



2025 Evergreen Book Talks - High School

Lightlark

Alex Aster

Publisher: Amulet

Book Talk by TuesD Chambers and Serena Pook, Ballard High School

500 years ago, six curses were placed on the joined magical kingdoms of Lightlark, the only way to break them? Solve the riddle the oracle gave the night the curses were cast. But it isn't that simple, the prophecy requires one of the rulers to die, and if you kill a ruler EVERYONE in their kingdom dies too. So, when Isla, the youngest and newest ruler, is invited to help break the curses, she goes out of duty to her people. But she has a secret she must hide from the other rulers, for if they knew they would surely kill her. She is the only person the curses don't affect... and she is powerless. In order to survive she will have to lie, cheat, and steal, even when her heart gets in the way.

My Mechanical Romance

Alexene Farol Fullmuth

Publisher: Holiday House

Book Talk by TuesD Chambers, Ballard High School

Who doesn't love battle-robot-building nerds? *My Mechanical Romance* is a witty, opposites-attract romance that explores the vulnerability of being a girl of color in STEM and falling in love for the first time. Bel is actively avoiding thinking about the future but accidentally reveals her talent for engineering, where she is reluctantly forced to join the robotics club. Mateo Luna, is the captain of the robotics club who cares deeply about Nationals and building a winning machine. He recognizes Bel as an asset, but they are so different and initially just butt heads. Yet as nights of after-school work grow longer both start to realize maybe they're more than just robot building champions, and actually constructing the foundation for a budding romance.

The Getaway

Lamar Giles

Publisher Scholastic Press

Book Talk by Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School

Karloff Country has it all...stomach dropping rides, sparkling lights, mouthwatering treats, and five-star resort amenities. The client list is an A-list, and it is all tucked away inside a utopian suburb where the employees live. When Jay's family moves there, they think they have won the lottery, but they could never predict the spooky reward. When Jay notices suspicious elements of the neighborhood and The Getaway amusement park, he teams up with people he trusts to expose the nefarious puppet master pulling the strings. This story provides chills and thrills that come with any sci-fi horror tale and plot twists that will leave readers deliciously dizzy.

The Silence That Binds Us

Joanna Ho

Publisher: HarperTeen

Book Talk by Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School

No one expects to get news that a family member has committed suicide. That happens to other people, until the “other people” become you, and that is the news that Maybelline Chen and her parents get one night. Soon everyone at school and in their town is buzzing with rumors and speculation until at a town hall meeting a parent from Maybelline’s high school accuse Asian Americans of the problem of teen suicide in their area. Now Maybelline’s fight to mourn becomes a fight for understanding, and she starts a movement at her school for all disenfranchised groups called #Take Back the Narrative. This story has many complex characters and situations that the author masterfully weaves together into a moving and unforgettable tableau of nuanced narratives. Readers will be forever transformed by this relevant and profound story

The Red Palace

June Hur

Publisher: Feiwel and Friends

Book Talk by Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Joseon, Korea, 1758. Hyeon has recently started working as a palace nurse, an impressive position for someone from the lowest class, as she is. But she risks everything to pursue justice when she discovers that four women have been murdered at the Hyeminseo, the medical office where Hyeon trained and the only place she ever truly felt at home. Her mentor is the police’s main suspect, but Hyeon knows she is innocent. Soon Hyeon crosses paths with Eojin, a young police inspector, and the two combine their investigations. Tensions mount as more young women are attacked and evidence begins to point to the Crown Prince himself as the murderer. Can Hyeon and Eojin solve the case before their own lives are put in danger?

The Lesbiana’s Guide to Catholic School

Sonora Reyes

Publisher: Balzer + Bray

Book Talk by Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

YAMILET’S PLAN:

1. Enroll in Catholic school. Support younger brother so he stays out of trouble and doesn’t blow his scholarship.
2. Avoid former best friend (and crush). Benefit of new school!
3. Find a job. Make enough money to rent an apartment. (In case former best friend outs her and family kicks her out).
4. ABSOLUTELY DO NOT come out, especially to Bo, the out, proud, and cutest girl in Catholic school.

But best-laid plans have a way of going sideways, and Yamilet will find support and friendship in some surprising situations before a bittersweet and heartwarming conclusion.

I Must Betray You**Ruta Sepetys****Publisher: Philomel Books**

Book Talk by Mike Fleming, Juanita High School

17-year old Cristian becomes an informer for the Securitate in Communist Romania in 1989. Disillusioned with the Ceausescu government having control over every Romanian's life, including the audio-bugging of their houses, he records his secret feelings he cannot share any other way into a notebook that he keeps secret. Cristian speaks a little English and wonders about the West. Therefore, it is even more crushing when he is blackmailed and forced into spying on his fellow citizens for the Securitate after a chance encounter with a US Ambassador and his teen son. Revolution and the end of the Ceausescu government is in the air, but it will cost Cristian everything if he chooses to participate. No one is safe, no one can be trusted – not even family.

Victory. Stand!: Raising My Fist For Justice**Tommie Smith and Derrick Barnes, Art by Dawud Anyabwile****Publisher: Norton Young Readers**

Book Talk by Jodi Kruse, R. A. Long High School

Tommie Smith grew up in a house full of people. Fourteen people—including his parents—to be exact. The son of a sharecropper, Tommie learned his work ethic from his father, and it was that work ethic that carried him to an Olympic track and field medal in the 1968 Olympics. You might recognize him from the raised fist on the Olympic podium. This is the story behind that cry for justice.

All My Rage**Sabaa Tahir****Publisher: Razorbill**

Book Talk by Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

The fortune teller told Misbah Auntie: “You will have your children far from here. Three... You will fail them all.”

Noor texted Sal: Come to the hospital ASAP. Emergency room. Your mom is OK. But she had to be admitted.

Sal texted Noor: YOUR UNCLE PULLED UP. ABORT MISSION. ABORT MISSION.

Noor and Sal, seniors in high school and (former?) best friends, are doing the best they can with what they have. But when the adults who they should be able to rely on descend into illness, addiction, and betrayal, will their best be enough? An incredible story of friendship, resilience, and forgiveness in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. A must read.

No One Is Alone**Rachel Vincent****Publisher: Bloomsbury**

Book Talk by Jodi Kruse, R. A. Long High School

Michaela's life is about to get messy. Not only is she grieving the unexpected loss of her mother, she now has to live with her father—the same father who cheated on his wife with Michaela's mom. Now Michaela has to live with her father, her stepmother, an older brother, a sister who is about her own age, and her half-siblings' grandmother who isn't afraid to let everyone know what she thinks. How will she navigate new family dynamics with different rules and expectations, a new school, and a new relationship. . .with her half-sister's ex-boyfriend? Yes, life is definitely about to get messy!