

# Ultimate Teen Booklist

An annually updated list of classics, landmark YA titles, and new favorites.

2018

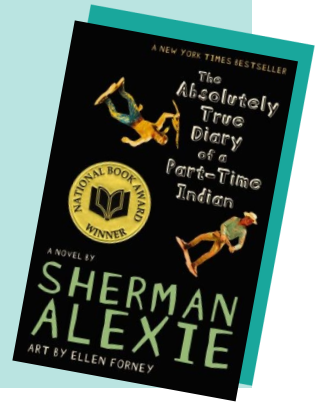
Our intention with this list is to provide a guide to some of the best and most enduring literature written for teens, as well as highlight adult and classic titles with special teen appeal. Plus we couldn't resist sneaking in a few of our own personal favorites just for fun! This is by no means a complete list and will be updated on an annual basis. In fact, we encourage you to share with us favorite titles you feel would improve the list (see back page).

While the materials on this list have been selected for ages 12–18, the books span a broad range of reading and maturity levels. We have tried to give a general indication of the appropriateness of each title for different age levels, but these are entirely subjective labels and may vary from individual to individual.

—Tracy Weikel, Committee Organizer  
October 2018

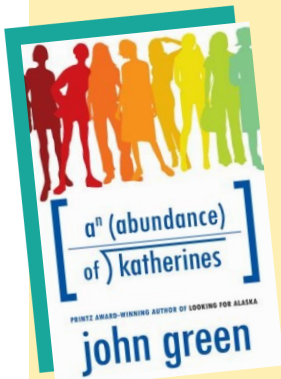
## ***The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (2007)**

Arnold “Junior” Spirit is used to being picked on. His hydrocephaly and cheap coke-bottle glasses make him an easy target, but at least he has his best friend Rowdy, a short-tempered rabble-rouser who is always on Arnold’s side. Sick of the hopelessness that permeates life on the rez, Arnold transfers from the reservation school to the white high school in Reardon. His choice makes him an outcast on the rez—even Rowdy deserts him—and the kids at the new school view him as a definite oddity. But as he learns to navigate the new school and copes with family tragedies, Arnold begins to get a larger picture of who he is and who he wants to be. *High School.*



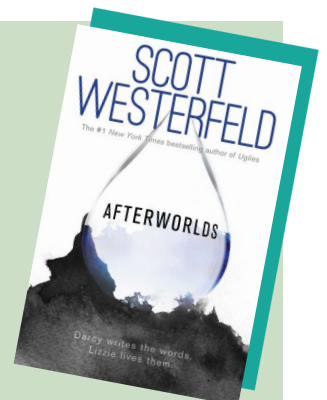
## ***An Abundance of Katherines* by John Green (2006)**

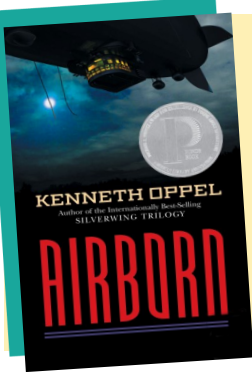
Recent high school grad and child prodigy Colin Singleton is devastated when his girlfriend Katherine dumps him. Of course this should be old hat by now, as this is Colin’s 19th dumping—all of them by girls named Katherine. Depressed over the love of his life’s rejection and the fact that his status as a child prodigy is over, Colin and his best friend Hassan—a wise-cracking, Judge Judy fanatic who lives with his parents and refuses to consider college or getting a job—head south on a road trip. This is a delightfully inventive and frequently hilarious adventure where the destination turns out to be the least of the journey. And, as a bonus, it has one of the funniest fight scenes ever. *High School.*



## ***Afterworlds* by Scott Westerfeld (2014)**

This unique novel of two stories told in alternating chapters will especially appeal to perceptive readers interested in the myriad ways authors’ lives influence their work. In the “real” world, eighteen-year-old Darcy Patel is struggling to build a life as a writer in New York City and falling in love for the first time. Meanwhile, Lizzie—the fictional protagonist of Darcy’s novel—has survived a terrorist attack by posing as a ghost and slipping into a nebulous Afterworld. Realistic fiction meets fantasy meets romance meets thriller in this surprisingly cohesive tale as Darcy navigates the ins and outs of the publishing world and Lizzie comes into new powers and connects with a hunky spirit guide in the Afterworld. *High School.*



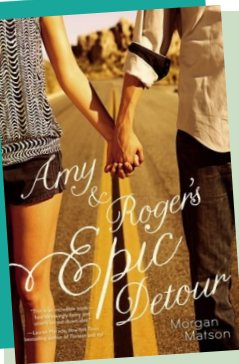


### ***Airborn* by Kenneth Oppel (2004)**

In this high-octane steampunk adventure, a young cabin boy aboard an airship and a wealthy young girl traveling with her chaperone team up to prove the existence of mysterious winged creatures that reportedly live hundreds of feet above the Earth's surface. Featuring daring rescues, brave acrobatics, and even pirates, the plot of this novel centers on adventure over romance—though there is a little of that too! *Middle School/High School.*

### ***All the Truth That's in Me* by Julie Berry (2013)**

In an unidentified world that evokes the New England Puritan settlements of the 17th century, 18-year-old Judith is an object of fear and suspicion in her community, an outcast even in her own family. She disappeared without a trace at the age of 14 only to mysteriously reappear two years later with part of her tongue removed. Now her community is under attack, and Judith must find the courage to face the past and make her silenced voice heard in a desperate bid to save them all. Poetic and gorgeously written, this is a stunning, romantic mystery told entirely through Judith's imagined conversations with the boy she has loved since childhood. *High School.*



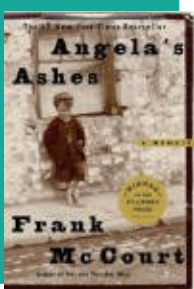
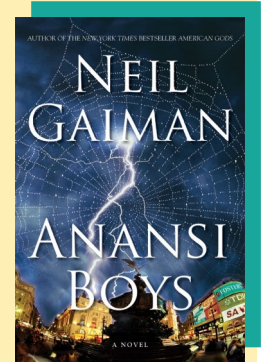
### ***Amy and Roger's Epic Detour* by Morgan Matson (2010)**

Seventeen-year-old Amy Curry is still reeling from her father's death when she sets out on a cross-country road trip in the company of Roger, a 19-year-old college student and total stranger. Along the way, they make several unscheduled stops to take in the local color and pursue separate missions. This is a compulsively readable novel, punctuated with awesome playlists, whimsical drawings, and other mementos to document their journey and add flavor to the story itself. Amy and Roger are likeable, well-drawn characters, and their conversations are fresh and believable. This is a wonderful, heartwarming book filled with adventure, drama, romance, and laugh-out-loud humor. *High School.*

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### ***Anansi Boys* by Neil Gaiman (2005)**

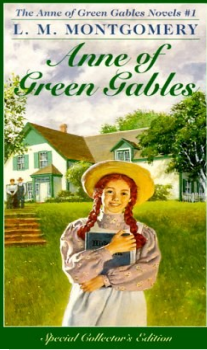
This inventive, darkly humorous fantasy centers on Fat Charlie Nancy, a young twenty-something who is haunted by his father's annoying taunts and embarrassing death. But following Mr. Nancy's death, Charlie learns that his father was really the African trickster god in human form and that he has a brother—Spider—with otherworldly powers. Before he knows it, Charlie finds himself surrounded by the chaos his brother creates and immersed in a surreal, mythological journey. *High School.*



### ***Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt (1996)**

This engaging memoir tells the story of Frank McCourt and his family, who left Depression-era America to "go home" to Ireland after a family tragedy. It is a powerful, gritty depiction of poverty and the glimpses of hope and humor that can be found in even in the most miserable childhoods. *High School.*





### **Anne of Green Gables (series)** by L.M. Montgomery (1908–1921)

When Anne Shirley, an irrepressibly imaginative red-haired orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm, she proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her. This is a beloved, heartwarming, often hilarious tale and the first of a series that follows Anne from the age of eleven through adulthood. *Middle School/High School.*

#### **Titles include:**

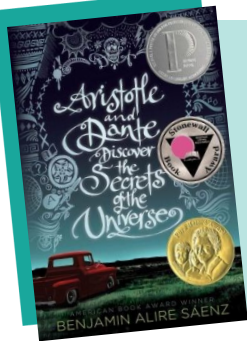
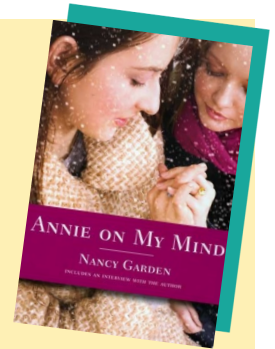
1. **Anne of Green Gables**
2. **Anne of Avonlea**
3. **Anne of the Island**
4. **Anne of Windy Poplars**
5. **Anne's House of Dreams**
6. **Anne of Ingleside**
7. **Rainbow Valley**
8. **Rilla of Ingleside**

### **Annie on My Mind by Nancy Garden (1982)**

From the moment Liza Winthrop meets Annie Kenyon at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, she knows there is something special between them. But when their relationship is discovered, Liza begins to doubt her feelings. *High School.*

#### **Quoted:**

"No single work has done more for young adult LGBT fiction than this classic about two teenage girls who fall in love." —*School Library Journal*



### **Aristotle and Dante and the Secrets of the Universe** by Benjamin Alire Sáenz (2012)

In the summer of 1987, two 15-year-old loners meet and forge a powerful friendship. This stunning novel about identity and acceptance deals with several teen “issues,” including sexual and ethnic identity, but never comes across as heavy handed. With simple, lyrical prose, Sáenz creates a magical tale that speaks of universal truths and fears. *High School.*



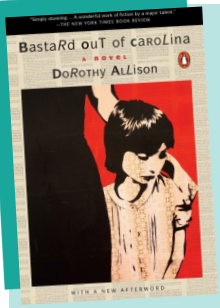
### **Ashfall by Mike Mullin (2011)**

Fifteen-year-old Alex is home alone for the weekend when a super volcano explodes and everything goes haywire. To find his family, he must trek over 100 miles through a dangerous landscape of ash and snow, trying to survive both nature and a new world in which all the old rules of civilization have vanished. This is an epic survival story with plenty of violence and peril. Touches of romance and humor are mixed in to relieve the darkness. The characters are superbly drawn—especially the brash, MacGyver-esque Darla—and the writing is solid. The unfathomable situations Alex encounters feel real and immediate, and the suspense never lets up in this gripping apocalyptic thriller. *High School.*

### **NEW! Attack on Titan** (manga series) by Hajime Isayama (2009–Ongoing)

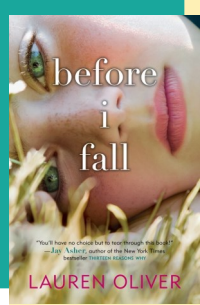
Set in a world where giant monsters called Titans have pushed humans to the brink of extinction, Attack on Titan is a dark, post-apocalyptic thrill ride packed with an intense combination of drama, mystery, and horror. The story centers on Eren, a young man who has vowed revenge on all Titans. If you're a Walking Dead fan but haven't yet given manga a try, Attack on Titan will be the perfect gateway series! *High School (mature).*





### **Bastard Out of Carolina by Dorothy Allison (1992)**

This is an emotionally difficult yet riveting novel about growing up poor and white in the South. The book centers on Ruth Anne “Bone” Boatwright, an illegitimate child in a family of social outcasts who grows up with her young waitress mother, younger sister, and large extended family. It is a tumultuous childhood, especially after her mother marries “Daddy Glenn,” a jealous and unpredictable man whose behavior escalates into sexual abuse. *High School (mature)*.



### **Before I Fall by Lauren Oliver (2010)**

Beautiful and ruthless, Samantha Kingston is the queen bee of her high school. She and her friends party hard and do as they like, regardless of the consequences to others. But one fateful night a car crash on the way home from a party brings an end to everything as Sam knows it. Now Sam is forced to live the same day over and over until she finally gets it right. This is a raw, emotional, often beautiful book as Sam reexamines her life and relationships. *High School*.

### **Beloved by Toni Morrison (1987)**

Sethe, an escaped slave living in a “spiteful” house with her 10-year-old daughter Denver, is haunted by a terrible choice in her past and her neighbors’ disapproval. After reconnecting with a friend from her days of slavery, Sethe’s life is once again turned upside down by a mysterious woman named Beloved, who quickly becomes a dominant force in Sethe and Denver’s home. Set primarily in post-Civil War Ohio, this story is not narrated chronologically; instead it is peppered with flashbacks, memories, and nightmares. *High School (mature)*.



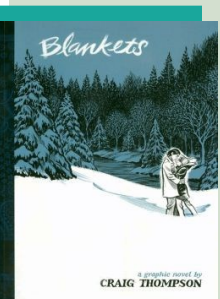
### **Big Fish by Daniel Wallace (1998)**

When his attempts to get to know his dying father fail, William Bloom tries to reconcile his memories of his dad with the tall tales and heroic feats Edward Bloom would use to describe his life. As he revisits his father’s mythic tales, William discovers that his father’s exaggerations might—just might—have some basis in reality. *High School*.



### **Black Butler (manga series) by Yana Toboso (2006–Ongoing)**

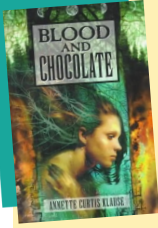
In Victorian-era London, an orphaned young earl named Ciel and his faithful servant bid their time until they can track down the mysterious organization responsible for his parents’ murders and Ciel’s subsequent kidnapping and torture. To outsiders, Earl Phantomhive’s loyal servant seems extremely capable but otherwise unremarkable. In truth, Sebastian is actually a demon contracted to help the young earl avenge his parents’ deaths. To date, there are 20 volumes in the series. *High School (mature)*.



### **Blankets (graphic novel) by Craig Thompson (2003)**

This graphic memoir is a poignant tale of sibling rivalry, first love, artistic inspiration, and personal faith. Thompson’s relationships are skillfully depicted in all their nuances, and he is brutally honest about his struggles with his fundamentalist upbringing and the complexities of young love and sexuality. *Blankets* is a compulsively readable story, and the pen and ink drawings are sensitive and dynamic, perfectly capturing the characters’ moods and the snowy Midwest setting. *High School (mature)*.



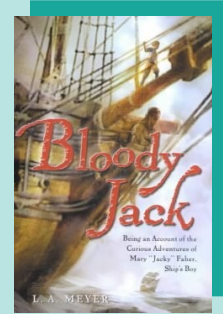


### ***Blood and Chocolate* by Annette Curtis Klause (1997)**

A beautiful teenage werewolf falls for a human boy and must cope with the expectations of her pack and the danger that her secrets will be discovered. This is a clever, sometimes bloody thriller that is far from the typical paranormal romance. If you've seen the film adaptation and think you know what to expect, you're probably wrong. *High School (mature)*.

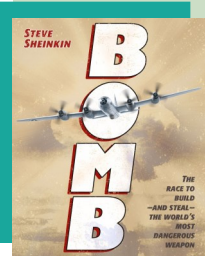
### ***Bloody Jack Adventures* (series) by L.A. Meyer (2002–2014)**

Streetwise orphan Mary Faber is thirteen (or thereabout) when she disguises herself in boys' clothes and renames herself "Jack" to trick her way onto a pirate-hunting warship of Her Majesty's Royal Navy. What follows is an adventure story to remember, as Jacky spends two years keeping her secret (mostly) and plunging headfirst into endless misadventures. There are pirates, shipwrecks, exotic settings, and even a bit of romance. This is a wonderful read, with excellent use of description and dialog—and Jacky is a clever and enterprising character that guys and girls will adore equally. (Description for *Bloody Jack*, book one of the series.) *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



#### **Titles include:**

- |  |                                       |   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. <b>Bloody Jack</b>                    | 5. <b>Mississippi Jack</b>            | 9. <b>The Mark of the Golden Dragon</b> |
| 2. <b>Curse of the Blue Tattoo</b>       | 6. <b>My Bonny Light Horseman</b>     | 10. <b>Viva Jacqueline!</b>             |
| 3. <b>Under the Jolly Roger</b>          | 7. <b>Rapture of the Deep</b>         | 11. <b>Boston Jacky</b>                 |
| 4. <b>In the Belly of the Bloodhound</b> | 8. <b>The Wake of the Lorelei Lee</b> | 12. <b>Wild Rover No More</b>           |



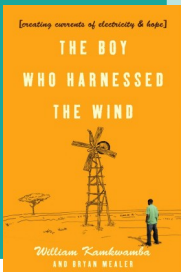
### ***Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World's Most Dangerous Weapon* by Steve Sheinkin (2012)**

History and science converge in this engrossing tale of the real-life espionage and secret military operations taking place as scientists secretly worked to spilt the atom and create the first atomic bomb. *Middle School/High School*.



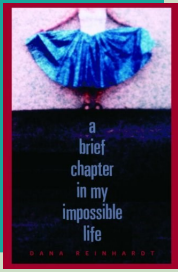
### ***The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak (2006)**

Trying to make sense of the horrors of World War II, Death narrates the story of Liesel, a young German girl who is eking out a meager existence for herself by thievery when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares stories to help sustain her neighbors during bombing raids. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



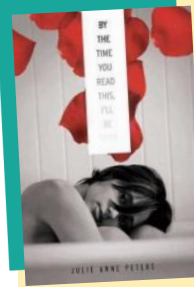
### ***The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba (2009)**

This is the highly readable story of a young Malawian teenager who, unable to afford the tuition to attend school, taught himself the principles of physics and electricity from books borrowed from the local elementary school—and then used that knowledge to build a windmill that provided his family with light, heat, and running water. Yet this book is about much more than building a windmill. It contains elements of magic as Kamkwamba relates the folklore and superstitions of his culture, and it touches on many of the troubles in modern Africa without becoming overwhelming or preachy. It's about inspiring a community and making a difference. Kamkwamba's story is one of ingenuity, perseverance, and hope, and the easy, conversational style of this book makes the life in a poor African farm family seem both relatable and fascinating. A young reader edition is also available, but most teens should be comfortable with the original version. *Middle School/High School*.



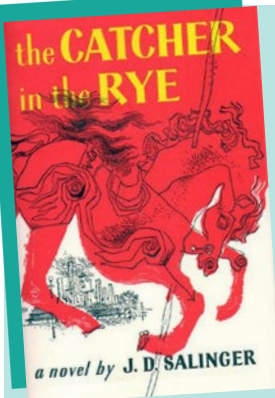
**A Brief Chapter in My Impossible Life** by Dana Reinhardt (2006)

Sixteen-year-old Simone has always been perfectly happy with her adoptive family and never really wondered about her birth parents. But when she is asked to meet her birth mother, a Hasidic Jew who is dying of cancer, Simone’s once simple life is suddenly full of complex questions about life, love, family, and her belief in a God she never thought existed. *High School.*



**By the Time You Read This, I'll Be Dead** by Julie Ann Peters (2010)

Daelyn Rice is broken, and after several suicide attempts, she’s determined to get her death right this time. So she visits a website for “completers” and blogs about her life, revealing a history of bullying that traces all the way back to kindergarten. Meanwhile, an unusual boy tries to draw out the “freak who doesn’t talk.” *High School (mature).*

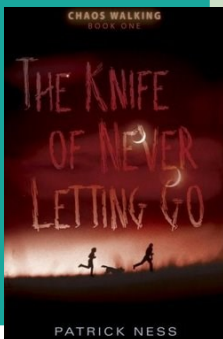


**The Catcher in the Rye** by J.D. Salinger (1951)

In this classic tale of teenage angst and rebellion, sixteen-year-old Holden Caulfield leaves behind the hypocrisies of his boarding school and goes on a “four-day odyssey” in New York City. *High School.*

**First Line:**

“If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you’ll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don’t feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.”

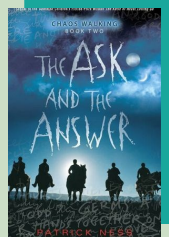


**Chaos Walking Trilogy (series)** by Patrick Ness (2008–2010)

Imagine if your every thought was broadcast like a radio signal—and you could hear the thoughts of everyone around you, even animals. On the planet of New World, settlers are besieged by this endless “Noise,” a result of biological warfare between the planet’s resident aliens and the first human colonizers. Or, at least that’s what Todd Hewitt, the last boy in a town of men, has been told. Supposedly the Noise germ killed all the women on the planet—including Todd’s mother—but just as he is preparing himself for his initiation into manhood, Todd stumbles upon a dangerous secret that sends him on the run and makes him question everything he’s ever believed. *High School.*

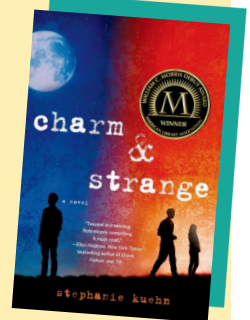
**Titles include:**

1. **The Knife of Never Letting Go**
2. **The Ask and the Answer**
3. **Monsters of Men**

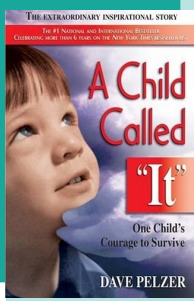


**Charm & Strange** by Stephanie Kuehn (2013)

Strange, beautiful, and unsettling, this story is told from two directions. In the present, Win is a weird, bitter loner at a Vermont boarding school who believes there is a wolf inside him struggling to break free. When a dead body is found in the woods behind the school, he believes he is responsible. In the past, Win is ten years old and goes by a different name—Drew. Drew looks up to his older brother and loves his little sister, but it’s clear there is something wrong in Drew’s world. Slowly, the two separate narratives merge; along the way, the reader becomes completely immersed in piecing together the mystery of Win and his past. *High School.*





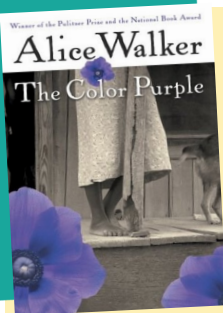
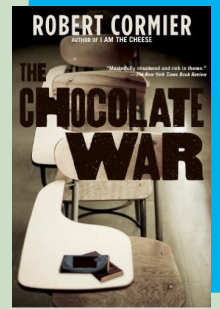


**A Child Called "It"**  
by David Pelzer  
(1995)

This ever-popular favorite tells the story of a child's abuse at the hands of his emotionally unstable, alcoholic mother. *High School.*

**The Chocolate War**  
by Robert Cormier (1974)

It's easy to talk about what you believe, but actually taking a stand can be absolutely terrifying. That's what Jerry Renault learns when he refuses to participate in his school's annual candy drive and incurs the wrath of senior Archie Costello, his gang of followers, and even the school administration. *High School.*



**The Color Purple** by Alice Walker (1982)

This epistolary novel relates the story of a poverty-stricken African American woman in the South during the first half of the twentieth century. Celie became the child bride of a violent and angry widower, but manages to sustain herself through letters to God and to her sister in Africa. Eventually, Celie's difficult marriage reveals itself to be a blessing of sorts when she discovers love, hope, and courage through an unlikely friendship with her husband's mistress. *High School (mature).*

**Complete Maus** by Art Spiegelman (1997)

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this visually and emotionally rich tale of the Holocaust reimagines the author's parents' deportation to Auschwitz and their post-war experiences in America in a world where the Nazis are represented as cats and Jews are symbolically portrayed as mice. Includes *My Father Bleeds History* (1986) and *And Here My Troubles Begin* (1991). *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



E.A. Poe

**The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe** by Edgar Allan Poe (1902, 2009)

This anthology contains all of Poe's (1809–1849) poems and tales as well as his only complete novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, a horror/adventure story about a stowaway on a whaling ship who must endure mutiny, starvation, cannibals, and the ocean's horrors on his way to the South Pole. Key stories and poems include "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "The Raven." Most titles are suitable for middle school, though the novel and a few other titles may be best for more mature readers. *Middle School/High School.*



**NEW! A Court of Thorns and Roses (series) by Sarah J. Maas** (2015–Ongoing)

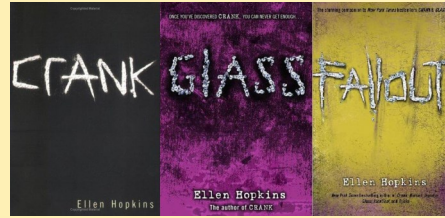
In this enchanting fantasy series reminiscent of *Beauty and the Beast*, a young human girl is given a terrible choice after killing a wolf to feed her starving family: die or go to the land of the Fae to face retribution for her offense. And so Feyre is thrust into the world of Fae, where new challenges lurk around every corner. Featuring wonderfully developed characters and a fascinating world full of steamy romance and hidden danger, this is one of those rare series that gets better with every book. *High School (mature).*

**Titles include:**

1. **A Court of Thorns and Roses**
2. **A Court of Mist and Fury**
3. **A Court of Wings and Ruin**
4. **A Court of Frost and Starlight**

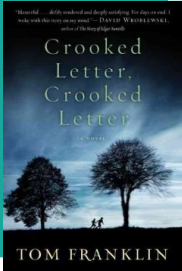
## Crank (series) by Ellen Hopkins (2004–2010)

Kristina Snow is the perfect daughter—until she meets Adam, who introduces her to “the monster.” As she becomes increasingly addicted to crystal meth, Kristina becomes a very different person, struggling to control her life and her mind as she grows up and has children of her own. Novels in verse. *High School (mature)*.



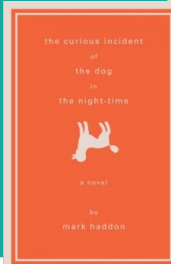
### Titles include:

1. Crank
2. Glass
3. Fallout



## Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter by Tom Franklin (2010)

In 1970s rural Mississippi, two boys—one black, the other white—build an unlikely friendship despite parental discouragement. Decades later, they are thrown together again. One is town constable; the other is the town pariah and lead suspect in the disappearance of a teenage girl. A perfect blending of place, character, and voice give this quiet literary thriller the feel of a classic. *High School*.

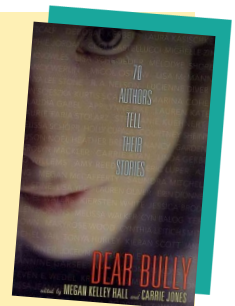


## The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon (2003)

This is the simple yet extraordinary story of a 15-year-old autistic boy who investigates the death of a neighbor's dog only to uncover shocking secrets about his own family. It is heartbreaking, funny, and remarkably written to convey the workings of an autistic mind. The novel was originally published for adults, but another version (edited for profanity) was later published for younger readers. *High School*.

## Dear Bully edited by Megan Kelly Hall and Carrie Jones (2011)

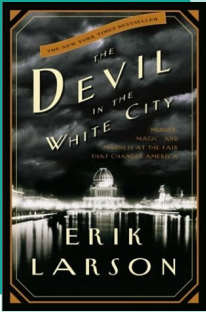
With raw honesty and frequently riveting prose, seventy authors confess their own youthful experiences with bullying. The confessions are made up of a series of letters, poems, essays, and comics that are powerful on their own, but combined they are striking both in their similarity and in their variation. Some of the authors faced devastating persecution while others simply experienced mild teasing. Some were bullies themselves, and others were mere bystanders, now haunted by their failure to intervene. All were affected by the choices they made and now make an attempt to come to terms with their pasts. Contributors include Ellen Hopkins, Sophie Jordan, Lauren Kate, A.S. King, Megan McCafferty, Lisa McMann, Lauren Oliver, Carrie Ryan, John Scieszka, R.L. Stine, Laurie Stolarz, Mo Willems, and many others. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



## **NEW!** Death Note (manga series) by Tsugumi Ōba (2003–2006)

This much-loved manga series follows a brilliant high school student named Light Yagami who discovers a mystical notebook that once belonged to a Shinigami death god. When he realizes that anyone whose name is written in the book will die, Light decides to use the notebook for his own purposes. But will his mission to cleanse the world of evil take him down a dark path he can't see coming? Brimming with suspense, horror, and touches of comedy, this series offers multidimensional characters and an intriguing storyline that is both intricate and easy to follow. With a manageable 12 volumes, Death Note makes a great introduction to the world of manga series, especially for readers who find themselves intrigued by moral gray areas and psychological thrillers. *High School (mature)*.





### ***The Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson (2011)**

This gripping true crime story recounts the events of the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, when the best and worst of the Gilded Age was put on display. One man, Daniel H. Burnham, was the architect and coordinator of the awe-inspiring event. But history was also shaped by a psychopathic serial killer who used the event to pursue his own determinedly dark deeds, in the tradition of Jack the Ripper's terrorization of 1888

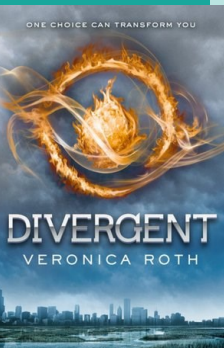
### ***Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank (trans. by Susan Massotty) (1947, 1995)**

This is the definitive translation of the beloved and deeply admired testament in which Anne Frank recounts the two years she spent hiding in an Amsterdam warehouse with her Jewish family during the Nazi occupation. *Middle School/High School.*



### ***NEW! The Devil Is a Part-Timer!* (manga series) by Satoshi Wagahara (2011–Ongoing)**

If you're looking for a fun intersection of fantasy, reality, action, and comedy in your manga, this may be the series for you! The story begins when the Demon Lord Sadao Maou—aka Satan—is rebuffed by a hero named Emilia after he attempts to conquer the world of Ente Isla. Forced to retreat, Satan and one of his generals land in modern-day Tokyo, where Satan takes human form and begins working at a fast-food chain called MgRonald to support himself. Emilia—who is intent on his destruction—also loses most of her magic and must find a way to survive in this new, human world. As the story develops, so do the characters' personalities and moral values, creating a fascinating combination of supernatural elements and real-world issues. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



### ***Divergent Trilogy* by Veronica Roth (2011–2013)**

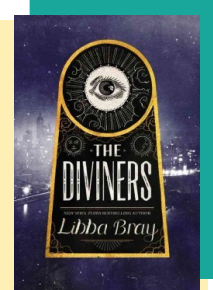
Smart, gutsy characters and a sweet romance add depth to this action-packed series set in a not-too-distant future Chicago where people are divided into five factions. Now that she is sixteen, it is finally time for Beatrice Prior to choose her permanent faction. But her choice won't be easy. When she takes her aptitude tests, Beatrice learns that she is a Divergent, someone who does not fit easily into any of the predetermined classifications and whose very existence threatens her society. In order to survive, she must keep her secret and excel in the tests administered by her new faction, from weaponry and hand-to-hand combat to capture the flag and virtual reality simulations. And then the battle becomes real. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

#### **Titles include:**

- 1. Divergent**
- 2. Insurgent**
- 3. Allegiant**

### ***The Diviners* by Libba Bray (2012)**

Featuring disparate teen protagonists with nothing in common other than a secret special ability, a ghostly serial killer, and the vivid setting of Prohibition-era New York, this is an exciting historical fantasy with a horror spin. Best of all, while the story comes to a satisfactory resolution, there are overarching mysteries that promise good things to come in the rest of the planned quartet. *High School.*



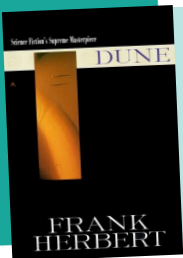


### **Dracula** by Bram Stoker (1897)

Having discovered the double identity of the wealthy Transylvanian nobleman Count Dracula, a small group of people vow to rid the world of the evil vampire. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

### **The DUFF** by Kody Keplinger (2010)

Bianca loathes Wesley Rush and his playboy ways. But while coping with the return of the boy who broke her heart and her parents' crumbling marriage, Bianca is desperate for a distraction... So she kisses Wesley. It's stupid and she hates herself, but they start hooking up secretly. The plan is to keep everything on a strictly physical level, but then the impossible happens: she actually starts to like Wesley and is horrified to discover that she could actually be falling for the guy she hated more than anyone. This edgy novel is nothing like the watered-down movie adaptation, so if you expect an ugly-duckling makeover story, think again. *The DUFF* is a contemporary, sexy, and sharply funny novel that examines teen self-esteem and the social labeling of others while offering a modern love story and compelling family drama. *High School (mature).*

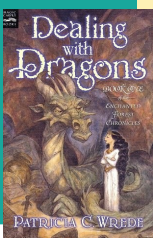
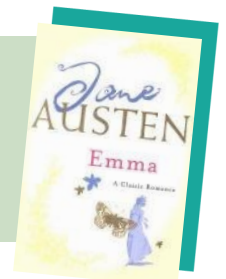


### **Dune** by Frank Herbert (1965)

Set on the desert planet of Arrakis, *Dune* is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who grows up to become a mysterious man known as Maud'dib. Blending elements of adventure and mysticism with environmentalism and politics, this sci-fi classic traces Paul's journey to avenge his noble family and create hope in a deteriorating universe. *High School.*

### **Emma** by Jane Austen (1815)

This classic comedy of manners centers on Emma Woodhouse, a flawed and self-deluding matchmaker with the best of intentions but little understanding of the people around her. *High School.*

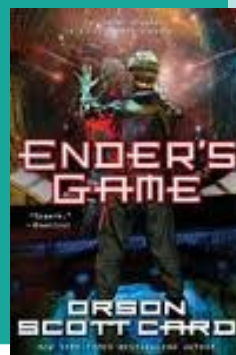


### **Enchanted Forest Chronicles** (series) by Patricia C. Wrede (1985–1993)

The series begins with Princess Cimorene, who bravely aids dragons in their battle against the wizards trying to overtake their kingdom. *Middle School/High School.*

#### **Titles include:**

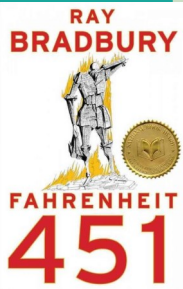
1. **Dealing With Dragons**
2. **Searching for Dragons**
3. **Calling on Dragons**



### **Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card (1985)

A child soldier and now a veteran of simulated war games, Ender believes he is engaged in a computer war game. In truth, he is commanding the last fleet against an alien race seeking the destruction of Earth. *Middle School/High School.*

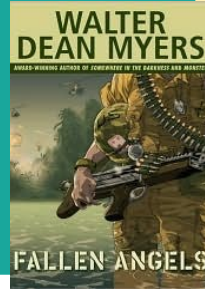




**Fahrenheit 451**  
by Ray Bradbury (1953)

In this dystopian classic set in a toleration society, a “fireman” who burns books for a living begins to question his beliefs and dares to defy the rule that all books must be destroyed.

*Middle School (mature)/High School.*



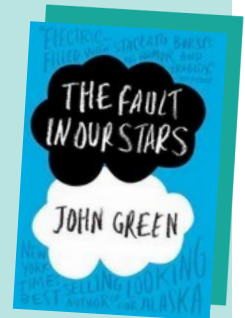
**Fallen Angels**  
by Walter Dean Myers (1988)

Seventeen-year-old Richie Perry is fresh out of a Harlem high school and doesn't have the money for college, so he enlists in the Army. Completely unprepared for the horrors he must face, Richie spends a devastating year on

active duty in Vietnam. *High School (mature).*

**The Fault in Our Stars by John Green (2012)**

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few extra years, Hazel's cancer is still terminal. But when she meets the wildly clever and charismatic Augustus Waters at her Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel discovers a new zest for life. This is a wonderfully written book about love and loss and learning to live while coping with the reality of death, about wondering how you will be remembered after you're gone and what will become of those you love. *The Fault in Our Stars* is not an easy read. It is intellectually and emotionally challenging—but worth the effort. By turns brilliant, hilarious, and heartbreaking, this is a book that is not easily forgotten. *High School.*

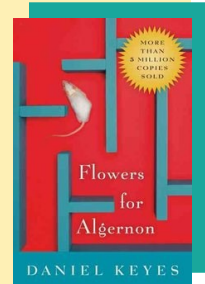


**The First Part Last by Angela Johnson (2003)**

With short, spare sentences that say everything, Johnson tells the story of a sixteen-year-old single dad. The fear, the exhaustion, and the overwhelming love for his newborn baby daughter all come through perfectly as Bobby comes to grips with what parenthood means for his life and struggles to make the best decisions he possibly can for his daughter. Short, poetic chapters alternate between “now” and “then,” creating a suspenseful mood that will translate well for reluctant readers. *High School.*

**Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes (1966)**

Charlie Gordon, a young man with limited mental capabilities, and a laboratory mouse named Algernon become the joint objects of a scientific experiment to see if Charlie can become “normal.” Based on the 1959 short story of the same name. *High School (mature).*

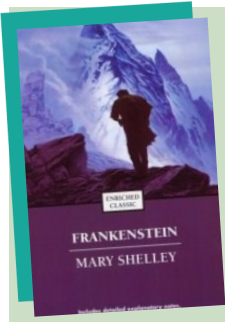


**Forever by Judy Blume (1975)**

Katherine and Michael, along with various friends and acquaintances in suburban New Jersey, discover the possibilities and limitations of love, sex, and personal commitment. They also invent a few interesting names for body parts. *High School.*

**Quoted:**

“...I still get angry when older people assume that everyone in my generation screws around. They're probably the same ones who think all kids use dope. It's true that we are more open than our parents but that just means we accept sex and talk about it. It doesn't mean we are all jumping into bed together.” –from *Forever*



**Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818)**

This gothic horror classic is considered by many to be the first ever science fiction novel. It's the story of the arrogant and ego-centric Victor Frankenstein, who becomes obsessed with generating a new life from stolen body parts. However, upon seeing his new creation, Frankenstein rejects his "monster," leaving it to make its own way in the world with no direction. The results are disastrous for Frankenstein and those he holds dear. Mary Shelley was 19 when *Frankenstein* was first published. *High School*.

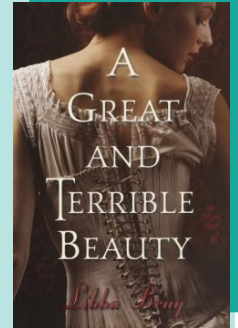


**Funny How Things Change by Melissa Wyatt (2009)**

This is a quiet, thoughtful novel set in the coal-mining country of West Virginia. The small town of Dwyer is dying, so when his girlfriend Lisa asks him to go with her to Pennsylvania when she leaves for college, Remy Walker agrees. After all, even his mother left to make a life somewhere else. Still, Remy is torn: he loves Lisa, but knows he will miss life in the mountains. This is a compelling and refreshing novel, with a relatable narrator and a strong sense of place. The characters and events feel authentic rather than contrived, and the writing is crisp and eloquent. *High School*.

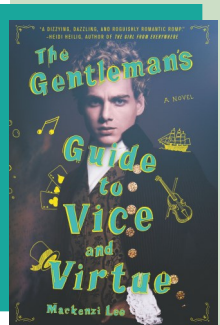
**Gemma Doyle Trilogy (series) by Libba Bray (2003–2007)**

In 1895, on Gemma's 16th birthday, she is struck with a terrifying vision of her mother's death at the hands of a mysterious dark creature. Minutes later, Gemma finds her mother dead in the middle of the Bombay marketplace. Gemma's visions continue after she is sent to Spence, an all-girls school outside London with a strong gothic atmosphere. There she discovers the existence of secret societies called the Order and the Rakshana—and learns that she holds the power to enter a magical place called the Realms. The series is fascinating as it explores three worlds—the mysteries of Spence, the Realms, and late 19th century London—yet somehow maintains a completely modern sensibility. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



**Titles include:**

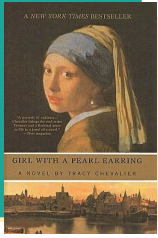
1. **A Great and Terrible Beauty**
2. **Rebel Angels**
3. **The Sweet Far Thing**



**NEW! The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue by Mackenzi Lee (2017)**

A delightful romp from page 1! Scandal prone and absolutely shameless in his fondness for boys, girls, and gin, Henry "Monty" Montague is an unforgettable character for any time period. And his fellow travelers—Monty's feminist sister Felicity and Percy, his childhood friend and secret crush—are nothing to sneeze at either. The book takes place in 18th-century Europe while the trio are on their Grand Tour across Europe, but plans are derailed when one of Monty's ill-advised liaisons lands the trio with a mysterious magical object. What follows is a madcap race to uncover the secrets behind the artifact while dodging killers, highwaymen, pirates, and possibly-mad scientists. This book is laugh-out-loud funny, but with plenty of heart and substance to back it up. Deliciously layered characters, nuanced relationships, and breakneck pacing make for a read like none other, and all of this is brought to vivid, hilarious life through Monty's witty, brash, shamelessly incorrigible voice. *High School*.





### ***The Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier (2000)**

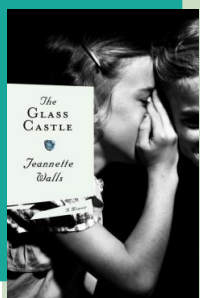
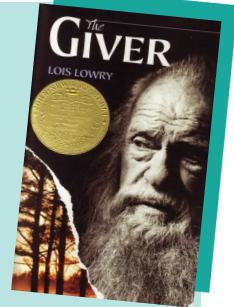
Have you ever wondered about the story behind a painting? In this radiant novel, Griet, a sixteen-year-old girl based on the unknown subject of one of Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer's most famous paintings, comes to life. *High School.*

### **Giver Quartet (series) by Lois Lowry (1993–2012)**

#### **Titles include:**

1. **The Giver**
2. **Gathering Blue**
3. **Messenger**
4. **Son**

This ageless favorite is a precursor to the current craze in dystopian fiction. It features a “perfect” world, where there is no such thing as fear or pain. There are no choices to agonize over; everything is decided for you. At the age of twelve, every person is assigned their role in the Community. When his turn comes, Jonas is chosen to receive special attention from the Giver, who holds in trust all the memories of the true pains and pleasures of life. And then Jonas learns a truth from which there is no turning back. In the other book of the series, readers get more background on Jonas's society, his fate, and related characters. *Middle School/High School.*



### ***The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls (2005)**

In this heartbreaking and inspiring memoir, the child of an alcoholic father and an eccentric artist mother discusses her family's nomadic upbringing. While their parents dodged authorities, the Walls children had to learn how to support themselves, even scrounging in school trashcans for food. *High School.*



### ***Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous (1971)**

Originally sold as the real diary of an actual teenager, this is the faux-memoir of a 15-year-old girl in the 1960s. Despite her stable, secure upbringing she tries LSD at a party and is subsequently drawn into a nightmarish world of addiction, hustlers, and dealers. *High School.*



### ***NEW! Gone (series) by Michael Grant (2008–Ongoing)***

One minute Sam is sitting in history class; the next, his teacher is gone. Every adult has vanished and no one over the age of 14 remains. To make things worse, the phones are dead, the internet is down, and Sam and his friends have no idea why or how it all happened. As new characters move into town and alliances begin to form, the strange things keep happening. Something is lurking in the shadows, animals are mutating, and some of those who remain are developing powers that could be a danger to them all. A fight is coming to decide the fate of the new colony, and it is a race against time to figure out what's happening because when someone reaches the age of 15, they disappear like everyone else. Fantastic character development, an eerie mystery, and action-packed scenes make for a rollercoaster ride of emotions and suspense as kids and teens learn to survive in a new world where superpowers are real and there are no adults to be found. *Middle School/High School.*

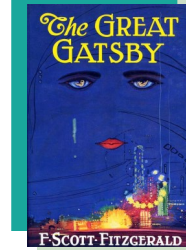
#### **Titles include:**

1. **Gone**
2. **Hunger**
3. **Lies**
4. **Plague**
5. **Fear**
6. **Light**
7. **Monster**
8. **Villain**
9. **Hero (pub. 2019)**



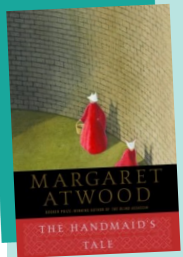
### ***Gone with the Wind*** by Margaret Mitchell (1936)

This Pulitzer Prize–winning classic is set during the Civil War and Reconstruction. It introduces its teenage heroine, the spoiled and headstrong Scarlett O’Hara, on the eve of the Civil War and follows her struggles into adulthood. This is a love story, but also an epic historical saga. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



### ***The Great Gatsby*** by F. Scott Fitzgerald (1925)

It may be an assigned-reading staple, but there’s a reason this Jazz-age tale of thwarted love, greed, and revenge in a wealthy seaside community has become a classic. *High School.*



### ***The Handmaid's Tale*** by Margaret Atwood (1985)

In a future world where the birth rate has drastically declined, fertile women are rounded up, trained as “housemaids,” and expected to bear the children of prominent men. Offred can remember the days before the Republic of Gilead, when she was a happily married wife and mother; when she had a job, money of her own, and access to knowledge. But now everything has changed. *High School.*



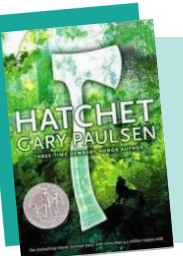
### **Harry Potter (series)** by J.K. Rowling (1998–2007)

After discovering on his 11th birthday that he is a wizard, Harry attends Hogwarts School for Wizarding and Witchcraft. There he discovers that he is famous for a childhood encounter with Voldemort, a dark wizard who is deter-

mined to gain power. As Harry and his friends age, the novels become progressively darker and more complex. *Middle School/High School.*

#### **Titles include:**

1. **Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone**
2. **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets**
3. **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**
4. **Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire**
5. **Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**
6. **Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince**
7. **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows**

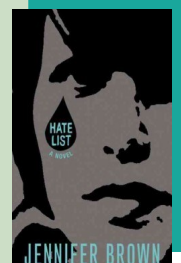


### ***Hatchet*** by Gary Paulsen (1987)

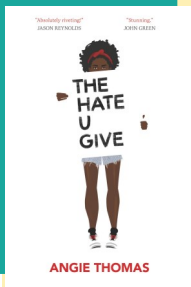
Thirteen-year-old Brian survives a plane crash only to be stranded in the Canadian wilderness—alone. There he must survive for months with only a hatchet to aid him while also coming to grips with his parents’ divorce. *Middle School/High School.*

### ***Hate List*** by Jennifer Brown (2009)

When Valerie and her boyfriend compiled a “HateList” of all the people they dislike or who have wronged them, she had no idea he would come to school with a gun and use it as a checklist for a killing spree. Five months later, school is back in session and Valerie is a social outcast struggling with her own guilt and grief. This is a wrenching, intimate portrayal of the aftermath of a tragedy, told from a unique perspective. *High School (mature).*





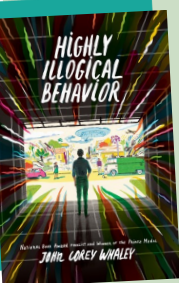
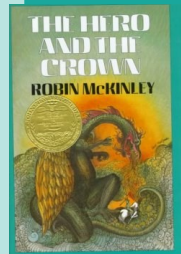


### **NEW! *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (2017)**

Sixteen-year-old Starr straddles two very different worlds, never completely feeling like she belongs in either. In Garden Heights—her poor, mostly black neighborhood—gangs are a fact of life and her childhood foes (and friends) often mock her for losing her roots. Then there is the wealthy private school Starr attends with her white boyfriend. At school and even around her closest friends, Starr is always careful in how she speaks and represents herself, and even her friends have no idea she lives in the ghetto. But when childhood friend Khalil is shot by a police officer during a traffic stop, Starr’s two realities collide. The only witness to the event that has created havoc in her town, Starr must find a way to comprehend the tragedy and merge her two personas so that she can speak her truth in a way that will resonate with each of her communities. *The Hate U Give* is a well-written, fast-paced read with substance and a must-read for anyone looking to better understand the Black Lives Matter movement. It’s an important book that is also enjoyable to read, featuring a great, authentic voice and wonderful character development. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.

### ***The Hero and the Crown* by Robin McKinley (1984)**

Although she is the daughter of the king, Aerin has never been accepted as full royalty. Both in and out of Damar’s royal court, people whisper the story of her mother, the witchwoman from the demon-haunted North who was said to have ensorcelled the king into marrying her and died after giving birth to Aerin. But with the guidance of the wizard Luthe and the help of the blue sword, Aerin will do what she must to win her birthright. *Middle School/High School*.



### ***Highly Illogical Behavior* by John Corey Whaley (2016)**

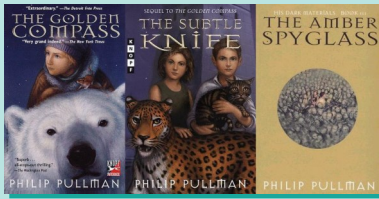
Sixteen-year-old Solomon Reed hasn’t left his house in three years, and even the thought of doing so brings on crippling anxiety attacks. But Solomon’s fairly content with the status quo, even if his parents continue to hope he will someday want more. Enter seventeen-year-old Lisa Payton, a type-A overachiever determined to befriend and “fix” Solomon just so she can lock in a scholarship she’s chasing. Witty dialog, prose that seems effortless, and oodles of quirky charm make this book a joy to read, and the book is further elevated by the thoughtful, multi-dimensional treatment of a character with anxiety disorder. It’s a book that makes you think about friendship, about forgiveness, and about personal courage—not the courage that wins medals and acclaim, but the small braveries that can be found in each and every day. *High School*.

### ***The Hired Girl* by Laura Amy Schlitz (2015)**

Joan Skraggs is tired of being undervalued by her father and brothers for the backbreaking work she puts in day after day. Life is hard on a 1911 Pennsylvania farm, and 14-year-old Joan’s only respite is found in the books she loves. Then Joan decides she’s finally had enough of being unappreciated, unpaid labor and decides to get a post in the city as a hired girl. Under a fake name and lying about her age, Joan lucks into a position in the home of a wealthy Jewish family. Everything in her new world is foreign and utterly fascinating, and Joan soon finds herself making mistake after mistake—from setting her hair on fire to crushing on one of her employers’ sons—even as she grows from a naïve country girl to a capable young woman. Told through a series of diary entries, this is a warm and thought-provoking story, laced with humor. Joan’s voice is fresh and hilariously candid, sure to appeal to readers who’ve enjoyed characters like Anne Shirley, Jo March, or Jane Eyre. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



## His Dark Materials Trilogy (series) by Phillip Pullman (1996–2000)



Lyra Belacqua's life changes forever after she saves her uncle from an assassination attempt and learns of a mysterious substance called Dust. Children, including Lyra's friend Roger, start to go missing and Lyra sets off on a rescue mission to the North. This is just the beginning of Lyra's adventures through multiple universes as she and her friends try to solve the mystery of the Dust. *Middle School/High School.*

### Titles Include:

1. **The Golden Compass**
2. **The Subtle Knife**
3. **The Amber Spyglass**

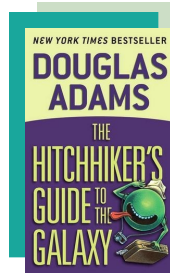


## His Fair Assassin Trilogy (series) by Robin LaFevers (2012–2014)

In fifteenth century Brittany, three young women seeking refuge at the convent of St. Mortain are blessed by Death with dangerous gifts and trained as assassins. As each leaves the convent—whether on a mission for Death or for her own purposes—she must navigate a dangerous web of intrigue and deceit to decide what her path will be. *High School.*

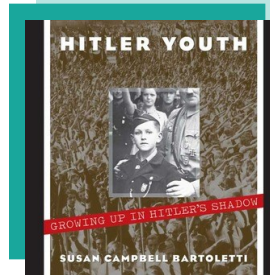
### Titles include:

1. **Grave Mercy**
2. **Dark Triumph**
3. **Mortal Heart**



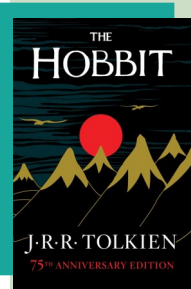
## The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams (1979)

Arthur Dent, the last survivor on Earth, embarks on an offbeat, galaxy-hopping tour of the universe under the guidance of a galaxy tour-guide writer. *Middle School/High School.*



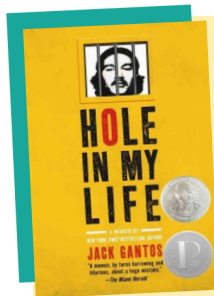
## Hitler Youth by Susan Bartoletti (2005)

Rather than focusing on Hitler himself, this well-rounded history considers the children and teens who pledged their loyalty to Hitler and their motivations for doing so. While some of the youths became disillusioned by Hitler's ideals as they grew older, others remained steadfastly obedient to their Führer, often despite familial disapproval or their own consciences. Through the stories of twelve Hitler Youth members, Bartoletti provides a terrifying picture of how Hitler was able to gain such unchecked power and blind devotion while offering a fascinating look at the young people who grew up during his reign. *Middle School/High School.*



## The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien (1937)

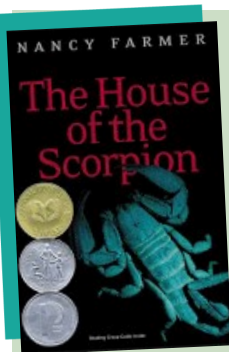
Bilbo Baggins, a respectable, well-to-do hobbit lives happily in quiet comfort until the day the wizard Gandalf and his band of homeless *dwarves* choose him to join their quest. Prequel to the Lord of the Rings Trilogy. *Middle School/High School.*



## Hole in My Life by Jack Gantos (2002)

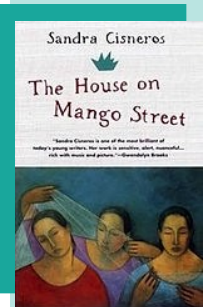
In the summer of 1971, Jack Gantos was an aspiring writer on the hunt for adventure and college tuition money. A few wrong turns later, he's smuggling drugs and doing time in prison. Darkly funny, insightful, and unflinchingly honest, *A Hole in My Life* is the true account of the uneven path one of today's most celebrated authors for children and teens took to reach his dream. *High School.*





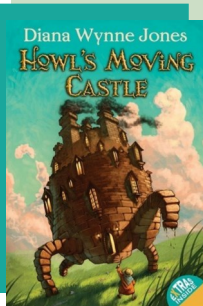
### ***The House of the Scorpion* by Nancy Farmer (2002)**

In a future no-man's land situated between the United States and what was once Mexico, a powerful drug lord known as El Patrón rules ruthlessly. Young Matteo has grown up isolated, but when he is brought to live on the estate of El Patrón, Matt quickly grows to idolize the man he thinks of as a father figure. However, as he grows older and wiser, Matteo begins to see that El Patrón's protectiveness has a selfish motive and Matt is viewed as nothing more than a commodity meant to keep El Patrón alive. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



### ***The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (1984)**

This poetic coming-of-age story centers on Esperanza, a young girl who longs to escape the low expectations and endless landscape of concrete and run-down tenements that come with growing up in her poor Hispanic neighborhood. *Middle School*

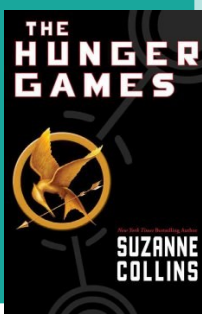
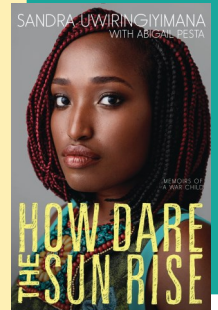


### ***Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones (1986)**

Sophie Hatter is living a humdrum life as a hat shop apprentice when a witch turns her into an old woman and she finds herself in the castle of the fearsome wizard Howl, who is rumored to eat souls. *Middle School/High School.*

### ***NEW! How Dare the Sun Rise* by Sandra Uwiringiyimana (2017)**

A gut-wrenching and inspiring memoir about growing up in a conflict zone, adapting to life in the U.S., and finding your voice. Told in conversational language with almost brutal honesty, Sandra's story is both eye-opening and thoughtful, neither sensationalizing nor downplaying her experiences. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

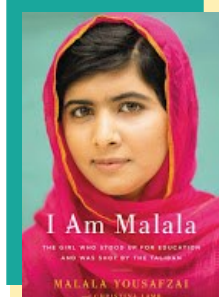


### ***The Hunger Games Trilogy (series)* by Suzanne Collins (2008–2010)**

**Titles include:**

1. *The Hunger Games*
2. *Catching Fire*
3. *Mockingjay*

Set in a post-apocalyptic world overseen by a selfish, pleasure-loving Capitol that rules with harshness and terror, this is an absorbing dystopian thriller series. In book one, Katniss and Peeta must compete in the Hunger Games, a televised competition where the teens must kill to survive. Balancing a fast pace with well-developed characters, the story blends gritty action scenes with a backdrop of social commentary. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



### ***I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb (2013)**

The Taliban tried to silence 14-year-old Pakistani student Malala Yousafzai, but she refused to give up her demand for an education. In the process, she survived an assassination attempt, became a global inspiration, and became the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

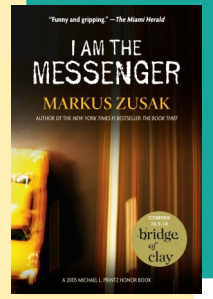


### ***I Am the Cheese* by Robert Cormier (1977)**

As Adam bicycles from Massachusetts to Vermont, he retraces memories of his past and his family's history in the witness protection program. Alternating chapters insert psychological examinations that attempt to uncover Adam's buried memories. A curious mix of fantasy and reality, this is an unforgettable psychological mystery. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

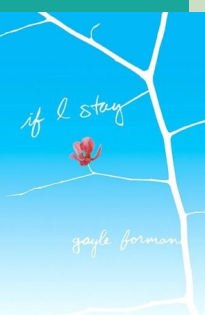
### ***I Am the Messenger* by Marcus Zusak (2005)**

After capturing a bank robber, nineteen-year-old cab driver Ed Kennedy begins receiving mysterious messages that direct him to addresses where people need help. *High School (mature).*



### ***I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou (1970)**

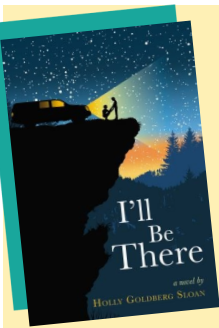
In this first volume of her autobiography, poet Maya Angelou reflects on her life up until the age of seventeen. Told through a series of scenes depicting both gut-wrenching moments of heartbreak and fear and life-affirming events and relationships, Angelou's story is a poignant tale of growing up in 1930s rural Arkansas. With bare honesty, humor, and grace, Angelou weaves a lyrical masterpiece that is both timeless and inspirational. *High School.*



### ***If I Stay + Where She Went* (companion novels) by Gayle Forman (2009, 2011)**

One minute Mia is on a happy, spontaneous family drive; the next, she is standing over her own mangled body as paramedics work to revive her. Mia follows her body to the hospital and over the following hours, she contemplates her life, worries about her little brother, and yearns for her boyfriend Adam. The people and relationships are vividly described, and Mia's dilemma—to stay or to let go—and the actions of her loved ones are poignant but not overwrought. This is a powerful, lyrical novel that will stay with you. *High School.*

Love, heartache, betrayal, and music intertwine in this emotional sequel to *If I Stay* told from Adam's perspective. Pouring his bitterness into his lyrics has made Adam a worldwide music sensation, but fame hasn't healed what was damaged and broken. Now, stranded in New York in between flights, Adam decides it is time to confront his past with the girl he can't get over. Raw and lyrical, Adam's story is gripping in the tradition of *Before Sunrise*. The majority of the story takes place in a single day, and readers experience each moment right along with Adam, unsure how it will end until the very last page. *High School.*



### ***I'll Be There* by Holly Goldberg Sloan (2011)**

Intertwining a gripping survival story with a sweet tale of first love, this is a heartfelt story that will stick with you. Seventeen-year-old Sam and his 12-year-old brother Riddle—kidnapped a decade ago by their mentally unstable father—have never known a normal life. Then Sam meets Emily, who finally “sees” him and, eventually, introduces the boys to her family. For the first time, the two boys feel connected to the real world, but what will happen when their father discovers their secret? This is a vividly cinematic novel, with a bit of something for everyone. *Middle School/High School.*



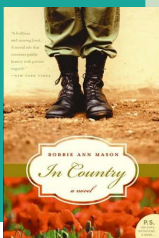
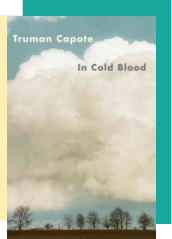


***I'll Give You the Sun* by Jandy Nelson (2014)**

Stunning and full of passages readers will want to revisit again and again, *I'll Give You the Sun* is the story of fraternal twins Noah and Jude. Three years ago, Noah and Jude were so connected that they communicated without words. Now sixteen, they are practically strangers—to each other and even to themselves. Their closeness has been shattered by secrets and lies and tragedy, but perhaps there is a chance to regain what was lost if first each can face what went wrong before. The novel is narrated jointly between the two siblings, weaving in an out of time seamlessly, Noah in the past and Jude in the present. This is an unforgettable novel, kooky and heartbreaking, full of art and love and even a ghost or two. *High School (mature).*

***In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote (1966)**

In this pioneer work of the true crime genre, Truman Capote paints a chilling portrait of the grisly 1959 murder of a family in rural Kansas, reconstructing the savage murder and ensuing investigation. *High School (mature).*



***In Country* by Bobbie Ann Mason (1985)**

A recent high school graduate in a small Kentucky town tries to make sense of her family and the war that killed her father before she was born. *In Country* is emotionally gripping and subtly humorous as it addresses the challenges of growing up and the lingering consequences of a war long over. *High School.*

***Infernal Devices* (series) by Cassandra Clare (2010–2013)**



In this companion series to Clare's *Mortal Instruments* saga, readers discover more Shadowhunter history. Set in a steam-punk London, the series centers on Tessa Gray, an orphaned young woman who travels from New York in search of her missing brother and the secrets of her past. Along the way, she learns more of the mysterious world of demons, discovers her own unusual unique magical abilities, and becomes entangled in a complicated romantic triangle. *High School.*

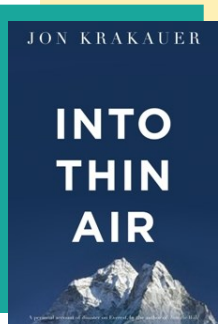
**Titles include:**

1. **Clockwork Angel**
2. **Clockwork Prince**
3. **Clockwork Princess**



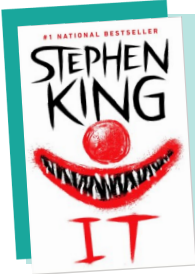
***Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer (1996)**

In 1992, a young man named Christopher McCandless hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness. His body was discovered four months later. In this true story, Krakauer reconstructs the story of McCandless's adventure and eventual death, in the process exploring the American fascination with the wilderness. *High School.*



***Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer (1997)**

The author describes his spring 1996 trek to Mt. Everest, a disastrous expedition that claimed the lives of eight climbers, and explains how he survived the rogue storm that left him stranded. *High School.*

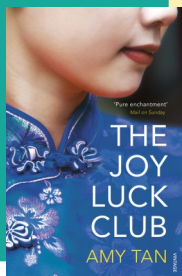


**It by Stephen King (1986)**

Horror master Stephen King spins a story about seven kids who stumbled upon an unimaginable terror in their hometown, something they tried to forget. But now that they are adults, they find themselves drawn back to Derry, Maine, where they must again face their childhood nightmare and a very real, unnamed evil. *High School (mature).*

**Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë (1847)**

This unconventional love story is made unforgettable by the intimate narration and sharp, clever dialog. (Some of Jane and Rochester’s conversations are simply riveting.) But it’s much more than a love story between a governess and her employer: it is the tale of a passionate and intelligent orphan’s path to adulthood and her determination to maintain her dignity and find her place in the world. *High School.*



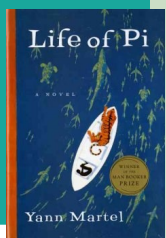
**The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan (1989)**

In this ultimate book about mother/daughter relationships, four Chinese immigrant mothers and their Chinese American daughters struggle to understand each other. *The Joy Luck Club* is a poignant and relatable novel about generational and cultural divisions, told in vignettes by seven different characters. *High School.*



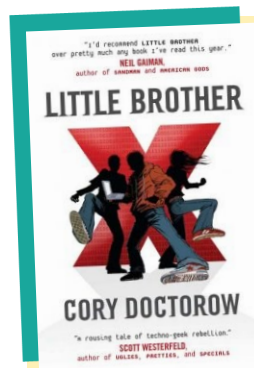
**Just Listen by Sarah Dessen (2006)**

Sixteen-year-old Annabel Greene’s life is far from perfect. Her “picture perfect” family is keeping secrets, and a recent split with her best friend has left her a social outcast. But Annabel finds an unexpected ally in Owen Armstrong, a music-obsessed, broody loner whose honesty and passion for music help her to finally be honest about what happened at the party that changed everything. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



**Life of Pi by Yann Martel (2002)**

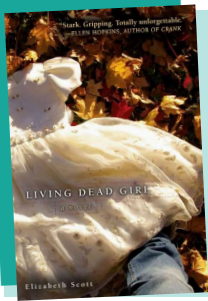
When his family’s ship sinks in the middle of the Pacific, sixteen-year-old Pi is trapped on a lifeboat with a hyena, an orangutan, an injured zebra, and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. Using his unusual outlook on life and encyclopedic knowledge of the animal world, Pi must find a way to outwit the hungry Bengal tiger and survive. *High School (mature).*



**Little Brother by Cory Doctorow (2008)**

This is a seriously scary book—in a very real way. It takes place in a not-too-distant future where school security systems use gait recognition software to keep intruders out—and students in—and where every keystroke on a school laptop is monitored. Then there is a suspected terrorist attack in San Francisco and things get really crazy. Seventeen-year-old Marcus thinks the Department of Homeland Security is out of control, so he uses his tech savvy to start an underground rebellion against the current government. This book is socially and politically charged, featuring super-smart teen characters who are willing to take risks for what they believe in. *High School (mature).*





### **Living Dead Girl by Elizabeth Scott (2002)**

After enduring five years of terror and abuse, Alice believes her only escape from her captor is death. And now that she is fifteen, Alice half hopes that Ray will finally take that final step and kill her. But Ray has another idea: he wants Alice to help him select and train his next victim. With spare, lyrical prose, Scott weaves an intensely disturbing tale that promises no safe or easy answers. *High School (mature)*.

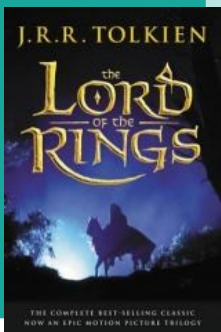
### **Looking for Alaska by John Green (2005)**

Inspired by the dying words of the poet Francois Rabelais, sixteen-year-old Miles chucks his boring existence in Florida to seek his “Great Perhaps” at an Alabama boarding school. There, he is quickly absorbed into a band of brainy pranksters led by his roommate and a maddening, beautiful girl named Alaska on whom Miles develops an intense and immediate crush. Pranks and other rebellious behavior abound, but the reader is always aware that a Great Catastrophe looms ahead, as the first chapter is ominously labeled “one hundred thirty-six days before.” Sure enough, tragedy strikes, and midway through the book, we reach the “after” section. What could have devolved into sentimentality and melodrama becomes a rich novel full of bittersweet humor, complex characters, and deep meaning. *High School (mature)*.



### **Lord of the Flies by William Golding (1954)**

A group of English schoolboys marooned on an island they believe to be haunted by a terrifying monster is divided in a power struggle between two groups in this classic tale of survival, morality, and society. *Middle School/High School*.



### **Lord of the Rings Trilogy (series) by J.R.R. Tolkien (1954–1955)**

With the fate of the world in his hands, Frodo Baggins and his companions must journey to Mordor to destroy the One Ring of Power before the evil Sauron conquers all of Middle Earth. This is an epic good vs. evil story set in a richly developed world. The trilogy

takes place approximately sixty years after the events in *The Hobbit*. Available as a one-volume set or individual volumes. *Middle School/High School*.

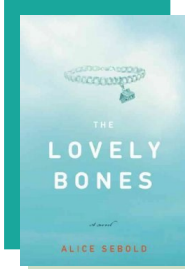
#### **Individual titles include:**

- 1. The Fellowship of the Ring**
- 2. The Two Towers**
- 3. The Return of the King**

### **“The Lottery” (short story; included in the collection *The Lottery*) by Shirley Jackson (1948)**

The title story of this collection has been described as a “chilling tale of conformity gone mad.” First published in the *New Yorker* in 1948, it was hugely controversial but has become one of the most beloved classics of American literature. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



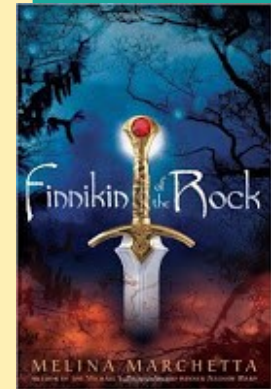


### **The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold (2002)**

Fourteen-year-old Susie Salmon was raped and murdered. Now in an “interim” heaven till she lets go of earthly concerns, she grapples with her own death and observes the different reactions of friends and family members over the years. While the subject matter is grimly haunting, *The Lovely Bones* still manages to convey both humor and hope. *High School (mature)*.

### **Lumatere Chronicles (series) by Melina Marchetta (2008–2012)**

Like Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, this series features a historical-style setting with hints of magic. Exiled from his homeland after the royal family was slaughtered and a dying woman cursed the land, Finnikin is determined to find a new home for his people. He was only a child at the time of the murders of his friend Prince Balthazar and the rest of the royal family, but Finnikin struggles with feelings of guilt related to a cryptic prophecy. Then he meets a young novice who goes by the name of Evanjalín who says the prince lives and there is hope of reclaiming Lumatere from the impostor king who butchered the royal family. Finnikin is skeptical, but Evanjalín remains stubbornly committed to her course and the two set off on a mission that takes them across kingdoms, collecting allies and exiles along the way back to Lumatere. While the story begins with the journey of Finnikin and Evanjalín, each successive book adds depth and intrigue to the story, bringing in new characters and gradually revealing unsuspected secrets to hold readers rapt until the final conclusion. *High School (mature)*.



#### **Titles include:**

1. **Finnikin of the Rock**
2. **Froi of the Exiles**
3. **Quintana of Charyn**



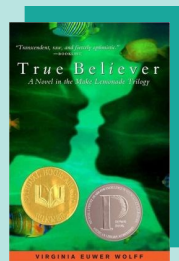
### **Make Lemonade + True Believer**

(companion novels)

by **Virginia Ewer Wolff (1993, 2001)**

No one in LaVaughn's neighborhood goes to college, but 14-year-old LaVaughn is determined to escape the poverty and hopelessness she sees every day. To earn money for her college fund, LaVaughn agrees to babysit for Jolly, an overwhelmed 17-year-old mother of two. Quickly, LaVaughn becomes enmeshed in the lives of Jolly and her children, perhaps to the detriment of her own goals. This novel in verse is a quick, engaging read and an authentic look at the crushing poverty that defines the characters' lives. *Middle School/High School*.

This award-winning sequel to *Make Lemonade* is perhaps even more powerful. Now 15, Lavaughn once again faces a tough decision about her future even as she struggles with her first strong romantic feelings and the pangs of choosing a path that causes friction with her best friends. *Middle School/High School*.



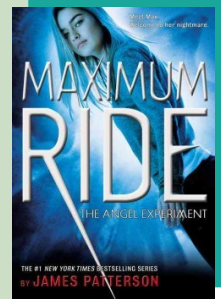
### **Maximum Ride**

(series)

by **James Patterson**

(2005–2012)

The “birdkids” were bred in a laboratory as part of a genetic experiment to be part human, part bird. When one of their group is abducted, they embark on a rescue mission that will change their lives as they struggle to understand their own origins and purpose. *Middle School/High School*.



#### **Titles include:**

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. <b>The Angel Experiment</b>                      | 4. <b>The Final Warning</b> |
| 2. <b>School's Out—Forever</b>                      | 5. <b>Max</b>               |
| 3. <b>Saving the World and Other Extreme Sports</b> | 6. <b>Fang</b>              |
|   | 7. <b>Angel</b>             |
|   | 8. <b>Nevermore</b>         |



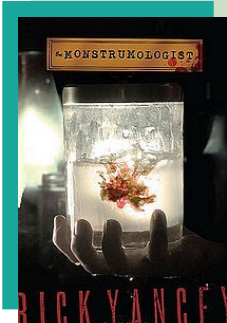
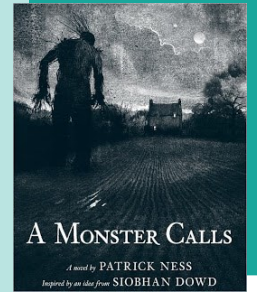


**Monster by Walter Dean Myers (1999)**

Steve Harmon is on trial for the murder of a Harlem drugstore owner. He is in jail, maybe for decades. And he is only sixteen years old. As his trial goes on, Steve records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script, all while struggling to come to terms with the course his life has taken. This is an excellent book for reluctant readers, and it keeps readers wondering: just how involved was Steve in robbery and killing of the drugstore owner? Does he have any responsibility for the crime, or is he as innocent as he claims? *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

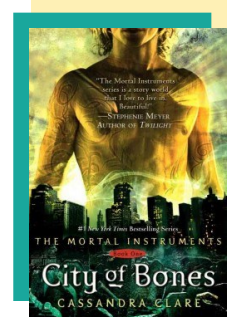
**A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness (2011)**

Emotionally gripping and intense from start to finish, *A Monster Calls* is the story of a 13-year-old coping with fear and loneliness as his mother battles cancer. Conor is plagued by a recurring nightmare, but when a real monster appears in his room one night, he isn't afraid—until the monster demands to know the secrets of Conor's dream. This is a powerful, timeless book full of sharp humor, insight, and a dark eeriness that is echoed perfectly in nightmarish pen and ink drawings. *Middle School/High School.*



**The Monstrumologist by Rick Yancey (2009)**

Dark, suspenseful, and unabashedly gory, this morbidly delicious Victorian tale is not for the faint of heart (or stomach). Twelve-year-old orphan Will Henry has nothing in the world but a too-small cap given to him by his father and Dr. Pellinore Walthrop, an eccentric “doctor” who studies and dissects real-life monsters. Will is his apprentice, and when a pod of hulking, headless, people-devouring Anthropophagi is discovered in a nearby cemetery, it is up to Will and the doctor to keep their sleepy New England town safe. But this stunning gothic adventure is more than pulp horror. It is filled with fully-fleshed, fascinating characters, from Will and the single-minded doctor, to a mysterious monster hunter who may be as dangerous as the creatures he hunts. Yancey's writing is vividly descriptive and totally absorbing, and the story recalls the best of the classic horror writers—Stevenson, Poe, Shelley, Lovecraft—yet emerges as a unique addition to the horror collection. *High School.*



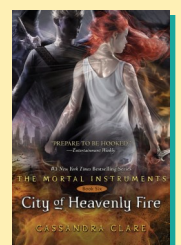
**The Mortal Instruments (series) by Cassandra Clare (2007–2014)**

Paranormal romance fans who want a bit more action in their story often enjoy the Mortal Instruments series. Book one begins when Clary is suddenly exposed to a world of demon hunters and dangerous supernatural beings she never dreamed were real. For years, her mother has shielded her from the hidden world of Shadowhunters, but now Clary must learn quickly as her mother has disappeared and Clary is being targeted by demons. This is a fast-paced urban fantasy series complete with tragic secrets, forbidden love, gut-wrenching betrayals, and witty verbal sparring, set primarily in an alternate present-day Manhattan. *High School.*



**Titles include:**

1. **City of Bones**
2. **City of Ashes**
3. **City of Glass**
4. **City of Fallen Angels**
5. **City of Lost Souls**



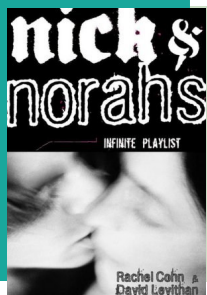
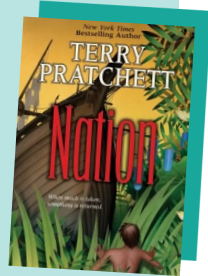


### **My Heartbeat by Garret Freymann-Weyr (2002)**

Fourteen-year-old Ellen is just starting high school at an elite prep school and is happy to be considered average. Her older brother Link—an acknowledged math genius—and his super cute friend James, both incoming seniors with bright futures, are her best friends. Her only real friends, actually. Together, the threesome have a unique and easy friendship—or so Ellen believes—until she begins to question the true relationship between the two boys. Are Link and James a couple? Are they in love? With Ellen’s questions, the relationship between the once inseparable threesome changes forever and in ways Ellen could never predict. This is a spare and touching novel about growing up and the complexity of relationships of all types. *High School.*

### **Nation by Terry Pratchett (2008)**

After a devastating tsunami strikes, Mau is the only survivor of his people. But soon, other survivors from the storm make their way to his tropical island, including an aristocratic English girl with a wide knowledge of 19th century science. Serving as the de facto leader, Mau forms a community from the survivors and learns about himself, the role of the gods, people from other cultures, books, science, religion, and how to win a battle against an overwhelming number of cannibals. But this is no heavy-handed tome; with his trademark wit and humor, Terry Pratchett provides insights into our culture and foibles while managing to spin a highly entertaining tale. *Middle School/High School.*

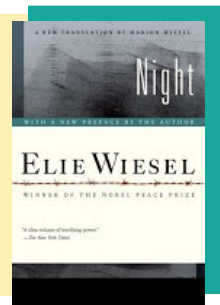


### **Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist by Rachel Cohn and David Levithan (2006)**

High school student Nick O’Leary, a music enthusiast and rock band member, meets college-bound Norah Silverberg and asks her to be his girlfriend for five minutes—just so he can elude his ex-girlfriend. What follows is a wild, fast-paced, rollercoaster of a night as the two opposites follow the trail of an elusive band, get to know one another, and come to terms with past heartbreak. *High School (mature).*

### **Night by Elie Wiesel (1955)**

In this candid account of the horrors of World War II, Elie Wiesel recounts the atrocities he both experienced and witnessed as a young teen who survived two Nazi concentration camps. But this powerful memoir is far more than a recitation of events; it is a poignant exploration of the evils that lurk in the human heart and the impact of that evil on the human spirit. *High School.*



### **The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern (2011)**

The Cirque des Rêves arrives in the night without warning and captivates its audience from dusk till dawn. What the audience—and most of the performers—do not know is that the circus is merely the arena for a deadly magical battle. This gorgeously imaginative, genre-blending novel is all about atmosphere and tone, creating a feeling of suspended enchantment for the reader. *High School.*



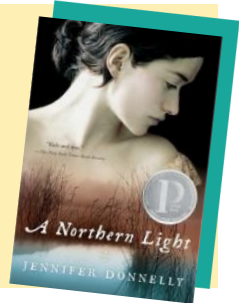


### **1984 by George Orwell (1949)**

This classic novel provides an unflinching look at a dystopian “future” lived under unrelenting war and constant surveillance. As an employee of the Ministry of Truth, Winston Smith re-writes old newspaper articles so that they will support the current party line even as he dreams of the day he can rebel against the corrupt, controlling government and overthrow the evils of Big Brother. *High School (mature)*.

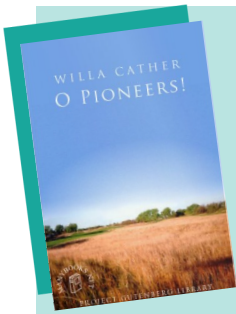
### **A Northern Light by Jennifer Donnelly (2006)**

This award-winning young adult novel combines a true historical murder mystery with a vivid coming of age story. In 1906, 16-year-old Mattie is determined to become a writer but her father has forbidden her to accept the college scholarship she has been offered. Then, while working a summer job at a nearby hotel, Mattie is entrusted with a packet of secret letters just before the letters’ owner dies under suspicious circumstances. *High School*.



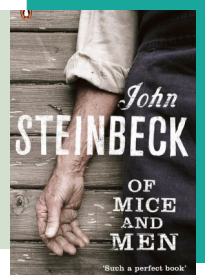
### **O Pioneers! by Willa Cather (1913)**

In this classic American tale set during the turn of the 19th century, a strong and determined woman named Alexandra Bergson struggles to make a success of the family’s Nebraska farm after her father’s death. Over several decades, she and her younger brother find love and face the tribulations of life and the harsh land they are determined to call home. Despite the epic nature of this story and the years spanned, *O Pioneers!* is a surprisingly quick read. *High School*.



### **Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck (1937)**

Set during the Great Depression, *Of Mice and Men* is the moving and ultimately tragic tale of the friendship between George, a quick-witted itinerant farm worker, and Lennie, his physically strong but developmentally disabled companion. Frequently controversial, this slim novel is simply told and completely absorbing. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.

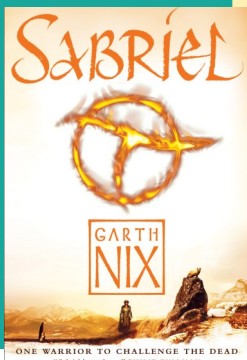


### **Old Kingdom Trilogy (series) by Garth Nix (1995–2003)**

The country of Ancelstierre has cars and electricity, but on the other side of the northern border—in the Old Kingdom—magic rules and the dead don’t always stay dead. Not all the soldiers who guard the Perimeter know why they must carry swords as well as rifles, until electricity fails and the Dead begin to walk. Then it becomes clear that things are different on

Original titles include:

1. **Sabriel**
2. **Lirael**
3. **Abhorsen**

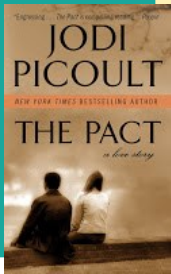


the other side of the crenellated stone Wall at the border—and that things in the Old Kingdom are only getting worse. *Middle School/High School*.



### ***The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton (1967)**

Ponyboy is fourteen, tough, and confused. Since his parents' deaths, his loyalties have been to his brothers and his Greaser gang, rough boys from the wrong side of the tracks fighting to make a place for themselves in the world. But when his best friend Johnny kills a member of a gang from the wealthier part of town, a nightmare of violence begins and Ponyboy's life is turned upside down. S.E. Hinton was just 16 years old when she wrote this timeless novel about teens getting caught up in class struggles and gang violence. *Middle School/High School.*



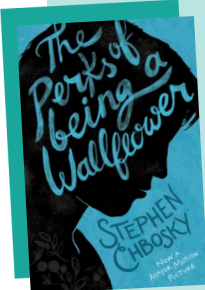
### ***The Pact* by Jodi Picoult (1998)**

Growing up as neighbors and the children of best friends, Chris and Emily have been inseparable all of their lives. Their happy future together seems inevitable, so when an apparent suicide pact leaves Emily dead and Chris alive, both families are left shaken to the core and doubtful of Chris's story. Suspense and heartwrenching family drama combine for a riveting read until the full story of Emily's death and her relationship with Chris is finally revealed. *High School.*



### ***Paper Towns* by John Green (2008)**

Just a few weeks before graduating from his Central Florida high school, Quentin, the quintessential nerd, gets a midnight visit from Margo, the wonderfully exciting classmate he's been desperately in love with since childhood. The mission is to play a series of score-setting pranks on the kids in the popular crowd. After their spree, Margo suddenly disappears and Quentin's next mission is to find out if she's run away—or worse, done something more permanent. *High School.*

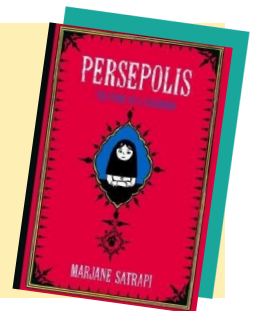


### ***The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky (1999)**

Fifteen-year-old high freshman Charlie is anxious about starting high school, especially after his only friend committed suicide last year. So he chooses an unnamed stranger as his confidante. Over the course of a year, he sends anonymous letters describing his triumphs and tribulations as he befriends two seniors who welcome him into their eccentric group of friends and show him how to engage with the world. Excellent characterizations and a truly authentic voice highlight this well-crafted story full of hilarity, heartbreak, and inspiration. *High School (mature).*

### ***Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (2000)**

This stunning graphic-format memoir tells the story of Satrapi's life in Tehran from the age of six to fourteen, through the turbulent period that saw the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, and the devastating effects of war with Iraq. The art work is simple yet irresistibly charming, and the story is equally charming: insightful, powerful, and surprisingly relatable. *Middle School/High School.*



### ***Positive: A Memoir* by Paige Rawl with Ali Benjamin (2014)**

Paige was in sixth grade when she learned that she had HIV. Although she was born HIV positive, it didn't really affect her life in ways she was aware of until she told a friend about her diagnosis and rumors began to spread. From that point, Paige became the target of relentless bullying. This is the inspiring and revelatory story of how she coped with the bullying and the challenges of living with HIV into adulthood. *Middle School /High School.*



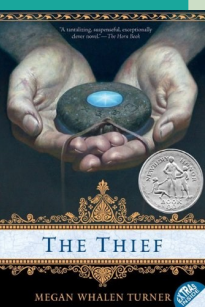
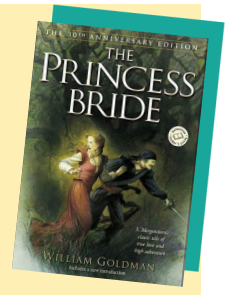


### ***Pride and Prejudice*** by Jane Austen (1813)

Witty and independent Elizabeth Bennett is determined to dislike the aristocratically aloof Mr. Darcy, whose pride and apparent coldness infuriates her. Darcy is equally disapproving of the somewhat unconventional Bennett family. And yet, as Darcy and Elizabeth are continually thrown into contact, unfavorable first impressions give way to genuine feelings. This is a charming comedy of manners, full of family foibles and clever repartee. *High School.*

### ***The Princess Bride*** by William Goldman (1973)

A former farm boy in disguise must rescue his true love from a handsome (but evil) prince in this timeless twist on the traditional fairy tale. Along the way, he acquires the help of two unlikely allies, a drunken swordsman and a gentle giant. Brilliantly combining adventure, fantasy, romance, and humor, *The Princess Bride* is a swashbuckling fable for all ages. *Middle School/High School.*



### ***The Queen's Thief* (series) by Megan Whalen Turner (1996–2010)**

Gen is a thief—a very, very cocky one. He boasts he can steal anything, and after his boasting gets him caught with the just-stolen seal of the King of Sounis, the king's advisor decides to take advantage of Gen's skills. So Gen is released from prison and sent on a mission to steal an object that will cement the King's power. And thus begins an adventure story that is much more complex than it first seems. For Gen is also a very, very clever thief. As Gen grows older and the novels' plots become more sophisticated, the series becomes even more compelling. Set in a world that is much like ancient Greece—only not quite—these books are full of political intrigue, unexpected shocks, and hidden clues that come together perfectly in the end. *Middle School/High School.*

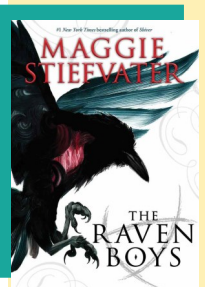
#### **Titles include:**

1. **The Thief**
2. **The Queen of Attolia**
3. **The King of Attolia**



### ***Rapunzel's Revenge*** by Shannon and Dean Hale, illus. by Nathan Hale (2008)

In this boldly illustrated reimagining of the classic fairy tale, the adventure is just beginning with Rapunzel's escape from the tower. Instead of a languishing princess awaiting rescue, 'Punzie is a self-sufficient, tomboyish cowgirl determined to right the wrongs of the evil Mother Gothel and rescue the downtrodden. Along the way, she teams up with a charming huckster named Jack (and his Goose Goldy). *Middle School/High School.*



### ***Raven Cycle* (series) by Maggie Stiefvater (2012–2016)**

Blue is an outsider. She comes from a family of clairvoyants but has no psychic abilities herself; instead, her presence acts as an amplifier for others' gifts. Like most of the Henrietta locals, Blue wants nothing to do with the stuck-up Raven Boys of Aglionby Academy, but then she meets Gansey, whose fate seems tied to Blue and a deadly curse. Despite her better judgment and fear of the curse, Blue joins Gansey and his group of boys' school misfits in their quest to unravel a mystical mystery involving an ancient Welsh king. Mystery, heartbreak, friendship, betrayal, and moral dilemmas emerge in the first book only to intensify further as the series continues. Lush, descriptive prose; complex characters; and a multi-layered, imaginative plot create a leisurely-paced but riveting series that succeeds in seamlessly combining magic with contemporary social issues. *High School.*

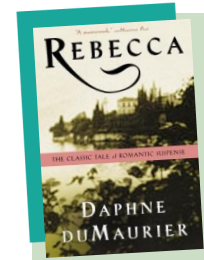
#### **Titles include:**

1. **The Raven Boys**
2. **The Dream Thieves**
3. **Blue Lily, Lily Blue**



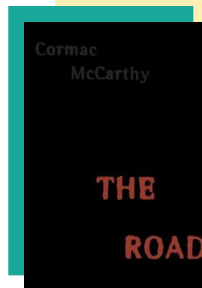
### **Reality Boy by A.S. King (2013)**

Gerald is very, very angry. It seems like he has always been angry, and there are three seasons worth of reality TV to prove it. Of course, the nanny show that made Gerald infamous when he was five years old showed very little of what actually went on in his house. Now seventeen, Gerald's just trying to keep it together so he doesn't end up dead or in jail. Then he meets Hannah, who has a screwed up home life herself. With King's trademark style of gritty drama with a touch of magical realism, *Reality Boy* is a stunning portrait of a young man on the edge. Gerald's is a unflinchingly honest voice, full of anger, insight, and pain, and his story is as riveting as any reality show. *High School (mature)*.



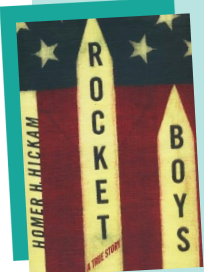
### **Rebecca by Daphne DuMaurier (1938)**

Young and naive, the second Mrs. Maxim de Winter arrives at her new husband's sweeping Cornish estate in a state of awe. There she finds that her life is overshadowed by the beautiful Rebecca, Maxim's first wife, dead but still a source of mystery. *High School*.



### **The Road by Cormac McCarthy (2006)**

In this acclaimed post-apocalyptic novel set in a bleak world of utter devastation, a father and his young son journey across the country toward the sea in search of salvation. Along the way they compete for food, contending with other survivors and roving gangs of cannibals as they struggle to preserve their own humanity. *High School (mature)*.



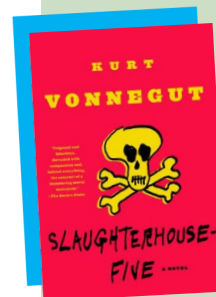
### **Rocket Boys/October Sky by Homer Hickam (1998)**

It was 1957, and the small mining town of Coalwood, West Virginia, was slowly dying. Faced with a dead-end future, teenaged Homer Hickam dreamed of sending rockets into space. In pursuit of his unlikely dream, he joined forces with a group of misfits, and they learned to build sophisticated, working rockets from unwanted scraps of metal. This is a well-loved memoir full of hope and inspiration; originally titled *Rocket Boys*, the book was later rereleased as *October Sky* after the success of the film of the same name. *Middle School/High School*.



### **The Scorpio Races by Maggie Stiefvater (2011)**

Every November, someone dies in the Scorpio Races, a dangerous horse race unlike any other because the horses are unlike any others. The water horses, both terrible and beautiful, rise from the ocean every autumn to terrorize the people of Thisby. And every year, the people—both awed and afraid—prepare for the traditional race along the beach. This year, Puck—the first female to ever enter the Scorpio Races—is determined to win even though it means taking on the four-time champion, Sean Kendrick. This is an eerie, romantic adventure that is completely original and unforgettable. *Middle School (mature)/High School*.



### **Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut (1969)**

An unreliable narrator recounts the adventures of Billy Pilgrim, an ill-prepared WWII soldier who claims to become “unstuck in time” during periods of stress. A satirical odyssey through time and space (Billy also claims to be the victim of alien abduction), *Slaughterhouse-Five* is an irreverent yet powerful indictment of war and a classic of the modern era. *High School (mature)*.



PETER CAMERON

someday  
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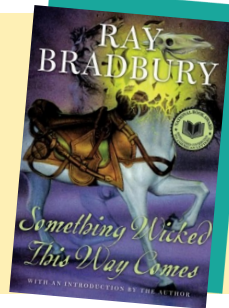


**Someday This Pain Will Be Useful to You by Peter Cameron (2007)**

Eighteen-year-old James Sveckis is an extremely intelligent, lonely, and confused Manhattanite who is searching for direction. He's been accepted to Brown but dreams of bypassing college and settling alone in a sleepy Midwestern town. He also might be gay, but prefers not to discuss it. This novel focuses more strongly on character than plot as James psychoanalyzes himself and his disconnect with the world around him. *High School (mature).*

**Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury (1962)**

Fantasy meets horror in this modern classic about a nightmarish traveling carnival and the two teens who notice something is very, very wrong with the carnival and its effect on the people of their hometown. This novel is tangentially related to Bradbury's earlier work, *Dandelion Wine*; together, along with the *Dandelion Wine* sequel *Farewell Summer*, the books make up the Green Town Trilogy. *Middle School/High School.*

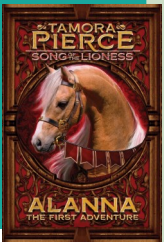


**Song of the Lioness (series) by Tamora Pierce (1983–1988)**

Eleven-year-old Alanna was suppose to go to a convent to learn to be a lady. Instead, she disguises herself as a boy and travels to court to pursue her dream of becoming a knight. Across the span of the series, Alanna encounters friends, foes, and numerous misadventures as she learns to embrace her magic and use it wisely. This is a classic and highly influential YA series that spans years and numerous intrigues as Alanna grows from a stubborn young girl to a kick-butt warrior in her late teens or early twenties. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

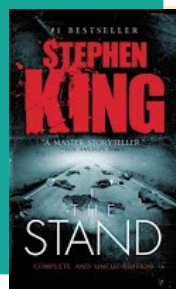
**Titles include:**

1. **Alanna: The First Adventure**
2. **In the Hand of the Goddess**
3. **The Woman Who Rides Like a Man**
4. **Lioness Rampant**



**Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson (1998)**

Melinda became a pariah last summer when she called the cops and busted up the end-of-the-year party. High school should be the best time of Melinda's life, but instead every day of freshman year is a struggle as she finds herself rejected by her former friends and alienated from her parents. Now Melinda's barely speaking at all. But inside, beneath the silence, Melinda is witty, ironic—and hurting terribly over what really happened that night. *High School.*



**The Stand by Stephen King (1978)**

Following massive death tolls from the accidental release of a weaponized flu virus, the survivors find themselves drawn into an epic battle between good and evil. This post-apocalyptic horror classic is considered by many to be King's greatest work. *High School (mature).*

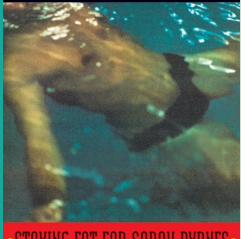
JERRY SPINELLI



**Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli (2000)**

In this allegorical story about popularity and the courage of nonconformity, an eccentric new student named Stargirl arrives at Mica High School to inspire fascination and scorn with her oddball behavior and strange dress. Her ebullient, uninhibited ways and determined kindness attract 11th grader Leo Borlock immediately, but when the rest of the school shuns them both, will Leo be able to balance his need for acceptance with his love for Stargirl? *Middle School/High School.*

CHRIS CRUTCHER



STAYING FAT FOR SARAH BYRNES

### **Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes by Chris Crutcher (1993)**

Outcasts Sarah Byrnes and Eric Calhoun were each other's only friend since childhood. They were bonded by her terrible scars and his layers of fat, but things were never quite the same after Eric discovered swimming, slimmed down, and made new friends. Still, their friendship persevered and their loyalty remained unquestioned. But now that Sarah Byrnes—the smartest, toughest person Eric knows—sits catatonic in a mental ward, he can't help but wonder what he should have done differently. Eric is determined to find a way to help his friend, even if it means digging into the secrets Sarah Byrnes wants to keep hidden. Like most of Crutcher's novels, this book tackles a whole boatload of Big Issues, many of them potentially inflammatory. It's no coincidence that most of Crutcher's works are regular targets of censors. But whether you agree with the characters' views or not, this is a book that inspires thought and critical debate on important issues. It's also a funny, irreverent, and suspenseful story of perseverance and friendship. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

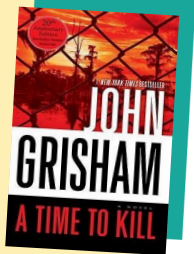


### **Story of a Girl by Sara Zarr (2007)**

Deanna was thirteen when her father caught her in the back of a Buick with her older brother's friend, seventeen-year-old Tommy. Three years later she is still unfairly branded as the school slut and her father can hardly look at her. Deanna dreams of escaping, perhaps with her brother—who now lives at home with his girlfriend and their child. This is a wonderful, absorbing book that is impossible to put down. It is realistic fiction at its best—a compelling story with believable, likable characters and a satisfying conclusion that in no way minimizes or oversimplifies the lives of its characters. *High School.*

### **A Time to Kill by John Grisham (1989)**

John Grisham's first novel is an excellent legal thriller about racism and uncertain justice in a small Southern town. When the two white men who attacked his ten-year-old daughter go free, a black father decides to take the law into his own hands and shoots them. Now it is up to young criminal lawyer Jake Brigance to defend Carl Hailey's actions, all in the midst of a deep well of racial prejudice and violence. *High School.*



### **Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher (2007)**

When Clay Jensen finds a mysterious box with no return address waiting on his front porch, he is intrigued and excited. But he is shocked by its contents: 13 tape recordings from Hannah Baker, his former classmate and secret crush who committed suicide two weeks earlier. The tapes serve as a type of suicide-note-cum-chain-letter and each recording is about a different person who is somehow connected to Hannah's reasons for committing suicide. Following the instructions on the tapes, Clay ventures out with a (stolen) Walkman on an all-night journey to try to figure out why Hannah made such a terrible choice—and to discover what part he played in her decision. This is an intense, compulsively readable novel for mature readers who will be just as curious and anxious as Clay as they learn all the reasons, great and small, that influenced Hannah's awful decision. *High School.*



### **This One Summer by Jillian Tamaki & Mariko Tamaki (2014)**

Bittersweet and brilliantly paced, this coming-of-age graphic novel centers on a young teen's summer vacation, during which she finds herself drawn to an older boy and depressed by the strain in her parents' marriage. Mariko Tamaki's illustrations wonderfully convey Rose's frustrations, anxiety, and heartbreaks, and the images are full of life and movement. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



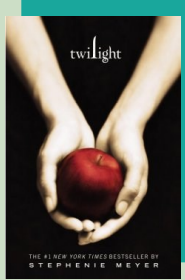


### **To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee (1960)**

In this classic tale of courage and morality in a small, Southern town, a young tomboy tells the story of the summer her father defends a black man accused of raping a white woman. This is a powerful look at discrimination and an emotional exploration of human instinct, as viewed through the eyes of a child. *Middle School/High School.*

### **Twilight Saga (series) by Stephenie Meyer (2005–2008)**

When Bella Swan leaves her life in Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, she is instantly drawn to Edward Cullen, a handsome and mysterious boy who she later learns is a vampire. Over the course of the series, Bella and Edward face several challenges to their relationship and to their lives, and Bella learns more about the secrets of creatures she once thought were only make believe. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



#### Titles include:

1. **Twilight**
2. **New Moon**
3. **Eclipse**
4. **Breaking Dawn**



### **Uglies Quartet (series) by Scott Westerfeld (2005–2007)**

In a future society where people are required to undergo extreme plastic surgery at the age of sixteen—transforming teens from “ugly” to “pretty”—Tally rebels against the enforced conformity and the operation which may affect more than just appearance. *Middle School/High School.*



#### Titles include:

1. **Uglies**
2. **Pretties**
3. **Specials**
4. **Extras**



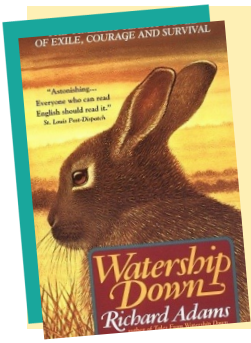
### **Unwind by Neal Shusterman (2007)**

In a future world where teens ages 13 to 18 can have their lives “unwound” and their body parts harvested for use by others, 16-year-old Connor is stunned to learn that his parents have signed the order. Determined to escape his fate, Connor goes on the run and encounters Risa and Lev while eluding the police. The three teens have nothing in common—except that each of them has been marked for Unwinding. This is an action-packed thriller filled with thought-provoking moral questions. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

### **Watchmen by Alan Moore (graphic novel) (1987)**

A groundbreaking graphic novel that turns the superhero archetype inside out, *Watchmen* is set in an alternate reality in which the world balances precariously on the brink of World War III. Superheroes have been outlawed, but when former crime fighters start turning up dead, a trio of masked crusaders come out of retirement to stop the killings and ensure their own safety. In the process, they uncover a dangerous conspiracy and must struggle with their own all-too-human failings and moral quandaries. *High School (mature).*



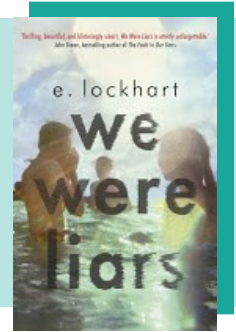


**Watership Down by Richard Adams (1972)**

One of the most beloved fantasy novels of all time, this heroic adventure is the story of what happens when a small band of young males go in search of a new home after Fiver, a clairvoyant, has a terrible vision of the future. But few in the group have been far from home, and their journey is filled with unforeseen dangers and epic struggles. The protagonists of this dynamic tale may be rabbits, but they aren't the rabbits of Beatrix Potter's children's stories. *Middle School/High School.*

**We Were Liars by E. Lockhart (2014)**

A story of love, lies, secrets, and deep family dysfunction, *We Were Liars* is a gorgeously written psychological thriller full of drama and mystery. The tale centers on Cady, a young woman with no memory of the summer that changed her life forever but determined to uncover the secrets her wealthy, Kennedy-like family try to keep hidden. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

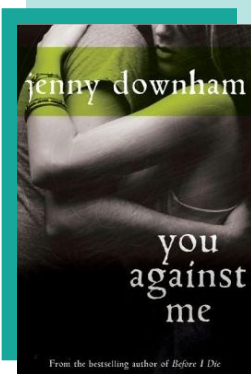
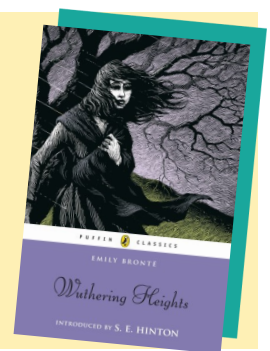


**Wintergirls by Laurie Halse Anderson (2009)**

Vividly realistic yet touched with hints of the supernatural, *Wintergirls* explores the psychological struggles and motivations of living with anorexia. Best friends Lia and Cassie became locked in a deadly competition to see which girl who could be the thinnest, ending in a broken friendship and tragedy. Now Lia believes she is being taunted by Cassie's spirit into continuing the competition as she battles with her feelings of guilt and her desire to gain a sense of control over her own life. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*

**Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë (1847)**

Set during the 18th century in the harsh and beautiful landscape of the English moors, this novel follows the intertwined lives of two families over several decades. Heathcliff is a powerful, moody figure who dominates those around him, and his relationship with Catherine is all kinds of twisted. Whether you see the book as romantic like *Twilight's* Bella or think the characters are obsessive and crazy, this masterpiece of Gothic literature is addictively readable. *Middle School (mature)/High School.*



**You Against Me by Jenny Downham (2011)**

Truth, justice, and family loyalty are called into question in this powerful Romeo-and-Juliet style romance. When Mikey's 15-year-old sister accuses an older boy of rape and refuses to leave their apartment, he's not 100% sure he believes the story but feels obligated to avenge her. He's also dealing with work, an alcoholic mom, and a confused 7-year-old sister. Meanwhile, Ellie wants more than anything to believe that her brother Tom is innocent, and her wealthy parents have launched a full-scale campaign to clear her brother's name. Then Mikey and Ellie meet and their loyalties are put to the ultimate test. This is a suspenseful, unforgettable novel with strongly drawn characters and complex emotions. *High School.*





## Our 2018 Ultimate Teen Booklist Committee

**Jessica Harney**, BCPL Administrative Assistant in Public Relations

**Steven Pierce**, BCPL Teen Programmer (Ridgway Memorial)

**Tracy Weikel** (*Committee Organizer*), BCPL Public Relations Coordinator

### Did all your favorites make the list? If not, we welcome your feedback!

*Simply fill out the form below to let us know what titles you think we should consider adding to next year's list. Our Ultimate Teen Booklist committee will do our best to read each suggestion and evaluate it for inclusion on the list. The revised list will be released in October 2019 to celebrate Teen Read Week.*

**Name (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age (optional):** \_\_\_\_\_

### Recommended additions (or removals!) for 2019:

Book/Series	Author	Reason we should consider this suggestion:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

**Would you like to be notified of our decision regarding your suggestion(s)?** \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, please be sure you provide your e-mail address so that we may contact you.*

**Additional questions or comments:**