



**WASHINGTON STATE YOUNG ADULT REVIEW GROUP**  
**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE: December 6, 2024**

**Issue: 146**  
**September 2024**

**WASHRAG**  
*Titles Taken: 3-10*  
*Fiction Reviews: 11-33*  
*Graphic Novel Reviews: 33-35*  
*Nonfiction Reviews: 35-40*

**WASHYARGers:**

Welcome to WashYARG, the oldest and largest Young Adult Review Group of its kind! While we all come to WASHYARG because it is a great place to learn about new books, we also enjoy the opportunity to network with other teen-serving professionals.

**We are now in hybrid mode!** Please join us in person if you are comfortable and able. Doors open at 8:30am. Or, join via Zoom. The link will open by 8:45am with a meeting start time of 9:00am.

Any questions? Contact Brenna Shanks – [bshanks@kcls.org](mailto:bshanks@kcls.org) or 425-369-3331

**DUES**

Members/reviewers may pay dues at any time during the year, but we appreciate prompt payment in September for the forthcoming year. Dues are \$25 and a dues sheet is included in the newsletter.

Dues can be paid online at:  
<https://givebutter.com/StQMvU>

Or mailed to:  
Anne Dame  
Einstein Middle School  
19343 3rd Ave NW  
Shoreline WA 98177

**REMINDERS**

**IN PERSON MEETING LOCATION:**  
King County Library System Service Center  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, 98027

**2024 MEETINGS**

- *December 6*

**2025 MEETINGS**

- *March 7*
- *May 2*
- *September 12*
- *December 5*

**REVIEWS**

Please submit your delivered reviews and current “books taken” after the meeting. You may submit them at:

<https://evergreenbookaward.org/washyarg/>

- Please be as accurate as possible.

**WHAT IS WASHYARG?**

The Washington State Young Adult Review Group is a regional reviewing organization of school and public librarians and other individuals interested in books, magazines, and other media appropriate for teenagers.

**WHY BELONG TO WASHYARG?**

We are the largest Teen Services library specialist group in the Northwest and have a national reputation as a credible review source.

Besides hearing firsthand reviews from frontline people, the meetings are an opportunity for networking, problem-solving, passionate debate, laughter, and cookies.

Even if you cannot attend the meetings, WashYARG is an excellent source for local professional reviews.

**WHAT DOES WASHYARG DO?**

WashYARG receives materials from diverse publishers. Selected items are presented orally at the quarterly meetings and written reviews of all materials are published in the WashRag newsletter and mailed to all members following the meetings. WashYARG also sponsors the annual Evergreen Young Adult Book Award, a statewide teen readers' choice prize.

**WHAT WOULD I DO?**

Agree to review at least two books a year.  
Attend as many of the meetings as possible.

**WHAT DOES IT COST?**

All interested folk are invited to attend for free the first time. The normal dues are \$25.00 for a school year and entitle one to review books and receive the WashRag, a quarterly compilation of written reviews.

**HOW DO I JOIN?**

Fill out the form below and bring it to the next meeting with your \$25.00 membership dues.

Please make checks payable to WashYARG.

**2024 MEETINGS**

- December 6

**2025 MEETINGS**

- March 7
- May 2
- September 12
- December 5

**MEMBERSHIP FORM:**



Name:

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Title:

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Email\*:

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Phone\*:

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Address\*:

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*\* Please indicate home or work for contact info.*

## Titles Taken for Review – Since May 2024

All titles and reviews are now being submitted online at:  
<https://evergreenbookaward.org/washyarg/>  
 Please be as accurate as possible when entering your information.

Please remember ARCs may not be added to your collection.

◆Already reviewed

### FICTION

<b><i>Adia Kelbara and the Circle of Shamans</i> #1 (ARC)</b>	Balzer and Bray, 2023		
Hendrix, Isi	9780063266339	\$19.99	352 p.
JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)			
<b><i>The Ballad of Darcy and Russell</i></b>	Simon & Schuster, 2024		
Matson, Morgan	9781481499019	\$19.99	388 p.
Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School			
<b><i>Beastly Beauty</i> (ARC)</b>	Scholastic Press, 2024		
Donnelly, Jennifer	9781338809442	\$18.99	323 p.
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High			
<b>Comments:</b> Companion to <i>Stepsister</i> and <i>Poison</i>			
<b><i>Bite Me, Royce Taslim</i></b>	Hyperion, 2024		
Ho, Lauren	978-1-368-09535-8	\$18.99	312 p.
Aimee Miles, UPrep			
<b><i>By Any Other Name</i></b>	Simon & Schuster, 2023		
Cotter, Erin	9781665940719	\$21.99	456 p.
Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School			
<b><i>Coyote Lost and Found</i>, Coyote Sunrise #2</b>	Henry Holt and Company, 2024		
Gemeinhart, Dan	9781250292773	\$17.98	275 p.
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High			
<b>Comment:</b> I didn't expect the sophomore Coyote Book to be so wonderful. Yes, they go back on the road, but don't let that stop you.			
<b><i>Creeping Beauty</i></b>	HarperTeen, 2023		
Portes, Andrea	975-0-06-242247-7	\$19.99	348 p.
Elizabeth Kalen, White Center Library (KCLS)			
<b><i>Cursed Cruise</i>, Horror Hotel #2</b>	Underlined, 2024		
Fulton, Victoria and Faith McClaren	9780593649381	\$11.99	80 p.
Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School			

<b><i>Darker By Four</i></b> , Darker By Four #1 Tan, Jun CL Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School	HarperTeen, 2024 9780063283848	\$19.99	392 p.
<b><i>A Darker Mischief</i></b> (ARC) Milman, Derek Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School	Scholastic Press, 2024 9781339009933	\$19.99	384 p.
<b><i>Deep is the Fen</i></b> Wilkinson, Lili Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School	Delacorte Press, 2024 9780593562703	\$19.99	406 p.
<b><i>Defy the Storm</i></b> , Star Wars: The High Republic Gratton, Tessa and Justina Ireland Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Lucasfilm Press, 2024 9781368093811	\$18.99	454 p.
<b><i>Dragonfruit</i></b> Lucier, Makiia Aimee Miles, UPrep	Clarion Books, 2024 978-0-35-827210-6	\$19.99	<b>*BFYA NOM 2025</b> 356 p.
<b><i>A Drop of Venom</i></b> , Venom #1 Patel, Sajni Michael Fleming, Juanita High School	Hyperion, 2024 978-1-368-09268-5	\$18.99	<b>*BFYA NOM 2025</b> 393 p.
<b><i>Faker</i></b> (ARC) Korman, Gordon Sarah Hunt, Kirkland (KCLS)	Scholastic Press, 2024 978-1-338-82675-3	\$17.99	224 p.
<b><i>Fifteenth Summer</i></b> Dalton, Michelle Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School	Simon & Schuster, 2024 9781665953085	\$20.99	249 p.
<b><i>The First State of Being</i></b> Kelly, Erin Entrada Heather Goude, McKnight Middle School	Greenwillow Books, 2024 9780063337312	\$19.99	272 p.
<b><i>The Golden Imaginarium</i></b> , Hither & Nigh #2 Potter, Ellen Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2023 9781665910422	\$17.99	255 p.
<b><i>The Hedgewitch of Foxhall</i></b> Bright, Anna Elizabeth Kalen, White Center Library (KCLS)	HarperTeen, 2024 978-0-06-308-357-8	\$19.99	389 p.
<b><i>Hot Boy Summer</i></b>	MTV Entertainment Books, 2024		

Jiménez, Joe Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School	9781665932059	\$19.99	342 p.
<b><i>Icarus</i></b> Ancrum, K. Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School	HarperTeen, 2024 9780063285781	\$19.99	382 p.
<b><i>Infinity Kings</i></b> , Infinity Cycle #3 Silvera, Adam Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School	Quill Tree, 2024 9780062882363	\$21.99	740 p.
<b><i>It Waits in the Forest</i></b> Dass, Sarah Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School	Hyperion, 2024 978-1-368-09833-5	\$18.99	306 p.
<b><i>The Last Dragons on Mars</i></b> , The Dragonships #1 (ARC) Reintgen, Scott Aarene Storms, Everett Public Library	Aladdin, 2024 9781665961462	\$18.99	384 p.
<b><i>Last One to Die</i></b> Murphy, Cynthia Micaela Gunderson, Rose Hill & Stella Schola Middle School	Delacorte Press, 2021 9780593705544	\$12.99	271 p.
<b><i>The Last Rhee Witch</i></b> , The Last Rhee Witch #1 Lee-Yun, Jenna Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Disney Hyperion, 2024 9781368099073	\$17.99	342 p.
<b><i>Lightningborn</i></b> , Storm Dragons #1 Kagawa, Julie Aarene Storms, Everett Public Library	Disney Hyperion, 2024 9781368090308	\$17.99	329 p.
<b><i>The Lilies</i></b> (ARC) Diacon-Furtado, Quinn Lindsay Ellsworth, North Bend Library (KCLS)	HarperTeen, 2024 0063318199	\$19.99	336 p.
◆ <b><i>The Longest Night in Egypt</i></b> , The Shadow Prince #2 Anthony Durham, David Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Tu Books, 2023 9781643796093	\$21.95	378 p.
<b><i>The Lost Ones</i></b> , Dark Ascension #2 DeStefano, Lauren Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Disney Press, 2024 97813680671517	\$18.99	330 p.
<b><i>Loveboat Forever</i></b> , Loveboat, Taipei #3 Wen, Abigail Hing JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)	HarperTeen, 2023 9780063297999	\$19.99	392 p.

<b><i>The Misdirection of Fault Lines</i></b> (ARC) Gracia, Anna JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)	Peachtree Teen, 2024 9781682635803	\$18.99	352 p.
<b><i>Not Like Other Girls</i></b> (ARC) Adamo, Meredith Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School	Bloomsbury, 2024 9781547614004	\$19.99	448 p.
<b><i>Not Nothing</i></b> (ARC) Forman, Gayle Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High	Simon & Schuster, 2024 9781665943277	\$17.99	269 p.
<b><i>The Notes</i></b> Con Morse, Catherine Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School Elizabeth Kalen, White Center Library (KCLS)	Crown Books for Young Readers, 2024 9780593711385	\$19.99	310 p.
<b><i>Now, Conjurers</i></b> (ARC) Kolsch, Freddie Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School	Union Square & Co, 2024 9781454951599	\$19.99	384 p.
<b><i>Promchanted</i></b> Matson, Morgan Amber Peterson, International Community School	Disney Hyperion, 2024 978-1-368-09557-0	\$18.99	377 p.
<b><i>Quest for the Wishing Stone</i></b> , Dungeoneer Adventures #3 Costa, Ben and Parks, James Michael Fleming, Juanita High School	Aladdin, 2024 978-166591073-6	\$13.99	280 p.
<b><i>Race for the Ruby Turtle</i></b> (ARC) Bramucci, Stephen Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School <b>Comments:</b> Elementary	Bloomsbury, 2023 9781547607020	\$17.99	336 p.
<b><i>The Reappearance of Rachel Price</i></b> Jackson, Holly Heather Goude, McKnight Middle School Micaela Gunderson, Rose Hill & Stella Schola Middle School	Delacorte Press, 2024 9780593374207	\$20.99	448 p.
<b><i>Reign</i></b> , American Royals #4 McGee, Katharine Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School	Random House Children's Books, 2023 9780593429747	\$19.99	432 p.
<b><i>The Second Chance of Darius Logan</i></b> (ARC) Walker, David F.	Scholastic, 2024 978-1-338-82642-5	\$19.99	384 p.

Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

***The Sherlock Society***, The Sherlock Society #1 (ARC) Aladdin, 2024  
Ponti, James 9781665932530 \$18.99 352 p.

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

**Comments:** Elementary

***Shooting for Stars*** (ARC) Peachtree Teen, 2024  
Webb, Christine 9781682636015 \$18.99 311 p.

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

***Skandar and the Chaos Trials***, Skandar #3 Simon & Schuster, 2024  
Steadman, A. F. 978-1-6659-1279-2 \$18.99 511 p.

Amber Peterson, International Community School

***These Bodies Between Us*** Delacorte Press, 2024 **\*BFYA NOM 2025**  
Van Name, Sarah 9780593646175 \$19.99 325 p.

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

***This Is Not a Personal Statement*** Quill Tree, 2023  
Badua, Tracy 978-0-06-321775-1 \$18.99 341 p.

Raina Sedore, Lacey & Hawks Prairie (Timberland Library)

***Unbecoming*** (ARC) Simon & Schuster, 2024  
Yasmin, Seema 978166593440 \$19.99 327 p.

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

***Under This Red Rock*** Katherine Tegen Books, 2024 **\*BFYA NOM 2025**  
McGinnis, Mindy 9780063230415 \$19.99 323 p.

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High

***The Voice Upstairs*** Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2023  
Weymouth, Laura E. 9781665926836 \$19.99 320 p.

Heather Goude, McKnight Middle School

***The Water Door*** self, 2022  
Jae, Aggie L. 979-8-9860266-0-2 \$35.00 545 p.

Linda Butler, Kent County Library, Kent County Maryland

**Comments:** Middle-Grade winner of the Mom's Choice Award, Royal Dragonfly Award, and Story Monsters Approved Award. Book 2 due out early 2025.

***We Still Belong*** Heartdrum, 2023  
Day, Christine 9780063064560 \$18.99 248 p.

Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

***We're Never Getting Home*** Quill Tree, 2024  
 Badua, Tracy 0063217805 \$15.99 320 p.  
 Lindsay Ellsworth, North Bend Library (KCLS)

***What The River Knows*, Secrets of the Nile #1**  
 Wednesday Books, 2023 \*BFYA NOM 2025  
 Ibañez, Isabel 9781250803375 \$20.00 403 p.  
 Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

***Wide Awake Now*** Alfred A. Knopf, 2024  
 Levithan, David 978-0-593-70697-8 \$19.99 263 p.  
 Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School

***The World Divided by Piper*** Quill Tree, 2024  
 Carter, Caela 9780062996664 \$19.99 374 p.  
 Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle school

***Zara's Rules for Living Your Best Life*, Zara's Rules #3** Simon & Schuster, 2023  
 Khan, Hena 978-1-5344-9765-8 \$17.99 130 p.  
 Raina Sedore, Lacey & Hawks Prairie (Timberland Library)

## GRAPHIC NOVELS

***The Deep Dark* (ARC)** Graphix, 2024  
 Ostertag, Molly Knox 978-1-338-83999-9 \$16.99 480 p.  
 Michael Fleming, Juanita High School  
 JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

***Good: From the Amazon Jungle to Suburbia and Back*** NBM, 2024  
 Good, David and Flux 1681123304 \$19.99 216 p.  
 Lindsay Ellsworth, North Bend Library (KCLS)

***HoverGirls* (ARC)** Bloomsbury, 2024  
 Bowers, Geneva 978-1-5476-1119-5 \$17.99 240 p.  
 Sarah Hunt, Kirkland (KCLS)

***King Cheer*, Arden High #2** Hyperion, 2024  
 Booth, Molly Horton 978-1-36806463-7 \$14.99 158 p.  
 Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

***Pearl* (ARC)** Scholastic, 2024  
 Smith, Sherri L. 9781338029437 \$24.99 144 p.  
 Anne Dame, Einstein Middle School  
 Aarene Storms, Everett Public Library



***Zombillennium - Black Friday (#5) and Sabbath Grand Derby (#6)*** NBM, 2023  
 De Pins, Arthur 978-1-68112-317-2 \$24.99 104 p.  
 Michael Fleming, Juanita High School

## NON-FICTION

***Agriculture Through the Ages: From Silk to Supermarkets***

Twenty-First Century Books, 2024  
 Woods, Michael & Woods, Mary B. 9798765610060 \$27.99 80 p.  
 Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

***The Ballerina of Auschwitz*** (ARC)

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2024  
 Eger, Dr. Edith Eva 9781665952552 \$18.99 178 p.  
 Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High  
 Comments: Young Adult Edition of *The Choice*

***Biology's Beginnings***, Discovering Life's Story #1

MITeen Press, 2023  
 Hakim, Joy 978-1536222937 \$22.99 192 p.  
 Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

***Bionic Animals***

Lerner Publication Group, 2024  
 Walker, Tracy Sue 979-8-7656-0912-5 \$11.83 32 p.  
 Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High  
**Comments:** Reading level and simplicity might be too low for middle school, but they would enjoy it.

***Eating My Words: And 128 Other Poems***

Millbrook Press, 2024  
 Clearly, Brian P. 9781728487649 \$25.99 120 p.  
 Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

***The Enigma Girls: How Ten Teenagers Broke Ciphers, Kept Secrets, and Helped Win World War II*** (ARC)

Scholastic Focus, 2024  
 Fleming, Candace 978-1338749571 \$19.99 384 p.  
 Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

***The Evolution of an Idea***, Discovering Life's Story #2

MITeen Press, 2024  
 Hakim, Joy 9781536222944 \$22.99 177 p.  
 Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

***Exploring Egyptian Mythology***

Reference Point Press, 2024  
 Nardo, Don 978-1-6782-0728-1 \$32.36 64 p.  
 Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High

***How the Boogeyman Became a Poet***

Katherine Tegen Books, 2024  
 Keith Jr., Tony 978-0063296008 \$19.99 352 p.

Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

**Comments:** Memoir in Verse

***The Monarch Effect: Surviving Poison, Predators, and People*** (ARC)

Scholastic Focus, 2024

Church, Dana L. 978-1338749229 \$19.99 320 p.  
Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

***Move: How Physical Activity Helps Maintain Mental Health***

Reference Point Press, 2024

Roland, James 9781678207366 \$32.95 64 p.  
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Junior/Senior High

***Out in the World : an LGBTQIA+ (and friends!) travel guide to more than 120 destinations around the world***

National Geographic, 2024

Scher, Amy B. 9781426223501 \$30.00 301 p.  
Aarene Storms, Everett Public Library

***Road Home*** (ARC)

Norton Young Readers, 2024

Ogle, Rex 978-1324019923 \$18.99 272 p.  
Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School  
Lindsay Ellsworth, North Bend Library (KCLS)

***Smashing Stigma: Dismantling Stereotypes Prejudice, and Discrimination***

Twenty-First Century Books, 2024

Goldsmith, Connie 9781728477398 \$28.99 144 p.  
Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

**SERIES NON-FICTION**

Guide to Financial Responsibility Reference Point Press, 2024 \$33.95 64 p.  
***How Do I Start a Business?*** Currie-McGhee, Leanne 9781678205560  
***How Do I Get a Job?*** Currie-McGhee, Leanne 9781678205546  
***How Do Credit Cards and Loans Work?*** Mooney, Carla 9781678205522  
***How Does Investing Work?*** Streissguth, Tom 9781678205584  
***Should I go to College*** Mooney, Carla 9781678205607  
Melissa Menti Mount Baker Junior/Senior High Library

Understanding American Democracy BrightPoint Press, 2024 \$32.95 64 p.  
***Fair Elections and Voting Rights*** Normandeau, Sheryl 9781678206925  
***Freedom of Speech and the Press*** Bell, Samantha S. 9781678206949  
***Individual Rights and Liberties*** Havemeyer, Janie 9781678206963  
***Rule By The People*** Havemeyer, Janie 9781678206987  
***Separation of Governmental Powers*** Milhay, Christy 9781678207007  
Sam Carterby, Grandview Middle School

## FICTION – RECOMMENDED

Andrew, Kelly 9781473234901 \$17.99 386 p.  
***Your Blood, My Bones*** (ARC) Orion, 2024

After the death of her cult leader father, Wyatt returns to her family farm with the intention of burning the place down. However, when she returns, she finds more of a mess than she expected including the twist that her childhood friend and first crush, Peter, is actually a semi-immortal being who has been ritually killed at the hands of the cult over and over for centuries. In order for him to be free, Wyatt's blood line must end. In order for Wyatt to stop the encroaching evil forces her father has been holding back, Peter must continue to die. The pair must navigate the complications in their relationship, mourning loss, and saving the world while continuing to fight the darkness looming closer and closer. A true horror title with a satisfying friends to enemies to lovers romance subplot.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Arnold, Elana K. 9780062990853 \$19.99 390 p.  
***The Blood Years*** Balzer + Bray, 2023

Based on her grandmother's experiences, Arnold tells the story of one family's life in Czernowitz, a city in present day Ukraine, over the course of World War II. Since their father left when she was 6, Rieke, her older sister Astra, and their mother have lived with her grandfather, a watchmaker and devout Jew. When the book opens in 1939, Czernowitz has been under Romanian rule for twenty years, Germany has invaded Poland, war has been declared. Jews have already lost status as citizens. The sense of fear and of being trapped between enemies pervades the book as Rieke deals with both the frightening changes of political occupation and her own family drama. As the years pass, neighbors move away or are killed, the family is rounded up and kept within a ghetto - where Rieke contracts tuberculosis - then released to return to their apartment. Rieke suffers incredible loss, starvation, and violence (including sexual violence), but, incredibly, survives. The geography of "The Blood Years" sets it apart from other holocaust stories, and the writing is exceptionally compelling. The book includes helpful contextual sections including a brief history of Czernowitz, author's note, reading list, and photos. Highly recommended.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Averling, Mary 978-0-593-62490-6 \$17.99 247 p.  
***The Curse of the Eelgrass Bog*** Razorbill, 2024

Twelve-year-old Kess Pedrock is trying to keep her family's Unnatural History Museum together while she waits for her parents to return from a research expedition. Her 15-year-old brother Oliver is supposed to be in charge but he isn't helping her efforts much—he just tells her to stay away from the Eelgrass Bog near their home. Kess' only friend isn't handy at helping either since he doesn't have hands—or body! He's a talking head from the museum that Kess carries around in a jar for company. How long her parents have been gone is a bit fuzzy in Kess' mind. Facts seem to slip in and out of her brain while the pull to visit the Eelgrass Bog is hard to resist, despite her brother's warnings. Then Lilou Starling

shows up at the museum asking for help to break a curse—her grandfather’s last request to her before he died. Lilou is the first girl her age Kess has encountered in, well, she can’t remember how long. Just who is cursed and the surprising connection between the two girls may be the key to helping Kess and her brother to change their situation for the better. If they can survive in the Eelgrass Bog that is. A few British-isms may confuse US readers, but this light horror mystery will appeal to fans of Ellen Oh’s Spirit Hunters series or Heidi Lang’s Whispering Pines series. Recommended grades 5-8.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School  
Amber Peterson, International Community School

<p>Bao, Karen <b><i>Pangu's Shadow</i></b></p>	<p>9781728477510 Carolrhoda LAB, 2024</p>	<p>\$19.99</p>	<p>282 p.</p>
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When rival lab workers Ver and Aryl are accused of murdering the supervisor, the two of them must team up to solve his murder so they won’t be sent to a penal moon for a crime they didn’t commit. Which means the two of them will have to figure out how to trust one another and find that they may have more in common than they thought. But the more the two girls dig into things, the more secrets they find. Secrets that powerful people would prefer not be found. Can they clear their names before time runs out? This rivals to lovers sci-fi murder mystery is a fun fast read. Great for both sci-fi fans and mystery lovers. Recommended for 7th grade and up. Disability and chronic illness representation. Immigrant experience representation. Queer romance.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS  
Elizabeth Kalen, White Center Library, KCLS

<p>Caletti, Deb <b><i>Plan A</i></b></p>	<p>978-0-593-48554-5 Labyrinth Road, 2023</p>	<p>\$18.99</p>	<p>404 p.</p>
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Ivy finds herself with a public, unwanted pregnancy while living in Texas. Bad combination. Oh, and it’s not her boyfriend's baby. We find out more about that as we go. However, she has an understanding mom, a grandmother in Oregon prepared to make an abortion appointment, and a boyfriend willing to drive her. Not only drive her there, but make an adventure out of it. Instead of taking the highways, they will see the “world”: Paris, Texas; Moscow, Kansas; Genoa, Colorado; Manila, Utah and so on. They will stay with family friends along the way and that is where the heart of the story is. Because they all know that Ivy is on her way to get an abortion, they feel free to reveal their own abortion stories. The author uses these moments to insert facts, figures, historic information, and laws about pregnancy, abortion, and women’s rights to make decisions about their own bodies. It was interesting but some might find it heavy-handed. Loved the characters, especially her younger brother, a gay chef living in Texas who is absolutely there for his mom and sister. One caveat about the book: I don’t totally understand why she didn’t make a bigger deal about the boy who did get her pregnant. Though there was no “penetration” it was still an assault on her body. I get that she just wanted to forget about it, but couldn’t because of the pregnancy. But why didn’t her mom pursue the issue? Recommended for MS & HS. (One sex scene that could be overlooked by unaware readers.)

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS  
Teresa Jensen, North Creek High School

Chee, Traci 9780063269354 \$19.99 432 p.  
**Kindling** (ARC) HarperCollins, 2024

The kindling are a group of elite warriors, trained from the age of 5 to channel their magical abilities into devastating weapons. Because the kindling draw upon their life force every time they use magic, most are doomed to an early death, literally burnt out by war. But after 100 years of war, peace has been declared, and these former child soldiers are left to wander the country without family to return to or a way to repurpose their skills. Except... a town terrorized by bandits decides to hire warriors to defend them from the next attack, and 7 of the kindling answer their call, banding together for one final heroic battle. This is a novel in three parts: assembling the team, training the townspeople in self-defense, and THE BATTLE. The first 2/3 of the book are character-driven while the finale is a edge-of-your seat climax. An Asian-inflected reimagining of The Seven Samurai and The Magnificent Seven. Several on-page lesbian sex scenes. The 7 POV characters are female, nonbinary, lesbian, and/or ace/aro.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Chum, Vichet 9780063223356 \$19.99 344 p.  
**Kween** Quill Tree Books, 2023

A debut novel from a Cambodian author who lives in Texas, Kween, tells the story of a young girl named Soma. Her poems have gone viral after she posts a video without really thinking it though. She is missing her dad - who got deported as well as dealing with her sister getting married in a traditional Cambodian wedding. Their mom is gone to help their dad and Soma has to help with the wedding. When she decides to enter a writing contest, Soma must decide if she is brave enough to put her real self out there for everyone to hear at the spoken word contest. A joyful, authentic look into a young queer Cambodian American's life.

**Recommended Audience:** MS  
Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

Chum, Vichet 978-0-006-322335-6 \$10.99 342 p.  
**Kween** (ARC) Quill Tree Books, 2023

Kween brings a new voice to the YA landscape. On a whim, Soma Kear posts a video of her rhyme that reveals a little too much of her identity. When it becomes wildly liked, she, with encouragement from her friends, decides to see where this talent can take her. She is a queer girl in denial about her family problems. Her father has been deported to Cambodia, her mother has followed him trying to clear things up leaving her big sister to "parent" her and force her younger sister into helping her plan her wedding. Soma is trying to decide if she should act on her crush, while she is conflict with her teacher, and her Cambodian friend brings up the genocide her parents' lived through in a school project. Overwhelmed is not the word as all these forces swirl around her, igniting anger, frustration, hopelessness, pride and shame. Finally at a crazy wedding she finds her true feelings and her true voice. Lots of surprises along the way.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes  
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Colbert, Brandy 978-0-06-309159-7 \$19.99 374 p.  
***The Blackwoods*** Balzer + Bray, 2023

The Blackwoods are well-known thanks to Blossom, the matriarch who, against all odds, broke into the silver screen in the 1950s and 60s in spite of being a Black woman. Her son, grandsons, and great-grandchildren have benefited from her fame and fortune but their personal feelings about it vary. The book pops back and forth between Blossom's story in the past to her two great-granddaughters in the present.

Pros: Blossom was the more compelling character and learning about the challenges faced by a Black woman trying to break into acting was interesting. Her chapters are what kept me from putting the book down. Cons: The granddaughters could have been interchangeable and I didn't really care about either of them. The "controversies" contrived to put each girl in the spotlight were pretty skimmed over and didn't provoke the dire consequences either of them envisioned. And I'm not sure either of them really grew from their experiences.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Teresa Jensen, North Creek High School

Davenport, Nia 978-0-06-325571-5 \$19.99 265 p.  
***Out of Body*** Balzer + Bray, 2024

Girl finds out she has been tricked by a new friend of 3 months into body-swapping. Now LC is literally in Megan's body, and Megan is in LC's old body. Returned home as a runaway, "Megan/LC" must solve the problem of how to get back into her old body, while dodging a fake FBI officer who seems to be in on the body-swapping. Good, quick read. MS/HS

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Michael Fleming, Juanita High School

De Leon, Jennifer 978-1-6659-0416-2 \$19.99 328 p.  
***Borderless*** Atheneum, 2023

Maya loves fashion. She's studying to be a fashion designer at Guatemala's most prestigious fashion training program. Her passion is working with unconventional and recycled materials. One day, Maya's best friend and classmate introduces her to a new guy. What follows is a devastating series of events that lead to Maya and her mother seeking to cross the Mexico-United States border seeking asylum. Maya's choices and coming of age are heart-wrenching to watch. She has a close relationship with her mother and that relationship is tested as the plot develops. Recommended for older middle schoolers and high schoolers.

**Recommended Audience:** High School, Junior High (7-9)

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Raina Sedore, Lacey & Hawks Prairie Timberland Libraries

Durham, David Anthony 9781643796093 \$21.95 378 p.  
***The Longest Night in Egypt*** The Shadow Prince #2 Tu Books, 2023

In this sequel to The Shadow Prince, the gang is back with two new allies and a new quest to save Lord Ra from the Egyptian underworld, Duat. Ash is now officially Prince Khufu's

shadow and bodyguard which comes with a secret prophecy he cannot reveal to the prince. Their lives are intertwined for better or for worse which makes Prince Khufu's penchant for act first, think never behaviors all the more stressful for Ash. Set deeply withing Egyptian mythology, the point of view switches between the human main characters and the Egyptian pantheon. This book is great for readers who love Rick Riordan and are looking for more mythology based books.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Faruqi, Saadia 9780063115811 \$19.99 401 p.  
***The Partition Project*** Quill Tree Books, 2024

Middle schooler Maha wants to be a journalist, reporting on serious information, and she just can't understand her teacher's and friend's interest in narrative. But then, her paternal grandmother comes to live with Maha's family in Texas. Each day she tells Maha stories of the family's history in Pakistan, and Maha learns more about her religion, culture, and Pakistani heritage. Maha comes to realize that history is not just facts but about the stories we tell. At the same time, she becomes so wrapped up in her journalism/history project that she begins to ignore her best friend, Kim. The book deftly handles friendship conflict, family conflict, and how our actions (even if well-intentioned) can hurt those we care about.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Florence, Melanie and Richard Scrimger 978-1-339-00285-9 \$18.99 256 p.  
***The Other Side of Perfect*** Scholastic Press, 2024

This is a sweet story told in two voices, Autumn, an indigenous, wealthy girl and Cody, a white child in poverty raised in a home of abuse. The story told by two authentic authors has a verity about it, though the plot otherwise might seem contrived. The story begins with Cody's dad brutally beating him and Cody running away from home. Autumn finds him passed out under a bush and decides to hide him in the studio outside her huge home. The two go to school together, and Autumn deals with judgment from her school friends. Cody, who has been raised by a racist father, unknowingly makes several racist comments, and the concept of racism is handled very gently and believably. Surprises at the end make this an enjoyable read.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Fraistat, Ann 9780593382219 \$19.99 450 p.  
***A Place for Vanishing*** Delacorte Press, 2024

After a mental health crisis, Libby and her mom and sister move to their mom's childhood home for a fresh start. Libby's mom insists that the family disappearances and spooky seance stories swirling around the home's history are just that, stories, but Libby and the cute boy next door are convinced there is more to the story. A classic haunted house story that will creep readers out. Some potential triggers include: attempted suicide, frank discussion of mental health, bugs, and some gore.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Gerber, Alyson 978-1-338-85921-8 \$14.99 304 p.

***The Liars Society*** The Liars Society #1 (ARC) Scholastic Press, 2024

Weatherby wins a sailing race only to discover afterward that her sails are the wrong size and she needs to be disqualified. On her way to meet the judges, she is offered a scholarship to a fancy private school that her missing dad had attended. She keeps quiet about the sails. At her school, she makes friends easily, but on her first day of sailing practice, she is thrown from the boat and almost drowns in a white fluffy blob under the water. After that she is plagued with fear that someone will find out her secret. Jack, who comes from great wealth, narrates half of the chapters. As the story progresses the two and others are invited by a long-standing secret society to join a quest. It turns out everyone involved has secrets to hide. Friendships form and many twists and turns, surprising revelations and mysteries, the book ends up clearing up most of the mysteries, but because it is the first in a two book series, it has a somewhat unsatisfying cliffhanger.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Granillo, Ashley 97987656085000 \$19.99 233 p.

***Cruzita and the Mariacheros*** Carolrhoda Books, 2024

Cruz is a “no sabo” kid failing Spanish. Her uncle has died, and her family’s bakery is struggling in his absence. All that matters to Cruz though is winning The Rising Star Contest at Encore Island in her quest for fame. That is, until, she is banned from music and made to focus on work! Her parents sign her up for mariachi lessons to help her Spanish, and her once big summer plans turn to mariachi and the bakery. Cruz has to make tough choices about her friendships, who and what she values, and who she wants to be when she is offered the choice between The Rising Star Contest and saving her family’s bakery. A sweet, but predictable story about embracing your identity.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Griffin, Rachel 9781728256153 \$18.99 401 p.

***Bring Me Your Midnight*** Sourcebooks Fire, 2023

Tana is a witch living on an island haven for witches called.... The Witchery. To avoid persecution from non-magic mainlanders, Tana's coven has given up "dark magic," AND her mother (the coven's leader) has arranged for Tana to marry the mainland governor's son, Landon. And Landon is fine, but there's no spark between them. Still, Tana is hopeful that they can grow to love each other. Enter: dangerous currents eroding the island, a deadly-to-witches flower, and Wolfe, who appears when Tana whispers his name at midnight. During their midnight rendezvous, Wolfe teaches Tana the ways of high magic and suggests that not everything is as it seems on the Witchery. Excellent plot, atmospheric tone, and I was completely swept away by the romance. In the last 1/4 of the book there's non-descriptive on-page sex and 3 f-words. Race is a non-issue in this world. One brief mention of lesbian side characters but otherwise heteronormative.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School



Hoang, Jamie Ho 978-0-059364296-2 \$24.99 361 p.  
***My Father, the Panda Killer*** Crown Books, 2023

This book might be appropriate for middle schoolers if Jamie's best friend's favorite word didn't start with F. In the foreword, Hoang begins the book by stating "This book is not a history lesson," and the book runs in between Jane and her father's memory. Jane's mother has gone, and she accepts her father's physical abuse as a cultural norm. Accepted to UCLA, Jane is torn between her own escape and protecting her younger brother. To prepare Paul, Jane tells a serial story about her father's escape from Viet Nam when he was 15. It is not clear if someone has told her the story of fear, abuse, abandonment and sharks, but in the telling, she comes to terms with her father as she tries to see her heritage for what it is and recognize the humanity in her father.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

**Comments:** Glossary of Characters  
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Ixta, Carolina 9780063287860 \$19.99 349 p.  
***Shut Up, This Is Serious*** Quill Tree Books, 2024

For Belén, college, careers, and questions like "what are you going to do with your life" are distant concerns. She has more pressing matters: losing her virginity, helping her pregnant friend, and crippling depression. Belén is concerned that she is too much like her father, who up and left the family without warning. She also wonders how her super-religious, stick-thin-with-no-curves and super-nerdy friend, Leti, has managed to find a boyfriend (and get pregnant) while Belén remains a virgin (code for unwanted). To deal with her sense of inadequacy, Belén makes some questionable life choices, metaphorically running from her problems. Although the reader recognizes that Belén is struggling with mental illness, Belén doesn't have the awareness or language to explain what's happening, but with the support of her friends and finally her family, Belén begins to craft a plan for her life after high school. Most characters are Latinx. The author deftly addresses Brown/Black racism, female sexuality, and body shaming. Descriptive on-page-sex (and childbirth).

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Johnson, Kim 978-0-593-48210-0 \$18.99 400 p.  
***Invisible Son*** Random House, 2023

I recommend this book for middle school and up. Dre or Andre who lives in Portland OR has just been released from Juvy for a crime he didn't commit and is adjusting to his new reality wearing an ankle monitor and reporting to his PO. Meanwhile the west coast is heading towards a pandemic shutdown. His neighbors, the Whitaker's children have been close friends of Dre's for a long time and he and the Whitaker kids are mystified about where their sibling Eric went after Dre's arrest. If Dre can find Eric, then he can clear his name of the robberies he was falsely accused of and finally be free. Until then his only freedom comes from when he can swim to the bottom of the pool where he works, which makes his ankle monitor invisible and that is the only time he feels free, thus the title of the book. This story captures all the layers of injustice that happened in 2020, from the

astronomical deaths of BIPOC people from COVID to the murder of George Floyd. The author also provides thought provoking insight which includes the irony of all the white people who pushed out black families in his gentrified neighborhood also display Black Lives Matter flags. The writing gave me a glimpse of the tragic deaths during COVID, especially when someone dies and because of the lockdown they couldn't be there to say goodbye or even have a funeral. The author also had me guessing about what happened to Eric right up to the last pages.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School

Khan, Hena 978-1-6659-4162-4 \$17.99 230 p.  
***Drawing Deena*** (ARC) Salaam Reads, 2024

7th Grader Deena struggles with nausea and stomachaches in the mornings and often skips breakfast entirely because of it. Her parents argue about money all the time, and her mom especially mentions money in ways that make Deena stressed and worried. Deena is an artist but doesn't feel like she can ask for art classes because of the cost, so she decides to help her mother modernize her small clothing boutique in the hope of easing the family money stresses and There are some great conversations about social media, normalizing not having it. The book is a little slow and felt, to me, a little bit low-stakes. But that also may be by design, to make the book a safe place for anxious kids to find language and mirrors for their experiences. I wouldn't say this is Khan's strongest book—some of the themes feel like they could have been rounded out a little more. But also, it's Hena Khan so this is a great read! Recommended for upper elementary and middle school only, not a crossover title.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Khan, Hena 9781665941624 \$17.99 232 p.  
***Drawing Deena*** (ARC) Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2024

Deena is in 7th grade. She loves art, especially Van Gogh, and she would love to take art lessons so that she can continue to improve. But money is tight, and Deena's parents whisper-fight about expenses. Deena comes up with a plan to advertise her mother's clothing shop online using social media. She can use her art to design a logo and her friends to model clothes in posts. However, first she'll need her parents (who have strict rules regarding social media) to agree. Deena grapples with social media use in middle school, anxiety/panic attacks, and how to reach out for support when she's worried about her parents' marital and financial stability. The book could have been richer if these themes had been intertwined instead of Deena confronting them one at a time; it felt like the book had 3 acts, all solid on their own, but leaving some hanging threads.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

LaRocca, Rajani 978-0-06-329540-7 \$19.99 380 p.

***Sona and the Golden Beasts***

Quill Tree Books, 2024

Sona lives in Devia, a colonized land where music, the source of her people’s magic, has been forbidden by the Malechians. The Malechians require the locals to mine precious gems, regardless of the cost to the miners and their communities, all to build the wealth of the conquerors. All of this sounds very basic, black and white, good and bad. However, LaRocca takes this foundation and complicates it for her readers. Sona has grown up as the daughter of a Malechian farmer, secure because she is not Devian, with gold-tipped ears. The story really starts when Sona finds out that her whole life is a lie, her father is actually her uncle, and her parents were Malechian and Devian, a marriage that is forbidden. At the same time, Sona rescues a wolf cub, one of the Great Beasts of Devia, who protect the people and the place. This cub is being tracked by a Malechian hunter, determined to remove the beasts as no more than Devian superstition giving hope to those who should be hopeless. Sona and Raag must save the wolf cub and Raag’s grandmother, while evading the Hunter, and find that their quest might be the one prophesied to save Devia. If only Sona and Raag can get along and work together. This book starts off seeming very straightforward but becomes so thoughtful and complex, describing the ways that identity, communities, and cultures mix even in times of colonization and power imbalance. Sona’s worldview is very simple when we meet her, and it is through her experiences and the people she meets, who are all more than one-dimensional, that our understanding of Devia comes into focus. Folkstories and songs add depth to Devian culture, and we see that there is no blood quantum required to be Devian. Highly recommended for middle school. I loved this. This is my top Evergreen pick from my stack this time.

**Recommended Audience:** MS

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Lim, Elizabeth

978-0-593-30099-2

\$19.99

416 p.

***Her Radiant Curse***

Alfred A Knopf, 2023

I recommend this book for 6th or 7th grade and up. There are two sisters, Channi and Vanna, who are opposites. Channi has a snake face that frightens others and Vanna is gorgeous with a glowing pearl in her heart that radiates light, thus the Radiant Curse title. It’s a curse because it is tied to a demon that demanded one of their father’s first born and that is a really really long story that I admit I don’t understand. Nevertheless, this story drew me in because of the tension in all the relationships. As the story progresses Channi is driven to save her sister from a promise of the lady demon that vowed to kill Vanna on her birthday which is also her wedding day. One of the characters Channi meets along the way is a half demon half dragon Hokzuh and he makes things more complicated but in a good way. The author shows impeccable skill with character development, world building, and conflict of interest. There was one time I got yanked out of the story because since she is part snake she can communicate with other reptiles which includes the half dragon but then there were times he could not hear her talking to her snake friend Ukhar and I didn’t understand that but my brain can’t multitask which is most fantasy is beyond my capability to enjoy but students who are into fantasy will devour this masterpiece.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Kathleen Story, Eastlake High School

Matejek-Morris, Jimmy 9781728457598 \$19.99 345 p.  
***Forsooth*** Carolrhoda Books, 2023

Calvin dreams of being a star, but the closest Calvin has gotten to stardom is falling off the stage during his school play after fainting from stage fright. To make matters worse, his two best friends kissed on the last day of 7th grade and now one of them is moving to New York. Calvin has plans for a very busy summer including convincing his best friend to stay by making a movie, singing in the church choir (and finding Jesus who he didn't know was missing), and starting a confusing friendship with the boy next door. This is a truly delightful novel that navigates the tricky middle school waters of first crushes, figuring out who you are, and choosing friends that lift you up.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

McKinney, L.L. 9780062986269 \$19.99 337 p.  
***Escaping Mr. Rochester*** HarperTeen, 2024

A new take on Jane Eyre that answers the question, what if Jane and Bertha fell in love instead? This feminist, queer, POC retelling of Jane Eyre alternates between Jane Eyre's and Bertha's perspectives. While the added context of the original Jane Eyre may lead to fun connections for readers, it is not needed to enjoy this version of the story. The major plot points of the original tale remain, but rooted in strong female characters who choose themselves, each other, and get a bit of revenge on a terrible man.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Motayne, Maya 978-0-06-284279-4 \$24.99 456 p.  
***Lucero*** Nocturna Trilogy #3 Balzer + Bray, 2023

This book tells the final part of a trilogy set in the country of Castellan, a Spanish-inspired monarchy. The book starts with the return of Sombra, the dark god who has been trying to return from his exile and to spread his darkness across the land, because he wants the attention of the other gods. Our main characters, Alfie and Finn, have to journey around the world to collect the relics of Sombra's body to prevent him from being able to fully return. Alfie and Finn are struggling under the weight of a well-known prophecy that says they will be the ones to defeat Sombra, as well as the aftermath of what they thought was a single romantic night together in the previous book. In the meantime, Lucian and James must face their homeland, changed under Sombra's dark influence so that plants wither and people's worst selves are brought to the front. We get to peek in with Sombra through Dez, Alfie's older brother whose body has been possessed by Sombra. The writing is clear, the story has high stakes and vibrant characters. However, a lot of the weight of the book and character growth seems to come from the previous books in the trilogy. Switching POVs for characters I wasn't attached to was rough, because the work of getting me to care for them had been (presumably) laid down earlier. I liked this book, but didn't love it. I might go back and try to read the first book and see if I want to make time for the whole series. I would recommend this for middle school and high school students, and for fantasy readers looking for a fantasy trilogy that isn't set in medieval England.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Nguyen, Doan Phuong 9781643796253 \$21.95 292 p.  
***Mèo and Bé*** Tu Books, 2023

Set in 1960s Vietnam, Thu'o'ng is eleven and has found out that her father, who she only sees once a month, has another family that lives in the countryside. Once the talk of war begins, Thu'o'ng and her mother move in with her father's first wife, Big Mother, and his sons. Big Mother isn't too happy with her husband's second family (even changing Thu'o'ng's name to Bé), and her mother eventually leaves Bé to find a job to get them both out of that house. However, Big Mother gets so frustrated with Bé that she sells her to soldiers. Mèo is a cat that Bé found at her father's house and snuck him away when she got sold. This is a harrowing story that the author had pulled from stories her relatives told her (the author's note at the end explains where Bé's story comes from). It does have a happy ending, though (Bé escapes from the soldiers and gets a new family).

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

Nicholls, Sally 9781536223194 \$17.99 297 p.  
***Yours from the Tower*** Walker Books, 2024

This novel is composed entirely of letters, mostly between Sophia, Tirzah, and Polly: friends who have entered very different social spheres since leaving boarding school. Sophia is pragmatic about seeking a rich husband, Polly is a social-welfare crusader, and Tirzah reads like an ADHD whirlwind stuck in a Scottish castle. Although the plot follows the main character's correspondence, some lovely letters from side characters add interest and romantic tension. The pacing is sedate and cozy and may have difficulty finding a teen audience.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Nielsen, Jennifer A. 978-1-338-79508-0 \$18.99 384 p.  
***Uprising*** (ARC) Scholastic Press, 2024

Based on a true story, this book is filled with realistic detail. It begins with Lydia's (codename Cello) father leaving home to fight for Poland. The first part of the book is bleak and depressing (Dad gets sent to a German camp, Grandmother figure is put in a concentration camp, while brother works for the Polish Underground trying to undermine the Nazi's and later the Soviets). The waiting and wondering is not easy for Lydia who joins a secret school without her mother's permission, taking piano lessons and sneaking food into the concentration camps. She wants to do more, but her brother won't let her join the underground. After witnessing an uprising in the concentration camp, she demands to be part of the underground organization and eventually gets her wish. This is not my favorite of Jennifer Nielsen's books, because of the long, hopeless beginning, but that is necessary to paint an accurate picture of Poland at this time and to show Lydia's desire to do more and more and more to help.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Nolan, Han 9781665931786 \$19.99 324 p.  
***Running Past Dark*** Margaret K. McElderry, 2023

Scottie O'Doul begins her senior year in the aftermath of her twin sister's death in a car crash. But the teachers and students aren't sympathetic about Cait's death because the school's beloved football coach was also killed in that crash. Instead, the principal, the students, the town are harassing Scottie for speaking her truth: Coach Jory Wilson raped Cait. To survive the bullying at school and her mother's descent into alcoholism, Scottie takes up long-distance running. In the tight-knit community of ultra-distance runners, she finds acceptance, purpose, and people who have her back. And she needs all the support she can get as she uncovers more clues about Cait's and Coach Jory's death. How well did she really know her twin? Excellent book that addresses self-harm, family alcoholism, bullying, rape, and victim-blaming with honesty and intensity.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

Oh, Ellen 9780593125946 \$19.99 295 p.  
***The Colliding Worlds of Mina Lee*** Crown Books, 2024

The Colliding Worlds of Mina Lee is a delightful take on a k drama in book form. As Mina Lee approaches graduation and senior year, she wants to follow in the footsteps of her deceased mother and become an artist. Her dad, however, has different goals for Mina that look more traditionally stable and involve things like SAT Prep Courses and the Ivy League. To escape her reality, Mina dives headfirst into creating a web comic. Taking feedback from her two best friends, Mina tries to make her web comic more exciting than previous results adding students with special powers and an evil billionaire intent on stealing their powers for himself to her high school story. The one thing she won't add is a love triangle because they are overrated. Mina's world is turned upside down when a lightning storm hits and she wakes up in her web comic world. Will Mina save her web comic? Will she return to the real world? Will there be a love triangle despite her insistence of no love triangles? While the target audience for this book may be high school students, middle school students would also be able to access this truly fun read with ease.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS  
Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Paolini, Christopher; Illustrated by Sidharth Chaturvedi 978-0-593-70446-2  
***Eragon*** Alfred A. Knopf, 2023 \$45.99 358 p.

Yes, this is indeed the unabridged text of the original Eragon in a new illustrated, oversize, 20th anniversary edition. The drawings are plentiful but not detailed. Enough clarity is given to show the emotions of the main characters and their setting. The colors are beautiful, particularly the blue, and a lovely map graces the front pages. On the downside, each chapter heading is the same picture; it would have been nice to have them change with the story. The illustrator works with oils and inks, and creates art for Magic: The Gathering and Dungeons & Dragons. On a side note... I enjoyed this book when I read it 20 years ago. I can't say that it stood the test of time. It is painfully obvious that a young writer penned it, but that may be because I've read so much more YA in the ensuing years. I gave it to my 10-year-old grandson. Recommended for MS & HS.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

**Comments:** Illustrated 20th anniversary edition

Teresa Jensen, North Creek High School

Park, Soyoung & Jounghmin Lee Comfort (translator) 978-0-593-48497-5  
***Snowglobe*** Delacorte Press, 2024 \$20.99 375 p.

In a frozen future, the only place that's still truly warm is Snowglobe, a city under a vast dome. The rest of the world eeks out a living in the freezing cold and working at the power plants that keep Snowglobe warm and running. In return, they get twenty-four/seven programming streamed live from Snowglobe to keep them entertained. Chobahm's favorite show follows Goh Haeri and ends up being the key to a better life. Because Haeri is dead, and Chobahm has been chosen as her replacement. But life in Snowglobe isn't what it seems, and Chobahm will have to risk everything to expose the truth. This dystopian thriller with K-Drama flavor will be a hit with fans of *The Hunger Games* and other dystopian novels. There's also a movie adaptation in the works, though a U.S. release date has yet to be announced. Recommended for High School. Contains murder and mentions of suicide.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Elizabeth Kalen, White Center Library, KCLS

Quach, Michelle 9780063038424 \$19.99 325 p.  
***The Boy You Always Wanted*** Katherine Tegen Books, 2023

When Francine's grandfather, A Gūng, tells the family over the phone that he has terminal cancer, he also expresses regret that he was a failure by not having any sons. Francine, determined to bring him peace at the end of his life, enlists Ollie, a classmate and the son of an old family friend to pretend to be ceremonially adopted as the grandson A Gūng never had. What follows is a variation on the fake dating romance, where Francine and Ollie, in alternating perspectives, become close through their scheme while also dealing with their individual family dynamics. Francine in particular has to learn to feel her feelings when it comes to the old Chinese tradition and her relationship with her grandfather. A really sweet, smart story.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & Junior High (7-9)

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Reyes, Sonora 978-0-06-306030-2 \$19.99 305 p.  
***The Luis Ortega Survival Club*** Balzer + Bray, 2023

Ariana Ruiz has autism and doesn't speak often, making her feel invisible and friendless at her high school. When cute, popular Luis Ortega singles her out, she is flattered by the attention—until he rapes her at a party and then dismissively tells others about it. Angry and isolated, Ari finds herself the target of rumors, bullying, and even further sexual harassment. Then she finds a note in her locker that simply says, "Me too," leading to a gathering of other victims of Luis Ortega. Together these victims come up with a plan to expose Luis and stop him from hurting others, and along the way their shared trauma blossoms into friendships and even romance. This is a story for anyone who has wished an abuser had been held accountable. A story where adults are imperfect but supportive when





and recommend it for your fantasy readers. I would recommend it for High School and older Middle School students, if you have strong feminist fantasy readers.

**Recommended Audience:** High School, upper MS

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Salazar, Aida 9781338775655 \$18.99 304 p.  
*Ultraviolet* (ARC) Scholastic Press, 2024

Elio is in 8th grade, which means everyone is starting to be paired up. When Elio gets a girlfriend, Camelia, he starts to learn a lot about what it means to be in a relationship and what it means to be a man. This novel in verse covers a wide range of topics: feminism, consent, puberty, sex education, and toxic masculinity. It also is tied in with Elio's background of being Mexican American, where they have Spanish words for crybaby and a ceremony for becoming a "man."

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

Santiago, Elizabeth 9781643795805 \$24.95 360 p.  
*The Moonlit Vine* Tu Books, 2023

Taina (Ty) and her family are going through hard times: mom and dad have separated; older brother has gotten suspended for fighting at school; grandma (abuela) has Alzheimer's. But these are not the only challenges Ty is facing. However, her beloved abuela helps her by giving her a piece of her Taino heritage that has been passed through multiple centuries and generations. While set mostly in the current day, we do get interstitial glimpses of the strong Taino women in Ty's past as well as a look at the deep cultural heritage that is rarely studied as a part of school curriculum. This is so important for those from Puerto Rico, Haiti, and the DR to be able to see themselves and for others to learn about. Wrapped up the story a bit too neatly overall but loved the idea of the power of community and working together for change. CW: police violence, gangs, teacher bias, racism.

**Recommended Audience:** Grades 7 and up

Anne Dame, Einstein Middle School

Schrefer, Eliot 9780062982391 \$19.99 274 p.  
*Charming Young Man* Katherine Tegen Books, 2023

Léon Delafosse is a talented young pianist searching for a patron in 1890s Paris when he crosses paths with Marcel Proust, who takes him under his wing. "We're both weird outsider fairy creatures, you and me," Marcel tells him early on. Through Marcel, Léon meets the "Oscar Wilde of France," Count Robert de Montesquiou-Fézensac, who offers him his patronage. Robert enjoys Léon's naivety and the possibilities of his talent and Léon is starry-eyed over Robert's extravagance and seeming openness about his sexuality. This openness has its limits, however, and an act of betrayal ultimately turns Léon back to his historical obscurity. Léon Delafosse was a real pianist, immortalized by John Singer Sargent in a portrait that both inspired the book and takes place within it. Schrefer explains his inspirations in an interesting author's note. While a fun element, knowledge of the historical and literary connections aren't necessary to enjoy "Charming Young Man," which works wonderfully simply as a historical coming-of-age story of a young gay man.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Shawl, Nisi 9781620149591 \$19.95 233 p.  
***Speculation*** Tu Books, 2023

When Winna breaks her glasses (well, when her little sister does), her grandparents give her an old pair that belonged to her great aunt Estelle. She soon finds that the glasses are magical; they grant her wishes if she asks a "what if" question twice, and they allow her to see Estelle's ghost, who can communicate with Winna by writing on the lenses of the fogged-up specs. Estelle clues Winna in to a generations-old family mystery and its accompanying curse: Winona's firstborn, Key, was kidnapped while she was on her way through the underground railroad, and no one in the family will be able to breathe easy until he's found. Time is running short; if Key is still alive, he's very old, and Winna's mom, who's been in the hospital, doesn't seem to be getting better. Winna enlists her cousin to help solve the mystery, but when he puts on the glasses and speculates "what if they don't work..." things get a lot more complicated. Recommended for all ages.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School  
Gianna Gargiulo, KCLS - AU/CO

Shawl, Nisi 9781620149591 \$19.95 233 p.  
***Speculation*** Tu Books, 2023

This historical fantasy is set in 1960s Michigan and follows Winna Cole who has to borrow a pair of magical family spectacles after her little sister accidentally breaks Winna's own glasses. Typical sibling. Winna finds that she is able to see a family ghost, who connects her to the family's past and future, and sets Winna on a journey to break a family curse that might be killing her own mother. *Speculation* explores generational trauma and the ways in which the past continues to influence the present. The novel delves into difficult topics, such as loss, racism, and family secrets, but does so sensitively which makes it accessible to a middle-grade audience. Shawl's writing is clear and evocative, with a narrative style that balances the fantastical elements of the story with the grounded reality of Winna's life. Recommended for middle school. Is slight enough not to intimidate kids who are intimidated by chonky books. The action and drama are relatively low, though it is life and death for Winna's mom, the tension feels like a historical fiction, rather than an action-adventure book. It would be a great one for a book club because of both the low-page count and the range of issues it tackles.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School  
Aimee Miles, UPrep

Short, Summer Rachel 9781665918879 \$17.99 245 p.  
***The Legend of Greyhallow*** Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers,  
2023

Ainsley and Tobin have just moved to Lowry- a town that was made famous as the setting for the 'Legend of Greyhallo' films. Ainsley's even living in the home of the former film director. The kids find a mysterious brass key that fits a small door in the attic and their adventure begins. A portal opens and turns the attic into the Greyhallow forest. The director, Ripley, is speaking to them through the movies - so the kids have to watch a lot of

the films to understand how to fix the two colliding worlds. When an escaped Gargoyle named Grumly needs to get back into Greyhallow, they decide to tell their parents and get some help. A sweet mystery that is packed with portals, creatures, and teamwork.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS  
Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

Vinesse, Cecilia 978-0-06-328587-3 \$19.99 358 p.  
***The Girl Next Door*** Quill Tree, 2023

Cleo was devastated when her boyfriend dumped her to start dating the most popular girl at school. Cleo and Daniel were supposed to build careers out of making movies together - after getting into NYU to study film, of course. Instead, they must navigate senior year as co-directors of the school's signature project - the school soap opera. In the midst of her heartbreak, Cleo reconnects with her backyard neighbor, Marianne, who was also dumped - by the person Daniel is dating now. Cleo and Marianne decide to fake-date, and hijinks ensue. This tropey romance is laced with specific details. Cleo is fixated on horror movies, and film in general. Marianne's Brazilian-American heritage is important to her character. Readers will enjoy watching a diverse supporting cast create a literal soap opera show as the central plot develops. Ultimately, Cleo learns important lessons about herself and her dreams. Recommended for high school and public libraries.

**Recommended Audience:** High School  
Raina Sedore, Lacey & Hawks Prairie Timberland Libraries

Wasson, Brian 9780063264656 \$19.99 326 p.  
***Seven Minutes in Candyland*** Quill Tree Books, 2023

A sweet (ha) and poignant slice-of-life with very well-handled explorations of mental health and relationships. Kal is his high school's "candy guy," selling candygrams and regular sugar fixes to his classmates in order to make money. His parents are marriage therapists who host a popular relationship advice podcast, but he feels like he's watching them drift apart in front of his eyes, so Kal is saving up to take them on what he hopes will be a marriage-saving vacation, a recreation of a cherished family trip to Hawaii. After he ends up having an accidental chat with his crush in which he gives her some advice about her relationship... and she refers a friend... he finds that he's all of a sudden gone from the Candy Guy to the Therapy Guy. And at \$10 per 7 minutes, that's going to get him to his goal much quicker, but with much more potential for disaster. I was pleased that we ended up exploring not only discussions of mental health but the ethics of giving relationship advice to your crush, the complexities of relationships, and the idea that even when you're right and the advice you give is solid, you're not the one who gets to make the choice. I also appreciated seeing the perspectives Kal shared as a Black student at a mostly-white school; some excellent friend dynamics including hurting your friends and doing the repair work; and a plot hurdle involving a student government girl trying to sabotage Kal's business as revenge for his effect on student government candy sales. A few mentions of sex but overall fine for middle school, but probably more interesting to high schoolers.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS  
Gianna Gargiulo, KCLS - AU/CO

Wilfrid, Karen 9780063290297 \$19.99 304 p.

**Just Lizzie**

Clarion Books, 2023

8th grade Lizzie has a lot on her mind. Her brother James has left for college and she's had to move houses with her mom and dad due to an "incident" with their neighbor. Now her best friend Sarah Nan has a boyfriend and Lizzie has to deal with annoying Michael Gorman in most classes. Taking self defense from Mrs. Ardvinson, her PE teacher, isn't helping her anxiety - she feels like Ardvinson hates her. Luckily she has Ms. Faraher for science and she's chosen asexuality as her science project. Maybe Lizzie does fit in- just not in the way her friends do. A beautiful story about finding your identity in middle school.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

Winston, Sherri

9781547608508

\$17.99

320 p.

**Shark Teeth** (ARC)

Bloomsbury Publishing, 2024

Sharkita and her siblings have just been returned to the custody of their mother, just in time for school to start. Sharkita takes very good care of her siblings because at the beginning of summer their mother abandoned them for nine days, in which Sharkita's brother had an episode and the kids had to call 911. Sharkita blames herself for this incident and is wary around her mother, who had been drinking before and often left the kids in Sharkita's care. Her mother seems to be more attentive now, but even Sharkita's younger sister, who is only five, knows that their mother will eventually go back to her old ways. Sharkita's best friend and a new teacher want her to try out for the twirling group, which her mother supports. However, Sharkita is unsure, especially when she starts to have random freezing attacks. This is an amazing book about anxiety, mental health, getting the support you need, and even foster care.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

Zhao, Amelie Wen

978-0-593-48754-9

\$19.99

345 p.

**Dark Star Burning, Ash Falls White**, Song of the Last Kingdom #2 Delacorte Press, 2024

This is a YA Fantasy and the sequel to *Song of Silver, Flame like Night*. It picks right back up alternating between Lan and Zen who are trying to drive out the occupying Elantians using the power of the ancient Demon Gods. Lan, now imbued with the power of the Silver Dragon, seeks the Godslayer, a mythical weapon capable of destroying the Demon Gods, while Zen, bound to the Black Tortoise, struggles with the increasing toll of his powers. This book ties immediately and directly into the previous book, so I don't recommend reading them separately. The first half feels a little slow as it focuses heavily on strategic planning and recaps, though the climax is full of intense action sequences. Zen's internal conflict, as he wrestles with his sanity under the influence of the Black Tortoise, is particularly compelling. Recommended for high school, some advanced middle school readers. Especially anyone looking for more fantasies influenced by Chinese mythology.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Aimee Miles, UPrep

**FICTION – SHRUG**

Clayton, Dhonielle 978-1-368-04692-3 \$18.99 344 p.  
***The Beauty Trials*** Belles #3 Hyperion, 2023

The Third of the Belles novels, in which Charlotte is Queen, Her sister Sophie (a wicked queen) is in “prison” for her crimes, but still has a huge following. Charlotte (who doesn’t want to be queen) decides to invoke the Beauty Trials (for the second time) and third sister, Edel, a Belle (who worked in the first Beauty Trial?) decides to enter to save the Belles, a group of women who can make people beautiful and who are disappearing and mistreated throughout the country.. The games are more dangerous than before and hosted by a God of death. The best part of this book were the surprises. I wasn’t able to guess the ending, and none of the characters were always what they seemed. This is not a stand alone book, and I was frustrated by all of the characters who kept entering throughout the book I was supposed to already and have context for. There is so much I don’t understand about the Beauty Trials themselves. Other than that, it has a very unexpected, perfectly right ending.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

**Comments:** Not a stand alone

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Forna, Namina 978-1-9848-4875-8 \$19.99 460 p.  
***The Eternal Ones*** The Gilded Ones #3 Delacorte Press, 2024

Girl finds out she is a God in book two, and the gods of her country are greedy and self-serving. If she can control her burgeoning powers and re-unite herself with her estranged power core, she can ascend to godhood and remake the world. However, the gods are arrayed against her and the odds seem overwhelming. Plus, her body is broken down from all the attacks, and her mother is being kept from her. Good conclusion to the trilogy and everything wraps up nicely, including some romance...

**Recommended Audience:** MS/HS

Michael Fleming, Juanita High School

Hodge, Rosamund 9780062869135 \$19.99 350 p.  
***What Monstrous Gods*** Balzer + Bray, 2024

After surviving a plague that killed the rest of her family, Lia was raised in a convent dedicated to serving one of the old gods. Taught that it was her destiny to walk into the deadly briar that has surrounded an old palace for hundreds of years, kill the sorcerer who raised the briar, and wake the old gods and royal family so they can once again touch her world, make saints, and work miracles, Lia has prepared her whole life to do just that. But when she does, she finds that she cannot retire to the convent as she believed, but must marry into the newly revived royal family and become a saint herself. Worse, the very act she committed in order to awaken the gods causes the goddess she served to reject her. Instead of becoming a saint to Nin-Anna, the goddess of spring and healing, she instead is chosen by Mor-Iva, the knife of the gods, and her hands are transformed into charred black claws. Also, she is being haunted by Ruven, the hot sorcerer she killed, and not figuratively. This book has very dense world-building that is sometimes hard to follow and can get pretty grotesque, but Hodge uses it to explore themes of faith and devotion. The inevitable romance that springs between the main character and the man she murdered is quite different than others we see in YA fantasy because neither sacrifices their beliefs even



This 2nd book in the Secret of the Storm series is well set up to be a stand alone. The most important information about the previous book is presented rather thoroughly in the first chapter, and while it might be difficult to remember for a person new to the series, it is easy to find when you have questions. Each time a character enters the story, a background of that person comes with it at a much easier pace to remember. Cassie has returned from the Land of Dragons after returning her darling kitten (a dragon) to his homeland. She discovers she has some of the dragon's powers (controlling the weather and opening the rift between the two worlds). Cassie and her best friend Joe find out that Albert (her dragon) is in danger and must be rescued. An interesting Adventure story, it does not have the depth of the first book. Other than Cassie and Joe, the characters are pretty flat.

**Recommended Audience:** Adult

**Comments:** 2nd in series. Works as a stand alone, but not as much depth as the first  
Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Neeves, E.A. 1368092705 \$18.99 336 p.  
***After You Vanished*** (ARC) Disney Hyperion, 2023

Everyone thinks it is strange Teddy wants to continue working as a lifeguard at the lake where her twin sister, Izzy, went missing. Teddy's favorite place is Bottomrock Lake and being there stops her head from spinning about her sister. It's the only place she feels at peace and may find some answers. When Toby, Izzy's secret boyfriend, comes back to town, Teddy is suspicious. Teddy is determined to get to know him and uncover his secrets in the hope of finding more about her sister, but it turns into a romance for her. Told from Teddy's point of view to her sister. The romance is really better than the mystery which is pretty predictable. Nothing too racy, middle school voracious readers and high school.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Lindsay Ellsworth, KCLS

Powars, Page 9780593568583 \$18.99 352 p.  
***The Borrow a Boyfriend Club*** Delacorte Press, 2023

Noah is a junior and has transferred to a new school to start fresh. He's a trans guy and wants people to know him as himself, not as who he was before he started to transition. Looking for a way to prove himself, he joins the school's 'Italian Club', which turns out to be a front for the Borrow a Boyfriends Club (which is exactly what it sounds like). He tries to join the club but is met by a series of obstacles, and it doesn't help that the annoying president of the club, Asher, is frustratingly attractive. As the story progresses, he learns more about Asher, his friends and family, and himself. This book was a struggle to get through, as the characters seemed underdeveloped and I couldn't get past the ridiculousness of a club like this actually existing. There was a lot of second-hand embarrassment in the book! This would be fine for older middle schoolers, there is very light romance (hand-holding & kissing) but nothing else too crazy. Obviously, LGBTQIA+ themes, light swearing, transphobia.

**Recommended Audience:**

Claire Sandoval-Peck, Olympia Timberland Library

## FICTION – NOT RECOMMENDED

Kanakia, Naomi 0063216574 \$15.99 320 p.  
***Just Happy to Be Here*** HarperTeen, 2024

Now that Tara has transitioned, she must leave her all-boys school and attend Ainsley Academy. All Tara wants is to join the Sibyls and be like her supportive friends in the group. Then the club's sponsor, a famous alumna of the school, attacks her in the media for aiming to take the Sibyl scholarship from the other girls. The book was not great in what it says about non-binary characters including the villain. The characters do not grow and even make the reader feel uncomfortable. There are some good aspects to the book, but I think there are better books to offer teens, especially teens in the LGBTQIA+ community.

**Recommended Audience:**

Lindsay Ellsworth, KCLS

Nielsen, J.A. 9781509246229 \$18.99 315 p.  
***The Claiming*** Fractured Kingdoms The Wild Rose Press, 2023

Spense is the younger son of a Lord who shows a promise for magic despite being a human. Dewey is a rebellious Fae princess who is always in trouble for her carefree ways. Spense, while trying to claim a bridge for the humans, accidentally sets a claiming spell on Dewey, linking the two of them together and severing Dewey's ties to the Fae in the midst of a war between Fae and humans. I do not recommend this book. It was predictable, clunky, and there is much better fantasy available in the young adult market.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Mariah Crosby, Cedar Heights Middle School

Smith, Amber 1665947101 \$21.99 432 p.  
***The Way I Am Now*** The Way I Used to Be #2 Margaret K. McElderry, 2023

Sequel to *The Way I Used To Be*. It's been three years have passed since Eden's brother's best friend raped her. She is giving her relationship with Josh another chance. After Eden and two other girls publicly accuse their rapist, Eden is starting college while her case goes to trial. The book is a lot about the steps to the trial, which was tedious and slow. The relationship was not that interesting and didn't give the reader much to latch onto. Additionally, the book did not feel like it had a proper ending. Pretty boring for me but might be loved by those who loved the first book.

**Recommended Audience:**

Lindsay Ellsworth, KCLS

Young, Suzanne 9781665941914 \$21.99 405 p.  
***The Program*** The Program #1 Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2013

Teenagers are committing suicide and alarming rates, and so any teen showing any sign of being mentally ill is kidnapped, sometimes with parent support because anything is better than having your kid kill themselves. Note: ALL the teens insist they would rather commit suicide than go through the program and some do. After being dragged out of their classes or their homes, teens are forced into the program: take a pill, tell a therapist your most intimate memories, have your mind erased of the people you love most. How does this help



prevent suicide? Who knows! But it's a fast-paced read fueled by teen angst and over-the-top emotions and reactions perfect for the post-Twilight era. I'm not sure it works nearly as well in the post-Covid era, and I wouldn't give it to anyone who might benefit from a thoughtful book about suicide. For readers who want to get caught up in their feelings. This is a re-release of The Program.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

## GRAPHIC NOVELS - RECOMMENDED

Adriansen, Sophie 978-1681123264 \$27.99 160 p.

***Nina Simone in Comics*** NBM Comics Biographies NBM Graphic Novels, 2024

This nonfiction graphic novel is packed with facts about Nina Simone, pianist, singer, and activist. Born in 1933, Nina could play songs by ear at the age of 4. She is taken under the wing of a wealthy white lady who pays for piano lessons. Nina goes on to Julliard, but drops out - then off to playing the piano for money in bars. She finally signs a record deal but struggles with her marriages and agents. The further reading and viewing resources are outstanding as well. A thorough and detailed look into her life, even with all of the trials and tribulations, Nina Simone is a true icon for young people to learn about!

**Recommended Audience:**

Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

Cartaya, Pablo, Miguel Díaz Rivas, illus. 9781368089265 \$14.99 192 p.

***Curveball*** (ARC) Disney, 2024

Elena's mom pushes Elena to do everything baseball, so much so that she hardly spends time with her brother Benji and does not have any friends. When Elena gets a knee injury during the summer, she is forced to hang out with Benji, who does LARPing in a park with other neighborhood kids. Elena eventually has fun and even incorporates baseball into LARPing. She also stands up to her mom and lets her know that baseball doesn't have to take over everything.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

Elliott, Victoria Grace 978-0-593-12437-6 \$19.99 218 p.

***Yummy: A History of Desserts*** RH Graphic, 2021

A global history of desserts, presented in candy colors by charming sprites. The book does an impressive job of including history outside of the US and Europe, making it clear what aspects of the history are known and which are questionable legends (included as "story time" segments), and acknowledging in an organic way the influence of colonialism and slavery on food history. The art is delightful, reminiscent of Adventure Time or chibi manga. Recipes are included, with tips for people unfamiliar with cooking.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Sarah Hunt, KCLS - Kirkland

Gibbs, Shawnelle & Shawnee 978035814808 \$18.99 224 p.  
***Ghost Road*** HarperAlley, 2024

Chelsea's dad is basically a ghostbuster. This is brutal to her social life and she does all she can to keep it secret so as not to be teased. After doing a bit of drinking and hanging out in the cemetery by her house Chelsea is caught by the police. For punishment, she must work with her dad on an old plantation for the summer. Her dad has never actually seen a ghost, but Chelsea starts seeing them here. She first sees a cat that leads her to meeting Oliver. He was the heir of the plantation of slave owners. Then Oliver was killed for standing against racism. The drawings are well done and the kids are loving this one.

**Recommended Audience:**

Lindsay Ellsworth, KCLS

Ha, Robin 9780062685124 \$18.99 311 p.  
***The Fox Maidens*** HarperAlley, 2024

Set in Korea during the Joseon Dynasty (between 1392 to 1910), Kai is the daughter of Tamjin Song and his first wife Meorhu. Tamjin is the General of the Royal Legion and is training Kai and his two sons from his second wife, Sunhwa, in a Korean form of martial arts. Sunhwa doesn't like that Kai is being trained along with her sons, and Meorhu tries to have her daughter be more lady like. However, Tamjin pushes for his daughter to be trained because when he was a kid, his whole family was killed by assassins. When Kai gets her period, she discovers that she has a tail. Meorhu then takes Kai to see the Gumiho, a nine-tailed fox who transforms into a beautiful woman who eats humans' livers. The Gumiho tells Kai that in order to stay human, she must eat the livers of humans. Kai doesn't want to, so the Gumiho convinces Kai to eat the livers of bad humans. Kai does so for several years and eventually gets promoted to work alongside her father. It's an interesting take on the Gumiho Korean folktale and has a sweet love story (Kai falls in love with a girl she saved when she was a kid).

**Recommended Audience:** High School

JJ Higgins, Kingsgate Library (KCLS)

Saade, Ernesto 9781728474137 \$21.49 216 p.  
***Just Another Story*** Graphic Universe, 2024

Interesting graphic novel where the protagonist and his mom decide to come to the United States from El Salvador. The story is told to the author's cousin when he goes back to El Salvador to visit. Mother and son go through some crazy adventures to migrate to the US, finally ending up being held for ransom and escaping to freedom.

**Recommended Audience:**

Lindsay Ellsworth, KCLS

Sfar, Joann 978-1-68112-316-5 \$17.99 96 p.  
***Dungeon Zenith Vol. 5 - Fog and Tears*** NBM Graphic Novels, 2023

Interesting graphic novel, about a Duck/Cat married couple that are fighting over birthing traditions for their separate societies, and also invading a Dungeon. Then, a dinosaur/lizard man comes in to fix some of the damage they did while in the Dungeon. Strange, quirky humor, interesting artwork with lots of color and emotional impact. World-building is cool,

most characters are human-like animals of some sort. Definitely need previous knowledge of world to have things make sense. MS/HS

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Michael Fleming, Juanita High School

Tokuda-Hall, Maggie 9780358464938 \$18.99 333 p.  
***The Worst Ronin*** (ARC) HarperAlley, 2024

Chihiro wants to become a samurai like her idols Tatsuo and Kazuo Mirimoto, but in her misogynistic society, she'll never be accepted into the prestigious Keisi Academy. Her father (wounded from previous battles) has been training her and encouraging her dreams. When a local hero requests her father's help battling a yamauba (a demon formed from overwhelming grief), Chihiro goes in his stead, meeting Tatsuo along the way. As she trains and learns from Tatsuo, Chihiro discovers more about herself and treachery that hides in unexpected places. Fast-paced, great art, strong character development, and a solid plot. Good for middle grade and high schools.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Amanda Karim, Eastlake High School

### GRAPHIC NOVELS – NOT RECOMMENDED

Cherkas, Michael and Larry Hancock 978-1-68112-283-0 \$16.99 142 p.  
***Dark Matter*** The Silent Invasion NBM Graphic Novels, 2021

Cherkas and Hancock wrote the original Silent Invasion comic books in the late 1980s, this is a continuation volume published in 2021. The series follows a journalist, and later his brother, investigating possible UFO abductions that may somehow involve Communists. Or something. It's all very murky. The art is a sort of super-stylized 1980s version of Gasoline Alley. The book's blurbs are enraptured with how thought-provoking and of the moment it is, but it struck me as the sort of generic paranoia/conspiracy fiction that has remained unchanged for generations, often merely cribbing interesting threads from actual paranoia and conspiracy writings without any of its original meaning or context. (And despite taking place in the 1970s, there is a thinly disguised Donald Trump figure at his current age. Confusing and to no apparent purpose.) The book does not resolve any of the threads raised in the storyline, which seems to be the way of the generic paranoia/conspiracy genre. Another volume of the series is listed at the end of the book, but seems not to have been published, though the volume names are confusing as the issues collected and titles given to the compilations seem to have varied over the series' lifetime. Would it have wrapped everything up? If The X-Files is any guide, no. Does not stand alone as a book.

**Recommended Audience:** Adult

Sarah Hunt, KCLS - Kirkland

### NONFICTION – RECOMMENDED

Anderson, Josh 9798765610206 \$30.65 32 p.  
***G.O.A.T. Football Wide Receivers*** Lerner Sports Greatest of All Time Players Lerner, 2024

After a quick introduction, this book counts down the ten best wide receivers. Each player is given a two-page spread, two photos, and a stats sheet. The oldest player covered is Don Hutson (number 3), who played in the 1930s and 40s, and the most recent is Justin Jefferson (number 10), who was drafted in 2020. This is a nice, short overview of players and engages the reader in considering what makes someone the greatest of all time. Backmatter includes a glossary, index, list of resources, and photo credits.

**Recommended Audience:** Too young for YA

Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Butler-Ngugi, Anitra 9781728475851 \$30.65 32 p.  
***The Real History of the Gold Rush*** Left Out of History (Read Woke Books) Lerner, 2023  
From the table of contents, where a side bar invites readers to think critically of the photos and illustrations throughout the book and the viewpoint they come from, this book helps young readers think about who is left out of history and who gets to tell the story. In discussing the Gold Rush, the book covers the Native Americans who first discovered gold, the immigrants from China, Mexico, Chile, and Peru who were treated differently than European immigrants, and the enslaved people who were forced to work in California even though it was a free state. The book also spotlights women who worked during the Gold Rush. While brief, this book can open readers eyes to untold history and prompt them to learn more. Backmatter includes a glossary, index, list of resources, and photo credits.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

**Comments:** Could go as young as 4th grade

Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Chuculate, Eddie 978-1-338-80208-5 \$19.99 240 p.  
***This Indian Kid: A Native American Memoirs*** (ARC) Scholastic Focus, 2023  
Sportswriter, Eddie Chuculate, wrote a very sweet and simple childhood memoir about his life as a Creek and Cherokee growing up impoverished in Oklahoma, moving from home to home going to 14 schools in 9 years. Yet the tale is a happy, content one filled with insight and wonder. Beginning with his friendship with Lonnie, an African American boy, which begins with an accident on the ice and a snake bike, the story traces his life, his adventures and trials with a sense of wonder. Eddie grows up with a love of sports and the outdoors and his disrupted family. Though you know from the beginning he is a sportswriter, it is a surprise to see his journey to writing professionally as a high school student.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

**Recommend for Evergreen?** Yes

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

Donohue, Caitlin 978-1-7284-2953-3 \$38.65 184 p.  
***Weed: Cannabis Culture in the Americas*** Zest Books, 2023  
The author is a journalist with an interest in alternative culture that has led her to podcast on “psychoactive substances in times of prohibition” in her adopted hometown, Mexico City. The book looks at cannabis through interviews centered around three themes. It has a casual, conversational style that does not lend itself to be a handy research resource. The information is not US-centered: the interviews are with people all over the Americas which gives the book a more global perspective. Part 1 explores “Cannabis and Our Bodies” and

includes a nurse, a patient, and an athlete. The underlying message is to go beyond “Just Say No” to get to “harm reduction”, or informed use as well as noting the lack of real evidence of effects due to worldwide prohibition. Part 2 is “Canna Culture” where we learn that hemp is an amazing building material, that hemp fabric is difficult to produce because it is so sharp, and that Rastafari villages are promoting a cannabis experience for tourists on Jamaica island. The last part, “The Fight for Drug War Justice”, explores the injustice prohibition brings on blacks, women, and the poor in the Americas. Interviews range from mothers fighting to access medical marijuana for their children, to brave protesters standing up to their governments, to the surprising fact that Uruguay was the first country to legalize the growth and sales of cannabis. Recommended for MS & HS.

**Recommended Audience:** HS & MS

Teresa Jensen, North Creek High School

Hurston, Zora Neale adapted by Ibram X. Kendi 9780063098336 \$18.99 196 p.  
***Barracoon: Adapted for Young Readers*** Amistad, 2024

This is the young reader’s edition of Zora Neale Hurston’s adult book by the same name. Cudjo Lewis was born in Africa and was named Kossula by his mama. Houston tells heart-wrenching stories told to her by Cudjo himself over the span of many months. There are stories of his childhood and stories of how he became enslaved and held in a barracoon (jail) by American slavers. Cudjo finally gets married and does have a family and a home on a piece of land called Africatown. His genuine goodness and love for his family shines through on each page.

**Recommended Audience:** Grades 8+

Heidi Bush, Northshore Middle School

Jewell, Tiffany 978-0-35-863831-5 \$11.99 228 p.  
***Everything I Learned About Racism I Learned in School*** Versify, 2024

In this non-fiction book, Tiffany Jewell explains the influence of racism as she explains her whole educational career. In her very clear, non-preachy, logical voice, she explains and shows examples of racism, institutional racism and other types in a way that makes sense without judgment. In between the telling of her own story 17 other people share chapters of their own education experience in poetry or prose that is easy to accept. Because of the compelling story element, it is very easy to engage with and believe.

**Recommended Audience:** High School, Junior High (7-9)

Melissa Menti, Mount Baker Jr/Sr High

McBride, Amber 9780063225282 \$19.99 140 p.  
***Poemhood: Our Black Revival*** HarperTeen, 2024

Take your time while reading this. Relish the rich language and exquisite word use that the 35 poets have poured their hearts and souls into to make this collection. But prepare yourself for the depth and anguish - but also joy - that is a part of the lived Black experience and is also therefore part of these poems. The collection is broken into 4 themes or volumes and each poem is followed by an outro to help clarify subject matter touched on in the poem for those who may struggle more with the poetry format or do not know as much about that particular topic. CW: violence, racism, lynching, incarceration Grades 8 and up

**Recommended Audience:** High School

Anne Dame, Einstein Middle School

Rockler, Naomi 978-1-6782-0596-6 \$32.95 63 p.  
***Understanding Consent and Boundaries: Dating and Relationships in the #MeToo Era***  
ReferencePoint Press, 2024

This book covers the #MeToo movement from a historic perspective, putting it into context and describing the behaviors and responses for young people. I think there's a lot of value in having books that cover recent history—a lot of kids will have heard of #MeToo, but they do not have a broad encompassing picture of what the movement was and how it related to real people. I really liked this book from that perspective. I will say that the conversations about consent and are almost exclusively described with hetero language, of assault on women and girls by men and boys. While relevant to the overall #MeToo conversation, that lone focus suggests to me that you should look to pair this with other books that bring broader understandings of the many ways gender and sexuality can interact around consent and assault. Content-wise, I'd suggest it for mature middle school and for high school, though if your school community is sensitive to topics around sexuality, consent, and recent political movements, it might be a better fit solely for high school.

Recommended for high school and for broad middle school collections.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Thakur, Sophia 978-1-5362-3016-1 \$18.99 95 p.  
***Wearing My Mother's Heart***  
Candlewick Press, 2023

I'm not confident that I am the right person to review a book of poetry. I picked it up because I have a student who is passionate about poetry and has single-handedly almost doubled my poetry section this past year. The author writes about her mother and grandmothers, their love and lives, and how they intersect. The grandmothers are from Christian Gambian families, each fell in love with someone outside of their culture, and they each moved away from family. The first section of poems capture their love, their families, the stress of moving to a new place with a new language, the pride they feel in her freedom to use her voice. The second part she writes about falling in love and the pain of falling out. Her finale is finding her feet underneath again. I think my student will enjoy her poetry. Recommended for high school because of complexity.

**Recommended Audience:** High School

**Comments:** US pub. 2023; UK pub. 2022

Teresa Jensen, North Creek High School

## NONFICTION – SHRUG

Brach, Kyle 97841728491547 \$30.65 32 p.  
***Bowhunting*** Searchlight Books Hunting and Fishing Lerner, 2024

This book covers the gear, skills, and safety considerations needed for bow hunting as well as an overview of rules around bow hunting. For example, it mentions the importance of licensing and how it helps manage population and fund conservation. It does not cover the process of actually shooting an animal and what to do afterwards, such as recovering and

dressing the game. Backmatter includes a glossary, index, list of resources, and photo credits.

**Recommended Audience:** Too young for YA

**Comments:** Could be fine for 6th grade

Becky Standal, Longview Public Library

Miller, Marie-Therese 978-1-7284-9089-2 \$30.65 32 p.  
**Esports Superstars** Lerner, 2024

This book is an introduction to esports, broken down into four chapters which explain what esports is, how it started, and highlights some big names in the field. It has pictures of some of the big esports competitions and competitors, it touches on gender bias and sexism in esports. Thinking of middle and high school, it's pretty basic and surface level, I don't feel like my paltry knowledge of Esports is much stronger than before I read it. The text is big, not many words on the page, and the language is pretty basic.

**Recommended Audience:** Too young for YA

Aimee Miles, UPrep

Perez, Precious 978-1-324-05229-6 \$16.95 112 p.  
**Vision: My Story of Strength I, Witness (ARC)** Norton Young Readers, 2023

This is a memoir of Precious Perez's experience growing up as a blind musician and singer. She was born to a teen mother and was 2 and ½ months premature, and her eyes were not developed, which is where her blindness comes from. The book touches briefly on experiences of a low-income family, and focuses primarily on external ablism that Precious dealt with. The text is large, and straightforward and the book is overall pretty brief. I think this is a solid non-fiction for middle school and upper elementary, and honestly would suggest this for a classroom read to my English teachers looking for 6th grade non-fiction that they can read quickly and also reflect on.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle school

Aimee Miles, UPrep

### NONFICTION SERIES – RECOMMENDED

• Lerner Sports All-Star Smack Down Lerner, 2024 \$30.65 32 p.  
Stabler, David 9781728490861

**Aaron Donald vs. Reggie White: Who Would Win**

Anderson, Josh 9798765610268

**Simone Biles vs. Nadia Comaneci: Who Would Win?**

Each book in this series takes two highly competitive athletes in their field – but who didn't compete at the same time – and compares their careers. While some introductory material is included, for the most part these books assume a basic familiarity with the sport. The books feature large full color photographs and pull-out sections of things to consider when comparing the two. They are pretty good as describing the context the athletes are competing in. The books then invite the reader to determine who would win before determining their winner. This is a fun way of looking at athletes and learning a little about

the history of a sport. The statistics in them are accurate through 2022. Backmatter includes a glossary, index, list of resources, and photo credits.

**Recommended Audience:** Middle School, Too young for YA  
Becky Standal, Longview Public Library