

Quick Picks
Grades 7 and 8
*(*student recommendation)*

- Alexander, Kwame. *The Crossover*.** *A verse novel in which fourteen-year-old twin basketball stars Josh and Jordan wrestle with highs and lows on and off the court as their father ignores his declining health. **2015 Newbery Award.** Also consider *Booked, Rebound,* and *Out of Wonder* by Alexander.
- Anderson, L.H. *Ashes*.** The last volume in the *Seeds of America* series. It follows Isabel and Curzon, two former slaves who have both spied and fought for the rebels during the Revolutionary War. Begin the series with *Chains* (**2009 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction; 2008 National Book Award Finalist**). Also consider *Speak* by same author.
- Barnhill, K. *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*.** Abandoned as a baby, Luna has been raised by a witch, a swamp monster, and a pocket-sized dragon. At thirteen, she must now thwart those who have long oppressed the town of her birth.. **2017 Newbery Medal.**
- Benway, R. *Far from the Tree*.** *Adopted at birth, Grace has just given up her own child for adoption and now wants to find her biological mother. In this quest, she enlists the help of two newly discovered siblings. **2018 National Book Award Winner.** Also consider *Emmy and Oliver* by same author.
- Bodeen, S.A. *The Compound*.** *Fifteen-year-old Eli, locked inside a radiation-proof compound built by his father to keep them safe following a nuclear attack, begins to question his future, as well as his father's sanity as the family's life steadily disintegrates from six years of isolation. Also consider Bodeen's *The Raft**, in which a young girl fights for her life after her plane goes down in the Pacific.
- Brimmer, L.D. *Birmingham Sunday*.** Provides an account of the racially motivated bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, on September 15, 1963, which resulted in the deaths of four children, and discusses how the tragedy spurred the passage of the landmark 1964 civil rights legislation. **2011 Orbis Pictus Honor Book for Nonfiction.**
- Bradley, K.M. *The War That Saved My Life*.** During World War II, a young disabled girl and her brother are evacuated from London to the English countryside to escape the blitz. They begin to build a new life away from their abusive mother. **2016 Newbery Honor Book.**
- Brown, D. *Drowned City: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans*.** A gripping account of the Hurricane Katrina disaster, when New Orleans flooded and over 1400 people died. Graphic nonfiction. **2016 Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction.**
- Budhos, M. *Ask Me No Questions*.** An illegal Bangladeshi teen tells of her family's frantic response to the post 9/11 crackdown on immigrants. The INS arrests her father, and she and her sister struggle to stay in the U.S. Also consider *Watched* by the same author. **2017 Walter Dean Myers Honor Book.**
- Cavallaro, B. *A Study in Charlotte: A Charlotte Holmes Mystery*.** Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson descendants, Charlotte and Jamie, two boarding school students, team up to solve a murder mystery and to prove their innocence. This is the first book in a series..
- Dashner, J. *The Eye of Minds*.** *Michael is a skilled internet gamer in a world of advanced technology. When a cyber-terrorist begins to threaten players, Michael is called upon to seek him and his secrets out. Also enjoy *The Maze Runner** series by the same author.
- Donnelly, J. *Revolution*.** Facing expulsion from her private school, Andi travels to Paris to complete a school assignment and uncovers a diary written during the French Revolution by an actress trying to help an imprisoned child, Louis Charles, France's lost king. (Advanced)
- Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*.** *An eleven year-old cerebral palsy victim is brilliant and creative yet cannot walk or talk. Unable to communicate, she is locked away from expressing her ideas, feelings, frustrations. The story tells of her struggle to find ways to make herself known and to participate in the "normal" world. Also consider Draper's *Copper Sun*, which won the **2007 Coretta Scott King Award**, and *Fire from the Rock* in which Sylvia Patterson's life suddenly changes with the integration of Little Rock's Central High in 1957 when she becomes one of the first black students to attend the previously all-white school. Also consider *Stella by Starlight*, which won the **2016 NCTE Charlotte Huck Award for Outstanding Fiction.**
- Edwardson, D.D. *My Name Is Not Easy*.** Alaskans Luke, Chickie, Sonny, Donna, and Amiq relate their experiences in the early 1960's when they are forced to attend a boarding school where there are required to suppress their native languages and tribal customs.
- Fleming, C. *The Family Romanov: Murder, Rebellion and the Fall of Imperial Russia*.** True story of the imprisonment and murder of the Russian royal family during the Bolshevik Revolution. **2015 Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction.**
- Fox, H. *Eager*.** Unlike Grumps, their old-fashioned robot, the Bell family's new robot, Eager, is programmed to not merely obey but to question, reason, and exercise free will. This book has humor, adventure, and suspense. A great read!
- French, N. *Bounce*.** *Thirteen-year-old Evyn's world is turned upside-down when her father, widowed since she was a toddler, suddenly decides to remarry a woman with six children, move with Ev and her brother from Maine to Boston, and enroll her in private school.
- Gemeinhart, D. *Scar Island*.** Twelve-year-old Jonathan Grisby has been sentenced to serve ten weeks at the Slabhenge Reformatory. When a freak lightning storm kills all of the adults, Jonathan and the other young inmates must fend for themselves to survive.
- Giles, Gail. *Girls Like Us*.** Graduating from their school's special education program, Quincy and Bidy are placed together in their first independent apartment and discover unexpected things they share in the face a harrowing trauma. **2015 Schneider Family Book Award.**
- Giles, L.R. *Fake ID*.** A teen in the Witness Protection Program moves to a new town and finds himself trying to solve a murder mystery when his first friend is found dead. **2015 Edgar Award Nominee.**
- Grabenstein, C. *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library*.** *Twelve-year-old Kyle gets to stay overnight in the new town library with other students but finds that come morning he must work with friends to solve puzzles in order to escape.
- Gratz, A. *Prisoner B-3087*** *Based on the life of Jack Gruener, this book relates his survival story from the Nazi occupation of Krakow, when he was eleven, through a succession of concentration camps, to the final liberation of Dachau. Also consider *Code of Honor, Projekt 1065,* and *Refugee* by Gratz.
- Hoose, P. *Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice*.** Fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin refuses to give up her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama, nine months before Rosa Parks' defiant act. **2009 National Book Award.** Nonfiction.
- Jamieson, V. *Roller Girl*.** Just as she and her best friend are growing apart, Astrid discovers and falls in love with roller derby. She discovers new friends and a new self. A graphic novel. **2016 Newbery Honor Award Book.**
- Jones, T. L. *Standing Against the Wind*.** With her mother jailed, Patrice's goal is to win a scholarship to an exclusive boarding school for African-Americans in Mississippi. Harassed by a gang at school, her savior is Monty with whom she develops a relationship.
- Kephart, B. *This Is the Story of You*.** When a superstorm devastates the small barrier island town where she lives year-round, seventeen-year-old Mira finds herself alone and trying to survive.
- Kodahota, C. *The Thing About Luck*.** Just when 12-year-old Summer thinks that nothing more can go wrong, her parents are called to Japan for an emergency and she is left take care of her younger brother and to help her grandmother cook and care for harvest workers. **2014 National Book Award.**
- Korman, G. *The Juvie Three*.** Gecko, Arjay, and Terence, all in trouble with the law, must find a way to keep their halfway house open in order to stay out of juvenile detention. This book is fast-paced and has cliff-hanging action.
- Kurlansky, M. *World Without Fish*.** Non-fiction text that describes what is happening to fish and oceans in the early 21st century.
- Lai, T. *Inside Out and Back Again*.** *In a verse novel, a young girl chronicles the life-changing year of 1975, when she, her mother, and her brothers leave Vietnam and resettle in Alabama. **2011 National Book Award.**
- Lewis, J. *March: Book Three*.** This graphic novel concludes the *March* trilogy, an autobiographical account of Congressman John Lewis's experiences during the Civil Rights Movement, including Lewis's involvement in the Selma March. **2017 Printz Award; 2017 Coretta Scott King Award; 2017 Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award; 2016 National Book Award.**

Levine, Kristin. *The Lions of Little Rock*. Twelve-year-old Marlee develops a strong friendship with Liz, the new girl in school, but when Liz is discovered as an African American girl passing herself off as white, the two must decide whether their friendship is worth fighting for.

Lupica, M. *QBI*. Jake Cullen, fourteen, lives in the shadows of his father and older brother until he becomes the starting quarterback for the high school football team. If you love **basketball**, try Lupica's *Travel Team*; for good **baseball** stories, try *Heat* or *The Big Field*.

Magoon, Kekla. *How It Went Down*.* When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson is shot to death, his community is thrown into an uproar because Tariq was black and the shooter, Jack Franklin, is white, and in the aftermath everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events agree. **2015 Coretta Scott King Honor Book.** Also highly recommended is Magoon's *Camo Girl*.*

McNaughton, J. *The Secret Under My Skin*. In 2368, humans exist under dire environmental conditions. One young woman, rescued from a work camp and chosen for a special duty, uses her love of learning to discover the truth about the planet's future and her own past.

Martin, A.M. *Rain/Reign*.* When her beloved dog goes missing, Rose, struggling with Asperger's syndrome, must confront the limits of her comfort levels, to search for her pet. **2015 Schneider Family Book Award; 2015 NCTE Charlotte Huck Winner.**

Myers, W. D. *The Journal of Biddy Owens: The Negro Leagues*. Teenager Biddy Owens' 1948 journal about working for the Birmingham Black Barons includes the games and the players and the racism the team faces from New Orleans to Chicago.

Naidoo, Beverly. *Burn My Heart*. Mugo serves Matt and his family on the land in Kenya that Matt's settler grandfather took from Mugo's family after World War I. When the Mau Mau insurgency begins to terrorize white settlers, political events, fear, and the quest to hold onto colonial power destroy relationships and lives. Matt and Mugo try to preserve their friendship, despite their different races.

Naylor, P.R. *The Fear Place*. When he and his older brother Gordon are left camping alone in the Rocky Mountains, twelve-year-old Doug faces his fear of heights and his feelings about Gordon--with the help of a cougar.

Reed, J. *Keep Me in Mind*.* High-schoolers Ellia and Liam are a couple until Ellia suffers amnesia as a result of a traumatic fall. She can no longer remember Liam or their relationship. Liam tries to bring Ellia's memory back by recreating in writing the story of their time together.

Reynolds, J. *Long Way Down*.* As Will, fifteen, sets out to avenge his brother Shawn's fatal shooting, seven ghosts who knew Shawn board the elevator and reveal truths Will needs to know. **2018 Edgar Award (Best Mystery); 2018 Newbery, Printz, Coretta Scott King Honor Book. 2018 National Book Award Finalist.** Also consider *Ghost, Patina*, and *All American Boy* by same author.

Riordan, R. *The Sword of Summer*. From the author of the popular *The Lightning Thief*, this is the first book in the new *Magnus Chase* series, which is based on Norse mythology. The second book in the series won the **2017 Stonewall Award for Children's Literature.**

Rowell, R. *Eleanor and Park*.* Set over the course of a year, friendship and then romance develop between two unique and exceptional teenagers who share a seat on the school bus and whom the world might label as "misfits." **2014 Printz Honor Award.** Also consider *Fangirl** by the same author.

Russo, M. *If I Was Your Girl*.* Amanda, a transgender teen, has changed schools to escape bullying from schoolmates. In her new school, she finds new friends and relationships but keeps a secret that defines who she is. **2017 Stonewall Award for YA Literature. 2017 Walter Dean Myers Honor Book.**

Schmidt, Gary. *Orbiting Jupiter*.* Jack, 12, tells the gripping story of Joseph, 14, who joins his family as a foster child. Damaged in prison, Joseph wants nothing more than to find his baby daughter, Jupiter, whom he has never seen.

Schreier, E. *Threatened*. Luc, a child slave in Gabon, meets a professor who claims to be studying chimpanzees, and they head off into the jungle. When the professor disappears, Luc has to fend for himself and join forces with the chimps to save their forest. **2015 National Book Award Honoree.**

Sheinkin, S. *Bomb: The Race to Build and Steal the World's Most Dangerous Weapon*. Examines the history of the atomic bomb, from the discovery of uranium to the race to build the bomb and its worldwide impact. **2013 National Book Award Finalist; Newbery Honor Book; Robert F. Silbert Informational Book Award.** Also see Sheinkin's *Port Chicago 50*. **2015 National Book Award Finalist.**

Sheinkin, S. *Undeclared: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team*. Retells an important piece of Native American history. This biography recounts how Jim Thorpe and Glenn (Pop) Warner created the legendary Carlisle School football team. This is a must-read for all **football fans**. See also *The Notorious Benedict Arnold* by the same author.

Sonnenblick, J. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie*. When his younger brother is diagnosed with leukemia, thirteen-year-old Steven tries to deal with his complicated emotions, school, and his desire to support his family.

Steifvater, S. *Shiver*; *Linger*; *Forever*. Paranormal romance trilogy. For years, Sam, a werewolf, has stared at Grace with his yellow eyes from the edge of the woods behind her house. One day, having assumed his human form, he meets her, and romance ensues.

Thomas, J. R. *Blind Mountain*. Annoyed at having to spend a day climbing a Montana mountain with his bossy father, twelve-year-old Sam must become the guide on their perilous journey down when his carelessness blinds his father.

Tunnell, M.O. *Candy Bomber: Story of the Berlin Airlift's "Chocolate Pilot"*. Describes US Air Force Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen aiding children in Russian-blockaded West Berlin by dropping candy from the air. **2011 Orbis Pictus Honor Book for Nonfiction.**

Uwiringiyamana, S. *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child*.* Sandra tells how, at age 10, she survived a massacre in war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo, later immigrated to America from a United Nations refugee camp, and now overcomes her trauma through art and activism.

Watson, R. *Piecing Me Together*. Tired of being singled out at her mostly-white private school as someone who needs support, high school junior Jade longs to be chosen to participate in the school's amazing Study Abroad program while resenting being selected to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for at-risk girls. **2018 Coretta Scott King Award. 2018 Newbery Honor Book.**

Wein, E. *Code Name Verity*. A British fighter plane crashes in Nazi-occupied France. The survivor tells her Gestapo captors a tale of friendship, war, and espionage to survive yet keeping secret all that she can. **2013 Edgar Award; 2013 Printz Honor Book.** (Advanced)

Wiles, D. *Countdown*. As eleven-year-old Franny Chapman deals with drama at home and with her best friend in 1962, she tries to understand the larger problems in the world after President Kennedy announces that Russia is sending nuclear missiles to Cuba. This documentary novel features historic quotations and photographs. First book in the *Sixties* trilogy.

Williams-Garcia, R. *Jumped*. The lives of Leticia, Dominique, and Trina are irrevocably intertwined through the course of one day in an urban high school after Leticia overhears Dominique's plans to beat up Trina and must decide to get involved or not. **2009 National Book Award Finalist.**

Whaley, J.C. *Noggin*. After dying at age sixteen, Travis Coates' head was removed and frozen for five years before being attached to another body, and now the old Travis and the new one must find a way to coexist while figuring out changes in his relationships. **2015 National Book Award Finalist.**

Wolk, L. *Wolf Hollow*. Growing up in a rural Pennsylvania town in the aftermath of two world wars, Annabelle confronts a violent new bully and must defend a traumatized World War I veteran who is wrongly implicated in the bully's disappearance. **2017 Newbery Honor Book.**

Woodson, J. *Hush*. Twelve-year-old Toswiah finds her life changed when her family enters the Witness Protection Program.

Woodson, J. *Brown Girl Dreaming*. In free verse poems, the author shares her childhood memories and reveals the first sparks that ignited her writing career in free-verse poems. **2014 National Book Award Winner; 2015 Coretta Scott King Award; 2015 Newbery Honor Award.**

Yoon, N. *Everything, Everything*.* Maddy has not left her house for 17 years due to an immunodeficiency disease. Her physician mother cares for her. When a new family moves in next door, Maddy begins to want a larger world for herself. Also consider *The Sun Is Also a Star* by the same author.

Yousafzai, M. *I Am Malala*.* Malala Yousafzai's describes her fight for education for girls under Taliban rule, the support she received from her parents to pursue an education, and how the Taliban retaliated against her by trying to kill her.