney nomads, Muslim Abdi came to maturity in the civil-war-torn streets of Mogadishu. Adept with languages, Abdi learns English while watching American movies like Terminator, styling himself Abdi American. After becoming an international radio celebrity cell-phoning reports from Somalia, Abdi wins the international visa lottery and—supported by a family from Maine—comes to America.* [252 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Ifueko, Jordan. Raybearer. 2020. *Created to assassinate the Crown Prince of Avitsar, Tarisai rebels as she decides her purpose is to save children, not preserve order.* [343 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Jackson, Tiffany D. Monday's Not Coming. 2018. *Middle school Claudia's from DC, she's dyslexic, she's a dancer and her best friend Monday is not returning her calls. She suspects something's wrong, but nobody will listen to her.* [435 pages]

PF: HS

Janeczko, Paul B. Secret Soldiers: How the U. S. Twenty-third Special Troops Fooled the Nazis. 2019. *Highly expository—even dry: the prose reminds me why some students do not like Social Studies—account of a groups of artists (actors, painters, soundmen, writers) who created “notional” Army units, fooling the Germans into believing situations that did not exist, thus affecting their response to Allied military initiative A personal frustration is that often the maps and photos did not correlate to the prose: sometimes the prose would refer to places that were not on the map; sometimes photos would not be explained.* [251 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Jarrow, Gail. *Spooked: How a Radio Broadcast and The War of the Worlds Sparked the 1938 Invasion of America*. 2018. *Well-illustrated, nonfiction, absorbing account of the famous Halloween eve radio broadcast, including relationships among actor, band conductor, citizens, director government officials, producer, sound effects technicians and writers*. [119 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Johnson, Maureen. *The Vanishing Stair (a truly Devious Novel)*. 2019. *Return to Ellingham Academy where Stevie has been reinstated, another student dies and the connections between 1938 and the present grow both clearer and more mysterious*. [369 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL19**Johnson, Varian. *The Parker Inheritance*. 2018. *Riddles, retribution, reconciliation and reparation are intertwined in this tale of segregated small-town South Carolina intertwined with the same contemporary town via three generations of African-Americans. At stake?: Candice Miller's grandmother's reputation; and, \$40,000,000. If Candice can solve the mystery then she can redeem both*. [331 pages]

PF: HS

Johnstone, William W. and J. A. Johnstone. *Frontier of Violence*. 2017. *There's a shooting contest in Rattlesnake Wells, Wyoming, and it offers a handsome set of pistols as first prize. While the prize attracts all sorts of villainous connivers, it also catches the eye of the town Marshal Bob Hatfield, a man with a past as well as a live-in Mexican beauty who cares for his son*. [373 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Johnstone, William W. and J. A. Johnstone. *Right Between the Eyes*. 2017. *Revisionist Western genre as Bob Hatfield marries a Mexican woman while serving as Marshal of Rattlesnake wells, Wyoming. Plot driven and a bit preachy, the novel forces the marshal to confront his violent past as the "Devil's River Kid" so that he, Consuela and his son Bucky can live in peace. Or, at least as peacefully as the "Deadliest Town in the West" will allow*. [423 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Johnstone, William W. and J. A. Johnstone. Springfield 1880. 2018. *A shipment of 250 Springfield 1880 rifles are stolen by a traitor who pins the crime on an Army lieutenant determined to clear his name. So, he goes to Mexico to "get'r done." He teams up with an incorrigible serviceman, a scout and a female guerilla; he confronts bandidos, Indians and expatriated Confederates.* [414 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Jones, Kimberly and Gilly Segal. 2019. *I'm Not Dying Tonight. Lena (African-American female) and Campbell (white female) alternate points-of-view as they bond while escaping a high school football game brawl that turns into a gunfight that turns into a riot. This novel is highly dramatic, exemplifying Poe's edict that authors write for effect.* [242 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Kelly, Joe. *I Kill Giants*. Illus. Ken Niimura. 2018. *Graphic novel: the story of Barbara, middle schooler, whose real world is so horrifically unfaceable that she creates a virtual world of escape. Bullies; dysfunctional family; misunderstanding adults abound until a rare Kansas twister sets things right.* [200 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Khorram, Adib. *Darius the Great Is Not Okay*. 2018. *High school sophomore Darius Kellner travels with parents and younger sister to Iran to visit his never-before-met dying maternal grandfather as well as grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins. Shunned, bullied and mocked in Pacific Northwest Portland, he discovers a friend in Persian teenager Sohrab. Filled with tea, local culture (with food, customs and architecture), Star Trek and The Lord of the Rings, the novel presents a sympathetic treatment of depression within families and cultures that are not always kind to its sufferers.* [312 pages]

PF: HS

King, Emily R. *Before the Broken Star: The Evermore Chronicles: Book One*. 2019. *Evelyn vows vengeance versus Killian, an evil 300-year-old prince seeking power via a sword and heartwood. He tried to kill her once, but her uncle—guided by Father Time—replaced her heart with clockworks. Transported to Dagger Island, she's taken to wife by Lt. Jamison. Her quest leads to Other Lands as she joins female pirates and a pixie in search of Dorcha, the great gray whale that swallowed Killian and the sword she needs to save all the worlds.* [283 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Kinney, Jeff. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul*. 2014. *Illustrated adventures of a quirky family road trip, inspired by a family magazine, narrated by middle kid Greg Heffley. A touch of the Griswold's Family Vacation and Malcom in the Middle. Recommended by youngest daughter Ying*. [217 pages]

PF: ELEM

Kipling, Rudyard. *The Jungle Books*. Oxford ed, 2008. *Stories of the Man-cub Mowgli, brought up in the Indian jungle by its inhabitants, interspersed with other tales of other places. Helpful notes appended*. [373 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Knowles, Jo. *Where the Heart Is*. 2019. *Thirteen-year-old Rachel's summer includes: 1) seeing her best friend Micah attracted to other girls; 2) watching her parents fight about money; and, 3) caring for neighbors' farm animals. These activities mask: 1) a search for sexual identity; 2) downward economic mobility; and, 3) the truth about where bacon comes from. Written in matter-of-fact prose*. [292 pages]

PF: MS

Kwaymullina, Ambelin and Ezekeil. *The Things She's Seen*. 2018. *Aboriginal sensibility imbues this tale of exploitation, molestation and violation. A ghost helps her grieving father with the case and his life. The four-page Author's Note is a nifty primer*. [197 pages]

PF: MS

Lacour, Nina. *Watch Over Me*. 2020. *18-going-on-19-year-old Mila leaves the CA foster system to take a teaching job at a remote, haunted, healing farm on the northern coast. There she confronts the death of her mother's controlling boyfriend as well as being abandoned by her mother. Gothic with some shades of Jane Eyre*. [261 pages]

PF: HS

Lee, Mackenzie. *The Lady's Guide to Petticoats and Piracy*. 2018. *Sequel to The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue: sister Felicity desires to be a doctor, enlisting family, frauds, friends, pirates and dragons in her 18<sup>th</sup> century campaign*. [442 pages]

PF: HS

Lee, Stacey. *The Downstairs Girl*. 2019. *In late 19<sup>th</sup> century Atlanta Jo Kuan endures racial prejudice of a different sort while writing an anonymous "Dear Miss Sweetie" agony column*. [366 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Lenski, Lois. Cotton in My Sack. 1949. *Newbery Award winner's response to Arkansas children of sharecroppers and tenant farmers who begged her to tell their story. Interesting note at the beginning: she wrote a song—the book's title and the song's title are the same and invites readers to use it free of charge while reminding wannabe profiteers that it is protected by copyright:*

The song "Cotton in My Sack" with words written by Lois Lenski and music by Clyde Roberts Bulla may be freely used or reprinted by any schools or teachers interested, for the use of their children. Its reprinting for any commercial use is, however, forbidden by copyright. It is hoped that the song will be an incentive to the making of dramatization of the story.

*This note reminds me of Creative Commons licenses.* [191 pages]

PF: ELEM/MS

Levy, Dana Alison. It Wasn't Me. 2018. *Circle Justice meets The Breakfast Club during Spring Break at Shipton (MA) Middle School as Ms Lewiston tries an alternate method to the suspension favored by Principal Davis to address five students (the Jock who believes in team but ultimately not at the expense of what's right; the death metal drumming Nerd who tries to remain invisible to the point of overlooking bullying; the Overachiever Princess who hides a family secret; the Screwup--with two foster dads--who can't seem to focus; and, the Weirdo whose Asian parents are stereotypically overbearing in the face of her obsession with horror filmmaking) who may-or-may-not-have-defaced Theo (himself grieving his parents' divorce)'s self-portraits, then destroyed his pinhole camera project. An excellent example that could be easily exported to middle school campuses across the country.* [320 pages]

PF: MS

Levy, Josh. Seventh Grade vs the Galaxy. 2019. *Jack, Ari & Becka are students in a middle school spaceship orbiting Jupiter in the 23<sup>rd</sup> century when they are confronted by a dominant lifeforce determined to quarantine humans. I see "series" written all over this book.* [279 pages]

PF: MS

Lim, Elizabeth. Reflection: A Twisted Tale. 2018. *Mulan saves the day, then has to save Captain Shang by joining his spirit in the underworld where--teamed with his family's guardian, a lion—she realizes an impossible quest: the three escape before dawn. Along the quest she meets ancestors, demons, monsters and demigods.* [408 pages]

PF: MS

Lu, Marie. Skyhunter. 2020. *Talin is an elite fighter—a Striker—in her adopted country Mara, refuge for her mother and herself. She communicates with most people using sign language. With red—a bio mutant warrior—she communicates telepathically. Red has deserted his army to join hers. Then comes the invasion, a losing battle and choices. First in a series.* [371 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Lupica, Mike. Batting Order. 2019. *The 2017 Houston Astros World Series winners serve as role models for short, stuttering Matt who “goes to bat” for his teammate Ben, who has an overbearing father who resists coaching from Matt’s mom. Good read for reluctant readers who are ball fans.* [293 pages]

PF: MS

Magras, Diane. The Mad Wolf's Daughter. 2018. *Set in fictionalized medieval Scotland, this day-by-day quest tale recounts how Drest—youngest child and only daughter of the Mad Wolf—rescues her Da and brothers from an evil king. The Author’s Note is useful and interesting, explaining various roles played by people and places. Sure to be the first book in a series.* [277 pages]

PF: MS

Maniscalco, Kerri. Stalking Jack the Ripper. 2016. *CSI meets Sherlock Holmes meets Mary Shelley meets Jane Eyre meets Charles Dickens in this adolescent mash-up bordering on historical/steampunk fiction. Ripper-era London meets 21<sup>st</sup> century feminist sensibility as Jack’s identity is revealed to Audrey Rose Wadsworth, her conservative Victorian dad and the man unconventional man who loves her well.* [323 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Maraniss, Andrew. Games of Deception: The True Story of the First U.S. Olympic Basketball Team at the 1936 Olympics in Hitler’s Germany. *Interweaves the invention of basketball with “hometown” ball—including the MacPherson, Kansas, Refiners—with college ball—including the University of Kansas—with the Olympics with anti-Semitism with racial prejudice.* [217 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL20**Marks, Janae. From the Desk of Zoe Washington. 2020. *Twelve-year-old Zoe is a cupcake savant. This summer she interns at a bakery with an eye toward going on a cooking show. Along the way she breaks up and then makes up with her next-door neighbor/best friend who faces down basketball bullies on her behalf, corresponds with her imprisoned dad, reads about the Innocence Project and visits Harvard. That's a lot for a twelve-year-old; perhaps too much as her voice is amazingly adult, particularly when she talks down to grown-ups.* [286 pages]

PF: MS

Mather, Adriana. Killing November. 2019. *Disney's Descendants, Mafia style. First in a series. Fast-moving plot: November suddenly appears at a prep school for assassins, not knowing who her parents really are. Sometimes awkwardly written at the sentence level.* [404 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Matson, Morgan. Second Chance Summer. 2012. *Taylor's dad Robin wants to die at their summer home in Lake Phoenix, providing memories of a lifetime for her, her older brother, their young sister and their mom. While there, she repairs 5-year-old broken relationships, reviving a best friendship and a romance.* [468 pages]

PF: HS

Matson, Morgan. Since You've Been Gone. 2014. *It's summer and gonna-be high school senior Emily's best friend Sloane has left town with no forwarding address, ruining their plans. In her place?: a letter with a "to do" list of 13 self-esteem raising activities. Completing the list, Emily is convinced, will help her find Sloane. What she realizes is that it also helps her find herself.* [449 pages]

PF: HS

Matson, Morgan. The Unexpected Everything. 2016. *When Andie's Johns Hopkins summer internship falls through, she becomes a dogwalker. One of her customers is Clark, a young fantasy novelist. Meanwhile, her widowed dad leaves Congress under an investigative dark cloud. And, one of her best friends has a crush on a boy who hooks with another best friend. It's a romance so all ends well: the fun is reading it happen.* [519 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**McCaughrean, Geraldine. *Where the World Ends*. 2017. *Off the West coast of 18<sup>th</sup> century Scotland, beyond the Outer Hebrides, a small group of nine adolescent males and three men continue the tradition of fowling—harvesting sea birds—atop a small outcrop. When their village is plagued by smallpox they are marooned for nine months. Based on history, the novel reverberates with the likes of Lord of the Flies and Pincher Martin.* [313 pages]

PF: MS

McGee, Katharine. *American Royals*. 2019. *Alternative universe spins like a TV soap onto the pages of history where G. Washington becomes King George I, leading—several centuries later—to America's first queen: Beatrice Regina. A delicious villainess, mischief-making twins and love-lorn commoners stir up the suds. Sequel follows.* [437 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**McGinnis, Mindy. *Heroine*. 2019. *A morality play of a novel as the author ponderously guides the reader through the hell that is drug addiction. A high school athlete and her best friend (both are stars on the softball team) survive a horrendous car crash. The pain is great. One yields to first Oxy then heroine; the other goes on to a Division I college athletic scholarship. People die along the way. Chapters have key terms defined for us.* [408 pages]

PF: HS

McManus, Karen M. *Two Can Keep a Secret*. 2019. *When their wannabe actress mom enters court-ordered rehab, twins Ellery and Ezra move to Echo Ridge, VT, to live with their grandmother. There are secrets in this quaint town: their mom's twin sister went missing on Homecoming night; and, years later a Homecoming queen was strangled. Ellery—fed on a diet of true crime novels and TV shows—wants to solve the mysteries. But there's more: another missing girl; and, some personal business for Ellery and Ezra.* [323 pages]

PF: HS

McSmith, Tobly. *Stay Gold*. 2020. *Lies, lies and more lies. From Pony a transgender transfer to Hillcrest High; from Georgia a journalist disguised as a cheerleader; from Kelly the school mascot; from Ted the Oscar-winning gay actor who denied his sexuality. Hatred is outed and love and respect reign supreme in a violent yet romantic Hollywood ending that starts at Homecoming at the Hyatt in Dallas, continues to a hospital and ends at school.* [357 pages]

PF: HS

Meconis, Dylan. Queen of the Sea. 2019. *Infant Margaret is entrusted to the nuns of St. Elysia on a little island off the West coast of Albion where two sisters—Catherine and Eleanor—vie for the throne. Eleanor is displaced and banished to the convent where she discovers that all three girls are daughters of Edmund—deceased king—with different mothers. Elizabethan intrigue commences.* [394 pages; graphic literature]

PF: MS

Medina, Meg. Merci Suarez Changes Gears. 2018. *Mercedes Suarez goes to an elite private school, where her older brother is renowned for his academic prowess. In stark contrast to her 6th-grade classmates, she rides a shabby bike, lives in a three-house compound with her extended, three generation family, works part-time for her Dad the painter, communicates in Spanish and watches her beloved grandfather descend into Alzheimer's disease. A bit pedantic at times.* [356 pages]

PF: MS

Mejia, Tehlor Kay. We Set the Dark on Fire. 2019. *Daniela goes to school to become a Primera—first wife/social manager for a wealthy family's son—but instead becomes an in-house agent for La Voz, an insurgent rebel group. Along the way she falls in love with her Segunda: second wife/child bearer for their shared husband.* [364 pages]

PF: HS

Mejia, Tehlor Kay. We Unleash the Merciless Storm. 2020. *Conclusion to We Set the Dark on Fire as Carmen rescues Daniela, roots out the traitor in La Voz and helps Alex take over as Vulture.* [388 pages]

PF: HS

Meyer, Marissa. Instant Karma. 2020. *Uptight, overachieving high school sophomore Prudence slips, falls and receives a karmic concussion, enabling her to provoke universal justice for both bad and good. Meanwhile, she has issues with her laidback ecofriendly biology lab partner, who she believes earned her a C on a team project. To raise her grade, she volunteers at the sea animal rescue center run by his mom. She learns some lessons; he learns some lessons; they kiss at the center during a storm-induced power outage. With references to the Beatles, Oasis, karaoke and other music, this book has movie written all over it.* [388 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Miranda, Megan. *All the Missing Girls*. 2016. *On the reading list for my oldest daughter's 10<sup>th</sup> grade English class, this novel of suspense "un-nests" two cases of girls gone missing in small town North Carolina. The tale is told from Day 15 to Day 1 by a woman returning home.* [368 pages]

PF: HS

Mitchell, Joseph. *Up in the Old Hotel*. 1992. *A godsend for those of us who still believe in the power of expository prose, with the occasional narrative thrown in to add character, this is actually a collection of four books of essays and some fiction written by a reporter for The New Yorker in the decades when it set the standard for essayists. Ranging in years from 1938 to 1992 and in topics from clams to skyscrapers the pages keep you turning in search of the next well-turned phrase. Elegant; thoughtful.* [716 pages]

PF: HS/U

Moriarty, Laura. *The Chaperone: A Novel*. 2012. *Thirty-something Cora Carlisle, Orphan Train girl who travelled from New York City to McPherson, Kansas, as a six-year-old returns to her roots as a chaperone for fifteen-year-old Louise Brooks, who has star written all over her. The contrast between dry Wichita and roaring New York is tremendous. Each woman finds herself. Local color, history and institutions add to the substance, which at times gets wordy.* [564 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Morrill, Stephanie. *Within these Lines*. 2019. *Ponderous tale of American shame: internment of Japanese-Americans after Pearl Harbor, told from the points-of-view of an Italian-American girl and the boy she loves: a Nesei whose family provides her family's restaurant with produce. Manzanar and a riot there figure prominently. The exposition and rising action take forever; some readers might not be patient enough to await the pay-off, for this is a romance: the lovers get together at Christmas, 1942, in Kansas. This might have been better written as a series of found letters (correspondence plays a large part in the novel) with flashbacks to the writers.* [350 pages]

PF: HS

Morrow, Bethany C. *A Song below Water*. 2020. *A mish-mash mess of Black Lives Matter, Black sisterhood and myths: gargoyles, gorgons, mermaids, sirens and untrustworthy adults in Portland, OR. The ending is terrific; some of the interiors of the two voices is a stone-cold dull message.* [286 pages]

PF: MS

Myers, Walter Dean. *Beast*. 2003. *Anthony escapes Harlem via a Connecticut prep school. He leaves behind a girl who escapes via drugs. He returns at Christmas to decide what to do.* [170 pages]

PF: HS

Ness, Patrick. *Burn*. 2020. *There are multiverses at play, some with dragons some without. When young farmgirl Sarah Dewhurst, blue dragon Kazimir, teen assassin Malcolm and Goddess Mitera Thea cross from one to another it's a battle for survival.* [371 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Nix, Garth. *The Left-Handed Booksellers of London*. 2020. *18-year-old Susan's search for her father takes her from her mum near bath to London where she meets Merlin, member of an old magical family. He sees something in her and joins her quest. Quirky with early 80s pop refs.* [393 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL20**Noah, Trevor. *It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood: Adapted for Young Readers. Bastard child of an illegal union between a willful Xhosa mother and a reluctant Swiss father, young colored Trevor navigates life among blacks, coloreds and whites in post-apartheid South Africa.* [292 pages, incl history of apartheid]

PF: MS/HS

O'Hearn, Kate. *Pegasus: The Flame of Olympus (1/6)*. 2012. *New Yorker Emily meets runaway foster kid Joel. They hide Pegasus from her dad, a cop. Soon, other world monsters + government secret agents seek the winged stallion. Then, Emily discovers that she's the flame that the source of Olympian power.* [385 pages]

PF: MS

O'Hearn, Kate. *Pegasus: Olympus at War (2/6)*. 2013. *The monsters in Book One wage war against Emily, Pegasus and Joel. Turns out Gorgons are involved.* [389 pages]

PF: MS

O'Hearn, Kate. *Pegasus: The New Olympians (3/6)*. 2014. *That government agency from Book One has been cloning Olympians. They set out to destroy Emily and Joel but waste Las Vegas instead.* [419 pages]

PF: MS

O'Hearn, Kate. Pegasus: Origins of Olympus. (4/6). 2015. *The Titans' weapon of Olympic destruction is unearthed. Emily and Joel time-travel to destroy it.* [418 pages]

PF: MS

O'Hearn, Kate. Pegasus: Rise of the Titans (5/6). 2015. *Emily has a "sister"/rival: Lorin: Flame of the Titans, Saturn's ultimate weapon versus the Olympians. They fight it out at diamond Head. First, Hawaiian goddesses get involved. Then, Xans—citizens of Xanadu—assemble. Finally, sibling rivalry is resolved.* [428 pages]

PF: MS

O'Hearn, Kate. Pegasus: The End of Olympus (6/6). 2017. *Emily's earlier mistakes come back to haunt her as mutant Titans devour Lorin, Londoners, Olympians and each other on their way to destroying Olympus, whose inhabitants must relocate to Xanadu, home of the Xan, who pull a deus ex machina to give Emily her choice of destinies.* [422 pages]

PF: MS

Otheguy, Emma. Silver Meadows Summer. 2019. *Carolina has emigrated from Puerto Rico to upstate New York with her parents and little brother. They live with her mother's sister, her husband and daughter while work and a new home are found. While they wait, all three children attend summer camp at a local farm where Carolina finds a magical cabin on her own path, a road not taken by others except her new friend Jennifer whose father is an artist, which is what Carolina wants to be. Excellent inclusion of poetry from Robert Frost, and Antonio Machado.* [223 pages]

PF: MS

Ostertag, Molly Knox. Witch Boy. 2017. *Aster is the hero of this graphic series. He is a boy among witches who believe that he can't be one of them. They believe boys can only be shapeshifters. Circumstances—including a newfound normal friend—prove otherwise.* [213 pages]

PF: MS

Ostertag, Molly Knox. The Hidden Witch. 2018. *Aster meets Ariel, a witch in a foster home befriended by his normal friend Charlie. Ariel has an evil presence, a Fetch, that provides the opportunity for Aster's granduncle Mikasi to rest in peace. Ariel gets home-schooled with Aster, whose cousin Sedge yearns to attend Sterling Junior High School with Charlie.* [203 pages]

PF: MS

Ostertag, Milly Knox. *The Midwinter Witch*. 2019. *Foster child/hidden witch Ariel joins Aster and Sedge's families on a midwinter family reunion. Charlie tags along, giving her two dads an opportunity for a romantic weekend. Ariel is tempted by her dead mom's sister, an evil witch. Aster wants to be the first boy to win the Jolrun, a competition for witches.* [203 pages]

PF: MS

Owens, Delia. *Where the Crawdads Sing*. 2018. *Abandoned as a child, Kya survives in the North Carolina marsh. Befriended by some of society's fringe, she becomes a self-taught artist, scientist, writer and advocate for Nature. Jilted, she becomes mistrustful and vengeful. The expository and interior writing is beautiful; the stuff in quotation marks is serviceable.* [368 pages]

PF: HS

Park, Linda Sue. *Prairie Lotus*. 2020. *Little Town on the Prairie meets revisionist author as Asian-American Hanna and her widowed Papa move from Los Angeles to the Dakota territory in late 19<sup>th</sup> century frontier America. Prejudice and ignorance abound as the author recreates some of the scenarios of the Little House books, including meeting members of the Sioux.* [256 pages, including a very useful Author's Note explaining her purpose and experiences].

PF: MS

Parsons, Karyn. *How High the Moon*. 2019. *Eleven-year-old Ella grows up in WWII small town South Carolina, compete with lynchings and singing all the while wondering who her daddy is. She visits her "Rosie-the-Riveter"-by-day, jazz-club-siren-by-night mama in Boston, then returns to her grandparents in time for some railroaded justice. A bit pedantic at times.* [307 pages]

PF: MS

Patterson, James and Maxine Paetro. *Confessions of a Murder Suspect. Book One*. 2012. *Tandoori's parents have fed her performance enhancing drugs for all of her sixteen years. Her fraternal twin Harry, older brother Matthew and younger brother Hugo have likewise had natural abilities enhanced with vitamins, concocted in the Pharmaceutical Factory owned by her dad. When her parents are found dead in their beds, her analytical mind and emotionless personality make her a prime suspect.* [372 pages]

PF: HS

Patterson, James and Maxine Paetro. Confessions: The Private School Murders. Book Two. 2013. *Tandy's sleuthing continues as she ties together random murders of teen-aged girls in NYC. Plus brother Matt is accused of murder, so she takes on that case. Plus she's in love with the son of her dead mother's greatest enemy. Or so she thinks: she really can't remember because her parents had her memory erased in a treatment center.* [422 pages]

PF: HS

Patterson, James and Maxine Paetro. Confessions: The Paris Mysteries. Book Three. 2014. *When their parents died, Tandy and her brothers were left with a lot of debt. They have to leave their home in The Dakota, an upscale NYC building. So, they move into their grandmother's place in Paris. Never mind that she never lived to see them: she provided. And, in Paris, Tandy faces more mysteries, mostly about her evil Uncle Peter, half-brother to her guardian Israeli-born Uncle Jacob. Brother Harry becomes quite the musical talent/sensation.* [293 pages]

PF: HS

Patterson, James and Maxine Paetro. Confessions: The Murder of an Angel. Book Four. 2015. *In which Tandy and family return to NYC, are reunited with supposedly dead oldest sister Katherine and evil Uncle Peter gets his come-uppance.* [275 pages]

PF: HS

Peck, Richard. Three Quarters Dead. 2010. *Tanya rules school and time. The Queen of Now leads fellow 12<sup>th</sup> grader Natalie, 11<sup>th</sup> grader Makenzie and a 10<sup>th</sup> grade minion in her vendetta from beyond the grave against the guy who dumped her.* [193 pages]

PF: HS

de la Pena, Matt. Superman: Dawnbreaker. *Clark Kent of Smallville, Kansas, navigates high school, social injustice, family issues and burgeoning superpowers. Highly readable.* [288 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Phelan, Matt. Knights vs Dinosaurs. 2018. *First in a series. Braggardly knights of the Round table meet Merlin's challenge by going into a cave with a book, then meeting terrible Lizards on the other side. Shout out to feminism/girl power as the Black Knight and Mel the squire reveal themselves. Interspersed with graphic lit to tell the tale.* [148 pages]

PF: ELEM

Phelan, Matt. *Knights vs Monsters*. 2019. *Second in a series as the Round table knights travel to magical Orkney to battle monsters and a witch determined to dethrone Arthur. Again, graphics are used to good effect.* [167 pages]

PF: ELEM

Philbrick, Rodman. *Wildfire*. 2019. *Sam and Delphy escape a deadly wildfire in the Maine woods, overcoming character-building obstacles as they do so.* [196 pages]

PF: MS

Power, Rory. *Wilder Girls*. 2019. *Lord of the Flies reset in a girls' school on an isolated island off the coast of Maine. Global warming thaws Ice Age microscopic parasites bent on evolving to survive at the expense of their hosts, whether human or some other form of fauna or flora. The Federal Government gets involved, as do the girls' romantic feelings for one another.* [353 pages]

PF: HS

Pratchett, Terry. *The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents*. 2001. *Maurice the cat partners with intelligent rats and pennywhistle-playing Keith to overcome evil rat catchers in Bad Blintz. Mayor's daughter storyloving Malicia helps.* [340 pages]

PF: MS

Rauf, Onjali Q. *The Boy at the Back of the Class*. 2018. *Nine-year-old Londoner Alexa befriends a new student Ahmet, a Syrian refugee separated from his family. To help him, she and her friends Josie, Michael and Tom confront bullies (both classmates and teachers) at school and at Buckingham Palace the Cold Stream Guards to entreat Queen Elizabeth for assistance. The author wrote the book to shine light on the issue.* [270 pages]

PF: ELEM/MS

Reekles, Beth. *The Kissing Booth*. 2012. *Beauty and the Beast, Southern California style, re-imagined through a British prism. Motherless, barely fathered 16-going-on-17 Rochelle (don't call me Shelly: call me Elle) reforms best friend's bad boy big brother Noah. Her biggest problem? How jealous will the girls be when they discover she's landed this Harvard-bound hottie?* [440 pages]

PF: HS

Reynolds, Jason. *Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks*. 2019. *Students from Latimer Middle School walk home, deconstructing their neighborhood with ten short stories.* [191 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Rhodes, Jewell Parker. Ghost Boys. 2018. *Black boys' lives—beginning before Emmett Till—matter in this mostly Chicago-set tale of 12-year-old Jerome Rogers, shot in the back by a police officer after playing with a toy gun. Jerome returns as a ghost able to communicate with his killer's 12-year-old daughter. Facts about Till's murder are exposed by his ghost and the Afterword. Pointedly pedantic and activist, the book "bears witness."* [208 pages]

PF: MS

Ribay, Randy. Patron Saints of Nothing. 2019. *Born in the Philippines, emigrated to the States with his American mother and Filipino father, high school senior Jay heads to the Phils to investigate the mysterious death of his cousin Jun. Family bonding and reconciliation with universal acceptance and understanding occur. Lots of local color with the effects of drug culture and anti-drug government policies.* [318 pages]

PF: HS

Riordan, Rick. 9 from the Nine Worlds. 2018. *Thor jogs through Norse mythology, connecting characters and setting from the Magnus Chase series.* [141 pages]

PF: MS

Rhiordan, Rick. The Trials of Apollo: Book Four: The Tyrant's Tomb. 2019. *Apollo—aka Lester—and Meg join the centurions at Camp Jupiter to battle evil emperors Caligula and Commodus as well as undead Roman tyrant Tarquin.* [423 pages]

PF: MS

Roehrig, Caleb. Death Prefers Blondes. 2019. *Wannabe snappy, but (really) boring at the sentence level caper tale of LA drag queen/cat burglars.* [438 pages]

PF: HS

Rowell, Rainbow. Wayward Son. 2019. *Continuing adventures with Baz, Penelope and Simon, students at Watford in England, who embark on a quest across America from Chicago to California to save classmate Agatha, held prisoner by vampires with no morals.* [354 pages]

PF: HS

Ryan, Pam Munoz. Mananaland. 2020. *Max longs for his mother, a hidden one escaping oppression who fell in love with Max's father, a guardian on an escape route reminiscent of the Underground Railroad. Believing she went to Mananaland, Max tries to go there while guiding a hidden one.* [251 pages]

PF: MS

**HBL19**Saeed, Aisha. Amal Unbound. 2018. *Headstrong 12-year-old Pakistani Amal offends the local despot, leading to her indentured servanthood as his mother's maid. He goes down; she goes home.* [226 pages]

PF: MS

**LITFEST19**Schmidt, Gary D. Pay Attention, Carter Jones. 2019. *Sixth-grade Carter's Army captain dad deserts the American family in favor of a German one. He is more than replaced by Carter's grandfather's legacy: a purple Bentley; and, a butler, who teaches Carter cricket and how to be a gentleman to his mother and three younger sisters.* [217 pages]

PF: MS

Schumacher, Julie. Dear Committee Members. 2014. *Not YAL, though it was recommended by a YAL author: Gary D. Schmidt. In a series of letters of recommendation an English Professor of Creative Writing reveals the culture of the academy and its members, including teachers, administrators, students and—extending off campus—potential employers.* [180 pages]

PF: College graduates

Sedgwick, Marcus, Julian Sedgwick, Alexis Deacon. Voyages in the Underworld of Orpheus Black. 2019. *"He ain't heavy—he's my brother" as Greek myth Orpheus underpins Art v. War during the Age of the Machine: WWII London as V2s rain down. At the price of his life, Harry (art student/conscientious objector/fireman/disowned second son of a father whose factory makes bombs: shades of Arthur Miller's All My Sons) finds and saves brother Ellis the (dogged) poet/soldier from the deep underground beneath a pub hit by a rocket who writes a book incorporating Harry's journal and sketches.* [319 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL19**Shusterman, Neal and Jarrod Shusterman. Dry. 2018. *Arizona and Nevada shut off water to California: survivalists rejoice; neighbors revert to pre-civilized behavior, Alyssa Morrow's parents go to get water but don't return so she bands with her younger brother, next-door-neighbor boy and a girl from the streets to escape until the chaos abates.* [390 pages]

PF: HS

Smith, Cynthia Leitich. *Hearts Unbroken*. 2018. *Quite the agenda. I am not sure how to write about it without offending someone, but here goes: gender uncertainty; cultural clashes; Texas v. Oklahoma v. Kansas (setting is Overland Park, KS); jocks v. journalists; to have sex for the first time or not; well-established girlfriend v. newfound boyfriend; big house Christian church ladies v. students of color; L. Frank Baum on-the-record v. beloved creator of The Wizard of Oz. Deus ex machina-ly a tornado comes along to clear things up.* [286 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Snaith, Simone. *Between the Water and the Woods*. 2019. *Magic and monsters both exist in the land, despite some powerful government officials desire to the contrary. A princessesque adolescent wields wonderful power over plants while enchanting a knight she meets on the way to the capitol with her father and brother, a neighboring farmer and a young stowaway to report a sighting and beg assistance. The king becomes a believer thanks to his brother's mischief.* [310 pages]

PF: MS

Springer, Nancy. *The Case of the Missing Marquess*. 2006. *Mycroft and Sherlock Holmes have a much younger sister: 14-year-old Enola. Abandoned by their aging mother, unwilling to submit to Mycroft's dictate of a tightly corseted boarding school, she solves a cipher, finds some funds and heads for London to open a "perditorian" agency dedicated to locating missing people. Along the way she finds a missing 12-year-old nobleboy.* [216 pages]

PF: MS

Sterling, Isabel. *These Witches Don't Burn*. 2019. *Interesting observation: copyright is held by Samantha Adams: pseudonym "Isabel Sterling"? Salem. Witches (Bloods. Casters. Elementals. Hunters.). Covens. Adolescent lesbians. "Regs" (Muggles). Break-ups. BFFs. Crushes. Intense kissing scenes. Tepid action scenes.* [320 pages]

PF: HS

Stevenson, Robert Louis. *In the South Seas*. 1971 (orig. 1900). *Semi-ethnographic account of the author's voyages to the Marquesas, the Paumotus and the Gilberts in search of good health during the reign of Victoria.* [343 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Stiefvater, Maggie. *Call Down the Hawk*. (Book One in the Dreamer Trilogy). 2019. *The Apocalypse is coming. Kill the Dreamers so it doesn't exist. Enlist Visionaries to find the Dreamers. Another great read from Stiefvater.* [469 pages]

PF: HS

Stilwell, Hallie Crawford. I'll Gather My Geese. 1991. *Despite her parents' misgivings, Texas gal switches career path from teaching to ranch-wife in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Big Bend country of West Texas. She raises a family while making a home and friends near Marathon. A wonderful memoir of an era when people were self-sufficient.* [153 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Stone, Nic. Dear Justyce. 2020. *Vernell LaQuan Banks Jr—Quan—is the son of an incarcerated drug dealer. His mother is in an abusive relationship. He turns to a gang for safety, security and community. He ends up in a juvenile detention facility after confessing to killing a police officer. While there he writes to his friend, a pre-law student at Yale.* [260 pages]

PF: MS

Swanson, Matthew and Robbi Behr. The Real McCoys: Two's a Crowd. 2018. *Husband-and-wife-artist-writer-team again wittily wend a tale of two siblings—Moxie and Milton McCoy—solve grade school mysteries while learning the values of family and friendship. My only question: how come Mrs. Bunyan and Mr. Shine have different last names?* [327 pages]

PF: ELEM

Strange, Lucy. Our Castle by the Sea. 2018, 2019. *Ponderous tale of early-WWII treachery by the British wannabe-upper-classes who blackmail an innocent lighthouse keeper whose crime is having a German-born wife. His daughters come to the post-mortem rescue, saving Britain from a German invasion.* [319 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Thomas, Angie. On the Come Up. 2019. *It is a pleasure to read a writer mature from here first book to her next book; I thought The Hate U Give was powerful for its story; this one is powerful for its writing. The saga of Garden Heights continues as 16-year-old Bri Jackson raps her way to notoriety. Like Starr of THUG, Bri goes to high school in a different neighborhood, a move that brings conflict to the forefront. Bri's story, though, has more depth, more substance than Starr's as the artist is determined to chase her dream on her terms.* [447 pages]

PF: HS

Townsend, Jessica. Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow. 2017. *Morrigan Crow is shunned by her family who believe she's cursed. They anticipate she'll die on her 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. Instead, she's rescued by Jupiter North who transports her to Nevermoor where she lives in a fantastic hotel and competes to join the Wunder Society.* [461 pages]

PF: MS

Townsend, Jessica. Wundersmith: The Calling of Morrigan Crow. 2018. *In this second book in the Morrigan Crow series, Morrigan goes to school with class 919 and learns to cope with being a Wundersmith. During the year she visits The Ghastly market and The Museum of Stolen Moments where horrors await. Loyalty is tested.* [521 pages]

PF: MS

Tucker, Laura. All the Greys on Greene Street. 2019. *Olympia lives in an industrial warehouse where her mother is an Artist-in-Residence. Her father restores art. He leaves mysteriously with a Frenchwoman. His business partner is in love with Olympia's mother. Olympia's mother takes to bed. Olympia's friends are too young to interfere. Olympia feels alone and abandoned. She draws to cope.* [307 pages]

PF: MS

Turnage, Sheila. Three times Lucky. 2012. *A newborn girl floats down a flooded river, rescued by an amnesia in Tupelo, NC: he names her Moses. Followed by his betrothed—who waits for his memory to return—they run a café where the townspeople congregate. Sixth-grader Mo and friend Dale form the Desperado Detective Agency and solve a bank robbery and murder mystery.* [312 pages]

PF: MS

Turnage, Sheila. The Ghosts of Tupelo Landing. 2014. *Miss Lana—café proprietress—buys the haunted Tupelo Inn with Grandmother Miss Lacy. Mo and Dale investigate, assisted by new boy in town Harm(on).* [352 pages]

PF: MS

Turnage, Sheila. The Odds of Getting Even. 2015. *Mo, Dale and Harm sleuth out a conspiracy of vengeance as the criminals put away in the first book plot revenge from behind bars.* [342 pages]

PF: MS

Vander Meer, Jeff. *A Peculiar Peril*. 2020. *First volume of a duology that sprawls from Earth to Aurora, an alt earth. Ignorant-of-his-gift Jonathan inherits a filled-with-eclectic objects from his grandfather, a member of the Order. With two earthlings and a rat, Jonathan opens the door on a quest to destroy the Golden Sphere. Alt versions of British, Czech and French geography, history and literature (as well as other monsters) are among the challenges.* [645 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL19**Vande Velde, Vivian. *23 Minutes*. 2016. *15-year-old Zoe can “playback” her life 23 minutes at a time, with certain conditions. And, in the case of a bank robbery gone deadly, she does so until she gets it right. Reads like a creative writing exercise as information is revealed via progressive playbacks.* [176 pages]

PF: MS

Vrabel, Beth. *Camp Dork*. 2016. *Lucy and the pack of dorks—having finished the fourth grade—head off to Camp Paleo, a rustic sleepaway summer camp complete with fossils, insects and mishaps. Here they begin to discover themselves, separate from the Pack.* [230 pages]

PF: ELEM

**HBL20**Wang, Jen. *The Prince and the Dressmaker*. 2018. *Prince Sebastian of Belgium is torn: he fears his parents will not like his alter ego: paradigm shifting Lady Crystallia, a Parisian nightlife lover who wears cutting edge trendsetting fashion designed by Frances, a simple seamstress. Acceptance and epiphanies abound as gender and class get bent by the prince and the dressmaker. Beautifully illustrated.* [277 pages] Graphic novel

PF: MS/HS

Ward, Geoffrey C. and Ken Burns. *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. 2014. *Intertwined personal, political and social biographies of three branches of the same family: Eleanor was Theodore's niece; Theodore and Franklin were cousins as were Eleanor and Franklin, who were also married. Lots of great photographs.* [477 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Warren, Andrea. *Enemy Child: The Story of Norman Mineta, a Boy Imprisoned in a Japanese American Internment Camp during World War II. A victim of Executive Order 9066, Norman Mineta is torn from his happy home in san Jose and relocated to Heart Mountain, near Cody, Wyoming. Given his family background, he perseveres and succeeds, eventually serving in Congress and on Cabinets. The author does her usual well-researched job of making the drama of history come to life through its actors. The subject agreed to assist because she writes for young readers.* [198 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL19**Watson, Renee. *Piecing Me Together.* 2017. *Underprivileged African-American collagist travels by bus from her sketchy Portland, OR, neighborhood to an overachieving high school where Woman to Woman—a mentoring program—helps her find her social voice and an audience for her art.* [261 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL20**Watson, Renee. *Some Place More than Others.* 2019. *Eleven-year-old Amara wants a trip to New York City for her twelfth birthday. She gets it, along with the opportunities to help her grandfather and her dad reconcile, to visit her cousins whose dad is in prison, to see her cultural history in Harlem, to dash back home to Oregon for her preemie sister, who likes her best, and to complete her Suitcase Project (details provided).* [192 pages]

PF: MS

Wees, Alyssa. *The Waking Forest.* 2019. *A wonderful riddle of a book, drawing from old magic, fairy tales, conflicts and characters including foxes, necromancers, nymphs, princesses, sphinxes and witches. Part 1 might be as frustrating as a walk in the dark woods without any light, but part 2 makes the journey well worth while.* [294 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Wells, Rebecca. *Little Altars Everywhere.* 1992? *Dysfunctional family life from points-of-view of four children, two parents and two caretakers flashing back from the 90s to the 60s in smalltown/country Louisiana. In addition to bad craziness and an addiction to alcohol, Mama has her Ya-Ya sisterhood, while Daddy has his farm and the kids have each other. Reminiscent of The Sound and the Fury.* [224 pages]

PF: HS

West, Jacqueline. *The Collectors*. 2018. *Auditorally-challenged Van—son of a single-mom-international-opera-diva—sees and hears things most of us don't. This leads to collectors who steal wishes and capture wish-eaters. Charming fantasy with realistic bits of adulthood: grown-ups fall in love, are manipulative and selfish. Contemporary New York City provides the gritty setting.* [372 pages]

PF: MS

Westerfield, Scott. *Shatter City*. 2019. *Frey masquerades as "twin sister" Rafia, heir to Shreve, ruled by their megalomaniacal dad. She escapes to Paz—a peaceful, humane city—where she discovers her sister left to become boss of a band of rebels. When her dad topples Paz with old-school earthquake-causing technology, she sets out for Iron Mountain with her betrothed. There, she hopes to restore Paz.* [406 pages]

PF: HS

Westerfield, Scott with Alex Puvilland. *Spill Zone: Broken Vow*. 2018. *Graphic Lit. Photographer Addie tries to single-parent younger sister Lexa whose best friend Vesperine is an escaped princess from another world interfaced by the Spill Zone. With the help of North Korean Jae, Addie tries to set things right. Art and radioactivity intersect to create some pretty trippy graphics.* [223 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL19** Westover, Tara. *Educated: A Memoir*. 2018. *Despite living off the grid, dominated by a lunatic father and a homicidal older brother, Tara goes to Cambridge where she's recognized as the genius that she is. The price she pays?: three brothers, her sister and her parents shun her.* [329 pages]

PF: HS

Wexler, Django. *Ship of Smoke and Steel. Book One: The Wells of Sorcery Trilogy*. 2019. *Shades of Katniss as Isoka earns the name Deepwalker and leads her princess girlfriend and fellow mages from deadly stern to Edenic bow of the Soliton, a ship with a will of its own fueled by death, populated by monsters.* [366 pages]

PF: HS

Wignall, Kevin. *When We Were Lost*. 2019. *One part Lord of the Flies, one part Breakfast Club, a group of high school students survive a plane crash in the Amazon. Now all they have to do is survive each other on the way to walking and rafting out.* [306 pages]

PF: HS

Will, George F. A Nice Little Place on the North Side: Wrigley Field at One Hundred. 2014. *Typical Will: an erudite rumination that should delight and enlighten any baseball fan, chock full of anecdotes, analyses, arguments, corrections (here's what really happened when. . .), heartbreak and statistics gracefully interwoven into a chapterless exposition.* [194 pages]

PF: MS/HS

Wodehouse, P. G. The Code of the Woosters. 1938. *Dry escapade with Jeeves again rescuing Bertie. A silver creamer, a black-shirted British Nazi, a pompous magistrate and two couples in love populate this piece set between WWI and WWII.* [222 pages]

PF: HS

**HBL20**Woodson, Jacqueline. Harbor Me. 2018. *Written in a monologic, pedantic prose style to display various social problems bedeviling a group of middle-schoolers who meet in an abandoned art classroom redubbed the ARTT room for A Room to Talk. Because I like Woodson's picture books best and because this is set in both an art and an ARTT room I felt that the book would be immensely better with graphics, with illustrations, with artwork to break the prose, which can become tedious.* [192 pages]

PF: MS

Yang, Gene Luen. Dragon Hoops. 2020. *Esteemed graphic artist/writer's farewell song to high school after nearly two decades of teaching. Structured around basketball tournaments, persistence and writer's block.* [436 pages]

PF: MS/HS

**HBL20**Yoon, David. Frankly in Love. 2019. *Frank Li explores his Korean-ness as he falls in love twice: once with a white (whatever white means) girl and once with a Korean (whatever Korean means)-American girl. Shades of Joy Luck Club with Gatherings of families as well as contemporary adolescent nerdiness with AP friends and Crazy Rich Asians with a made-for-movies wedding set aboard a retro steam ship.* [406 pages]

PF: HS

Zoboi, Ibi. Pride (A *Pride and Prejudice* Remix). 2018. *The stuck-up Darcys move to Bushwick (Brooklyn), into a mini-mansion across the street from the keep-it-real Benitezes. Second oldest of five daughters Zuri looks askance at privileged Darius. Comedies of cultural mores ensue (block v cocktail party; Catholic v Santarian funeral; Cornell v Syracuse v Howard University), providing great scenes while poetry appears seemingly everywhere. By the way, this is a romance, so expect a happy ending, providing respite from all those dysfunctional dystopian series of novels.* [289 pages]

PF: HS

12/30/20:

TOTAL AUTHORS/EDITORS/ILLUSTRATORS: 220

TOTAL PAGES: 80, 230

TOTAL TITLES: 243

**THE HEARTLAND COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE LIFELONG READING  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2019**

1. *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevado
2. *Speak: The Graphic Novel* by Laurie Halse Anderson & Emily Carroll
3. *The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle* by Leslie Connor
4. *Defy the Stars* by Claudia Gray
5. *Game Changer* by Tommy Greenwald
6. *The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson
7. *Dreamland Burning* by Jennifer Latham
8. *Darius the Great is not Okay* by Adib Khorram
9. *The 57 Bus* by Dashka Slater
10. *Dry* by Neal Shusterman & Jarrod Shusterman

**THE HEARTLAND COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE LIFELONG READING  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2020**

1. *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevado
2. *Me, Frida and the Secret of the Peacock Ring* by Angela Cervantes
3. *Scary Stories for Young Foxes* by Christian McKay Heidicker
4. *Monday's Not Coming* by Tiffany D. Jackson
5. *Games of Deception: The True Story of the First U. S. Olympic Basketball Team at the 1936 Olympics in Hitler's Germany* by Andrew Maraniss
6. *From the Desk of Zoe Washington* by Janae Marks
7. *Where the World Ends* by Geraldine McCaughrean
8. *Heroine* by Mindy McGinnis
9. *Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team* by Steve Sheinkin
10. *Frankly in Love* by David Yoon