

## BIRTH TO AGE SEVEN

### **MAYBE TOMORROW?**

by Charlotte Agell, illustrated by Ana Ramírez

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

9781338214888

The heavy, black block that Elba, the hippopotamus, drags everywhere is indicative of her grief at the loss of Little Bird. Her friendship with alligator Norris—a kind, attentive soul—eases her burden. Warm mixed media illustrations depict a believable, uplifting transformation.

### **B IS FOR BABY**

by Atinuke, illustrated by Angela Brooksbank

Candlewick

9781536201666

A mischievous baby is hidden in a basket fastened to the back of a bicycle her brother rides to see their Baba in another village. A fun and whimsically illustrated story featuring the letter 'B'.

### **A FRIEND FOR HENRY**

by Jenn Bailey, illustrated by Mika Song

Chronicle

9781452167916

Henry hopes to find a new friend, but everyone he meets does something to disturb him until he meets Katie. With its simple narrative and illustrations, the story focuses on the pleasure a child on the autism spectrum might experience in finding a friend who is just right.

### **A NEW HOME**

by Tania de Regil

Candlewick

9781536201932

A new take on moving. Parallel storylines have two children moving to each other's city and country, emphasizing similarities in the moving experience and cities. A picture glossary at the end highlights more information on the two cities.

EST. 1996

### **BIRDSONG**

by Julie Flett

Greystone Books - Greystone Kids

9781771644730

A Cree girl who moves from a “city by the sea” to a rural home develops a friendship with an older woman with whom she shares a love of art. Spare pastel illustrations subtly capture seasonal and emotional changes.

### **POKKO AND THE DRUM**

by Matthew Forsythe

Simon & Schuster - Paula Wiseman Books

9781481480390

When Pokko's parents give her a drum it changes their quiet life forever. A rousing storytime choice.

**CARL AND THE MEANING OF LIFE**

by Deborah Freedman

Penguin Random House - Viking Children's Books (Penguin)

9780451474988

Follow the journey of Carl the earthworm as he tries to figure out his life's purpose in this child-friendly exploration of the enormous impact earthworms—and all of us—have on our environment.

**UNDER MY HIJAB**

by Hena Khan, illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel

Lee & Low Books

9781620147924

A young Muslim girl describes women in her life who wear the headscarf known as a hijab. Bright illustrations and a rhyming text show how the women wear the hijab in many different ways to express their Islamic faith.

**THE THING ABOUT BEES: A LOVE LETTER**

by Shabazz Larkin

Readers to Eaters

9780998047799

An African American father and sons come to value bees. Humorous, informative charts and vivid rhyming language depict an autobiographical attempt to replace fear with understanding.

**FRY BREAD: A NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILY STORY**

by Kevin Noble Maillard, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal

Macmillan - Roaring Brook Press

9781626727465

Warm illustrations lovingly portray a happy, diverse community of Native Americans as they prepare fry bread. The myriad meanings of this staple are explained in phrases which define its culture and history.

**HELLO WORLD! OCEAN LIFE**

by Jill McDonald

Penguin Random House - Doubleday (Random House)

9780525578772

EST. 1996

A vibrantly illustrated exploration of sea creatures in board book format presents just enough information, unique vocabulary, and open-ended questions to inspire multiple rereads.

**WHAT IS GIVEN FROM THE HEART**

by Patricia McKissack, illustrated by April Harrison

Penguin Random House - Schwartz & Wade Books (Random House)

9780375836152

A heartwarming story about James Otis and his mother as they face hardship and loss. The community and the power of giving help them overcome their situation.

**LUBNA AND PEBBLE**

by Wendy Meddour, illustrated by Daniel Egneus  
Penguin Random House - Dial Books for Young Readers (Penguin)  
9780525554165

Lubna copes with living in a refugee camp by drawing a face on a rock, creating a friend and companion. When she leaves the camp, a tough but selfless decision reveals the true power of friendship.

**WHERE ARE YOU FROM?**

by Yamile Saied Mendez, illustrated by Jaime Kim  
HarperCollins - HarperCollins Children's Books  
9780062839930

A loving abuelo tells his granddaughter about the variety of people and places she comes from, stressing that love, not any one place, is her true origin.

**NINE MONTHS: BEFORE A BABY IS BORN**

by Miranda Paul, illustrated by Jason Chin  
Holiday House  
9780823441617

A simple rhyming text describes the excitement of awaiting a new baby sister as seasons change. Colorful illustrations depict the family's anticipation with actual-size drawings of the baby's development on facing pages. Includes informative fact-filled back matter.

**ONE FOX: A COUNTING BOOK THRILLER**

by Kate Read  
Peachtree Publishers  
9781682631317

"A famished fox" is outwitted by "one hundred angry hens" in this distinctive, brightly illustrated counting book. Suspenseful, a tiny bit scary, and utterly satisfying.

**ANOTHER**

by Christian Robinson  
Simon & Schuster - Atheneum  
9781534421677

EST. 1996

A wordless picture book takes a girl and her cat on an adventure through a portal into a parallel world. Bold colors and simple shapes reveal something new with every read in this imaginative.

**WHY?**

by Laura Vaccaro Seeger  
Holiday House  
9780823441730

A childlike rabbit asks its wise bear friend to explain "why" as they enjoy everyday activities and face challenges depicted in the soft, emotive watercolor illustrations.

**SWEET DREAMERS**

by Isabelle Simler  
Eerdmans Books for Young Readers  
9780802855176

This cozy picture book depicts, in gentle poetic language, a variety of slumbering wildlife. Digital scratchboard-style illustrations blend muted tones with bright, day-glo orange lines for a striking effect.

**SMALL IN THE CITY**

by Sydney Smith  
Holiday House  
9780823442614

A child navigating the city alone offers advice to a lost creature—where to get warm and where to find a bite to eat—as the streets fill up with snow. A quiet, emotionally resonant tale.

**¡VAMOS! LET’S GO TO THE MARKET**

by Raul the Third  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Versify  
9781328557261

Little Lobo and his dog, Bernabe, deliver supplies to a variety of stores and friends in this richly illustrated bilingual picture book with iconic Mexican details, complete with Spanish vocabulary and glossary.

**ALONG THE TAPAJÓS**

by Fernando Vilela  
Amazon Publishing - Amazon Crossing Kids  
9781542008686

A brother and sister brave the dangers of the Tapajos River to rescue their pet tortoise. Vivid woodcut and collage illustrations evoke the lush vegetation and wildlife of the Amazon, while capturing the universal connection between children and their pets.

**A STONE SAT STILL**

by Brendan Wenzel  
Chronicle  
9781452173184

A stone sits still in the world, viewed as something different depending on the animal, insect, or object that interacts with it, while changes happen all around. A beautifully illustrated lesson in opposites, perception, and the environment.

**HOME IN THE WOODS**

by Eliza Wheeler  
Penguin Random House - Nancy Paulsen Books (Penguin)  
9780399162909

In Depression era Wisconsin, this fact-based tale finds eight children and their mother homeless after the death of their father. Light-filled watercolor illustrations convey their struggle, strength, and love as season by season they turn a shack into a home.

**BECAUSE**

by Mo Willems, illustrated by Amber Ren

Disney (Hyperion)

9781368019019

Events large and small lead to a young girl's life being transformed by music. A small illustrated score creates a winding path through the pages, emphasizing how music influences and ties people together.

**THE WHOLE WORLD AND ME**

by Toni Yuly

Candlewick

9780763692636

Spare, poetic text evokes a child's connection to the natural world, radiantly depicted with ink-on-collage illustrations which fluidly shift in perspective and scale, from the smallest pebble to the expansive sea.



**CAPITOL  
CHOICES**

## SEVEN TO TEN

### **THE UNDEFEATED**

by Kwame Alexander, illustrated by Kadir Nelson  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Versify  
9781328780966

Stunning oil portraits and a powerful inspirational ode highlight the triumphs and struggles of African American activists, athletes, and artists and their persistence in the face of adversity.

### **ALL IN A DROP: HOW ANTONY VAN LEEUWENHOEK DISCOVERED AN INVISIBLE WORLD**

by Lori Alexander, illustrated by Vivien Mildenerger  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers  
9781328884206

Despite his lack of formal education, Antony von Leeuwenhoek and his passion for the miniature world of microbes changed all of science as we know it. Lively illustrations and just enough yucky detail create a highly readable biography of a great figure in biology.

### **THE IMPORTANT THING ABOUT MARGARET WISE BROWN**

by Mac Barnett, illustrated by Sarah Jacoby  
HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray  
9780062393449

Margaret Wise Brown wrote straightforward books, books that were true and real and much loved by real children. Forty-two pages of appropriately simple text and watercolor illustrations accompany this charming look at her life and work.

### **THE CRAYON MAN: THE TRUE STORY OF THE INVENTION OF CRAYOLA CRAYONS**

by Natascha Biebow, illustrated by Steven Salerno  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Clarion  
9781328866844

Edward Binney is probably not a household name, but his invention certainly is—the colorful crayon! More than a picture book biography, this is also a story of invention and the creative process. Back matter focuses on how the factory works today and is sure to inspire the desire for field trips.

### **STUFFED**

by Liz Braswell  
Disney (Hyperion)  
9781368037013

Clark is really attached to his stuffed animals, much to the dismay of his parents, who think it's time for him to stop such childish nonsense. But those stuffed animals are more than toys, they're a veritable army. This is not your typical "toys coming to life" story; it has unexpected twists and just the right amount of scariness for the age group.

**TITANOSAUR: DISCOVERING THE WORLD'S LARGEST DINOSAUR**

by Dr. Jose Luis Carballido and Dr. Diego Pol, illustrated by Florencia Gigena

Scholastic - Orchard Books

9781338207392

An accidental discovery in the Argentine desert leads to unearthing the world's largest dinosaur skeleton. Compellingly told by the paleontologists involved.

**WHICH ONE DOESN'T BELONG?**

by Christopher Danielson

Charlesbridge

9781580899444

This collection of puzzles with no wrong answers and plenty of encouragement to think creatively offers a new approach to teaching math concepts to young children.

**MOONSHOT: THE FLIGHT OF APOLLO 11**

by Brian Floca

Simon & Schuster - Atheneum

9781534440302

For the 50th anniversary of man's first step on the moon, this Sibert honor book has been updated with a 21st century eye and eight pages of welcome new material. A historical event dramatically brought to life for young readers.

**TWO BROTHERS, FOUR HANDS: THE ARTISTS ALBERTO AND DIEGO GIACOMETTI**

by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan, illustrated by Hadley Hooper

Holiday House

9780823441709

The story of brothers Alberto and Diego Giacometti, Swiss sculptors whose artistic lives intertwined and spanned much of the 20th century.

**THE PROPER WAY TO MEET A HEDGEHOG AND OTHER HOW-TO POEMS**

by Paul B. Janeczko, illustrated by Richard Jones

Candlewick

9780763681685

Whimsical illustrations accompany the work of notable poets sharing their how-to advice from the practical to the fanciful.

**PAPER SON: THE INSPIRING STORY OF TYRUS WONG, IMMIGRANT AND ARTIST**

by Julie Leung, illustrated by Chris Sasaki

Penguin Random House Canada - Schwartz & Wade

9781524771874

Follows the life of painter Tyrus Wong, the artist behind the iconic backgrounds in Disney's *Bambi*, as he emigrates from China to America seeking new opportunities.

EST. 1996

**GOING DOWN HOME WITH DADDY**

by Kelly Starling Lyons, illustrated by Daniel Minter

Peachtree Publishers

9781561459384

Lil Alan, a young African American boy, goes down home for a family reunion. Lush illustrations and text portray the powerful love and history of his family, highlighting the importance of coming together and sharing traditions.

**IT BEGAN WITH A PAGE: HOW GYO FUJIKAWA DREW THE WAY**

by Kyo Maclear, illustrated by Julie Morstad

HarperCollins - HarperCollins Children's Books

9780062447623

Morstad invokes the recognizable style of Gyo Fujikawa in this tribute to the Japanese-American artist and activist: coming of age during WWII prejudice, seeking refuge in drawing, and making unprecedented contributions to racial diversity in picture books.

**JUST RIGHT: SEARCHING FOR THE GOLDILOCKS PLANET**

by Curtis Manley, illustrated by Jessica Lanan

Macmillan - Roaring Brook Press

9781250155337

A child speculates about the possibilities of finding another world that is “just right” for sustaining human life - a Goldilocks planet.

**JUANA & LUCAS: BIG PROBLEMAS**

by Juana Medina

Candlewick

9781536201314

Juana and her best dog, Lucas, love their cozy life with Mami. When Mami invites a new amigo, Luis, into their little circle, Juana isn't sure there is room for him!

**LET 'ER BUCK!: GEORGE FLETCHER, THE PEOPLE'S CHAMPION**

by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson, illustrated by Gordon C. James

Lerner Publishing Group - Carolrhoda Books

9781512498080

Black cowboy George Fletcher's unlikely triumph following the Pendleton Round-Up will captivate all who love true stories, unexpected heroes, and cowboy tales.

**GITTEL'S JOURNEY: AN ELLIS ISLAND STORY**

by Leslea Newman, illustrated by Amy June Bates

Abrams - Abrams Books for Young Readers

9781419727474

Sepia-toned illustrations with woodblock motifs evoke a turn-of-the-century feel for this emotionally rich story of a nine-year-old girl who must make the crossing to Ellis Island on her own. Inspired by a true story.

EST. 1996

**MY PAPI HAS A MOTORCYCLE**

by Isabel Quintero, illustrated by Zeke Peña

Penguin Random House - Kokila

9780525553410

Take a trip with Daisy on the back of her father's motorcycle and around the changing community where they live. Available in English & Spanish.

**THE BELL RANG**

by James E. Ransome

Simon & Schuster - Atheneum

9781442421134

Simple, rhythmic text echoes the routine of daily life on a slave plantation, broken only when the bell tolls to signal a slave's escape—here, a young girl's older brother—inspiring fear, grief, and hope in those left behind.

**BIRD COUNT**

by Susan Edwards Richmond, illustrated by Stephanie Fizer Coleman

Peachtree Publishers

9781561459544

Ava and her mother, citizen scientists, participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count, showing how they tally all the birds they see and hear—and wait for the ones they hope to see again.

**YOU ARE HOME: AN ODE TO THE NATIONAL PARKS**

by Evan Turk

Simon & Schuster - Atheneum

9781534432826

This celebration of the natural splendor of national parks features various flora and fauna as well as children from many different backgrounds, making it clear that national parks are for everyone to enjoy.

**MAGIC RAMEN: THE STORY OF MOMOFUKU ANDO**

by Andrea Wang, illustrated by Kana Urbanowicz

Simon & Schuster - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

9781499807035

Tells the story of Momofuko Ando, the creator of one of the world's most popular foods, and his persistence to create a workable, affordable instant ramen.

**A PLACE TO LAND: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND THE SPEECH THAT INSPIRED A NATION**

by Barry Wittenstein, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

Holiday House

9780823443314

Before Martin Luther King spoke in Washington in 1963, he consulted with advisors and worked all night on a draft, but it was Mahalia Jackson who urged him mid-speech to preach about his dream. Gorgeous, allusive paintings add context.

EST. 1996

## TEN TO FOURTEEN

### **THE LINE TENDER**

by Kate Allen, illustrated by Xingye Jin

Penguin Random House - Dutton Books for Young Readers (Penguin)

9780735231603

Lucy grieves her mother's and her best friend's deaths and celebrates their lives in a way that each would understand—with the help of a great white shark.

### **THE OTHER HALF OF HAPPY**

by Rebecca Balcárcel

Chronicle

9781452169989

Quijana, half Guatemalan and half American, struggles to figure out her life in a new school, cope with family health problems, and understand how she fits with her Guatemalan relatives.

### **THE NEXT GREAT PAULIE FINK**

by Ali Benjamin

Little, Brown & Company - Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

9780316380881

It is hard enough to be the new kid but Caitlyn has the impossible task of being compared to a student whose antics have taken on mythic proportions in his absence. Her response is legendary.

### **THIS PROMISE OF CHANGE: ONE GIRL'S STORY IN THE FIGHT FOR SCHOOL EQUALITY**

by Jo Ann Allen Boyce and Debbie Levy

Bloomsbury

9781681198521

In a series of poems crafted with Debbie Levy, Jo Ann Allen Boyce tells of the pain and the courage it took to be a pioneer of desegregation at Clinton High school in Tennessee in 1951, one year before The Little Rock Nine.

### **FEVER YEAR: THE KILLER FLU OF 1918**

by Don Brown

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

9780544837409

This graphic non-fiction account of the Spanish Influenza of 1918 examines its effects on the world and on World War I.

### **INFINITE HOPE: A BLACK ARTIST'S JOURNEY FROM WORLD WAR II TO PEACE**

by Ashley Bryan

Simon & Schuster - Atheneum

9781534404908

Ashley Bryan's paintings, sketches, letters, and photos provide a compelling visual narrative to accompany this intimate memoir of his years in the Army and his ongoing passion for art.

EST. 1996

**NEW KID**

by Jerry Craft

HarperCollins - HarperCollins Children's Books

9780062691194

Navigating the separate, very different universes of his neighborhood and his selective private school are a challenge for this preteen. This graphic novel explores and exposes stereotypes, asking "when are you no longer an outsider?"

**BEST FRIENDS**

by Shannon Hale, illustrated by LeUyen Pham

Macmillan - First Second

9781250317469

Readers may see themselves in this vibrant graphic novel portraying the confusing nuances of friendships and popularity in sixth grade.

**TORPEDOED: THE TRUE STORY OF THE WORLD WAR II SINKING OF "THE CHILDREN'S SHIP"**

by Deborah Heiligman

Macmillan - Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

9781627795548

A gripping, impressively well-researched narrative presents heroic acts as well as horrors of war in relating the tragic story of the sinking of the passenger ship City of Benares that was carrying English youth to safety in Canada.

**SWEEPING UP THE HEART**

by Kevin Henkes

HarperCollins - Greenwillow Books

9780062852540

Amelia faces a boring spring break until she rediscovers pottery and friendship and possibilities.

**POISON EATERS: FIGHTING DANGER AND FRAUD IN OUR FOOD AND DRUGS**

by Gail Jarrow

Boyd's Mills Press - Calkins Creek

9781629794389

EST. 1996

They put *what* in our food? Gory details, vintage ads, and extensive back matter fill this matter-of-fact account of food production and medical claims before today's standards. Don't read this book while you are eating.

**LALANI OF THE DISTANT SEA**

by Erin Entrada Kelly, illustrated by Lian Cho

HarperCollins - Greenwillow Books

97806274273

After a portentous wish leaves her family and village at risk, quiet 12-year-old Lalani Sarita embarks upon a harrowing journey to save the community with a show of strength even Lalani did not realize she possessed. Rich with Filipino characters and folklore.

**PIE IN THE SKY**

by Remy Lai

Macmillan - Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

9781250314093

Using comic illustrations where words Jingwen doesn't understand are shown as squiggles, this story tells of a boy new to Australia taking care of his annoying little brother and trying to honor his dead papa by making fancy cakes – without Mama finding out.

**BUTTERFLY YELLOW**

by Thanhà Lai

HarperCollins - HarperTeen

9780062229212

Hằng has made it to Texas from Việt Nam in 1981, but now she wants to find her little brother who got there six years before. A wannabe cowboy ends up as her unlikely helper in this poignant story of family, traumatic memories, and daring to hope.

**QUEEN OF THE SEA**

by Dylan Meconis

Candlewick

9781536204988

In this elaborately detailed graphic novel, an exiled queen is banished to a remote island—home to an order of nuns isolated for political crimes—where her life intertwines with that of a young orphan.

**FREE LUNCH**

by Rex Ogle

W.W. Norton - Norton Young Readers

9781324003601

The author's first semester in sixth grade is made worse by the way that the cafeteria lady sneers at him about his free lunch, the way his mother refuses help for her hungry children, and the way his stepfather treats him. A look both at being poor from an insider's perspective and at how hope blossoms even in the worst circumstances.

**WE'RE NOT FROM HERE**

by Geoff Rodkey

Penguin Random House - Crown (Random House)

9781524773045

Being an unwanted refugee on the planet Choom puts huge pressure on Lan, who must demonstrate that humans are acceptable. Awkward situations and plenty of humor demonstrate challenges in understanding alien perspectives and hint at contemporary, earth-bound events.

EST. 1996

CAPITOL CHOICES

**MAXIMILLIAN FLY**

by Angie Sage

HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books

9780062571168

Maximillian's quiet life is upended when the Roach rescues two young Wingless creatures on the run from the dictatorial Bartizan. Alternating perspectives and exceptional world-building produce a piercing post-apocalyptic tale.

**PAY ATTENTION, CARTER JONES**

by Gary D. Schmidt

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - Clarion

9780544790858

Chaos turns to calm when Mr. Bowles-Fitzpatrick, an English butler, arrives at the Jones' household on the rainy first day of school. He not only brings order but also helps Carter and his younger siblings face a difficult truth.

**STARGAZING**

by Jen Wang

Macmillan - First Second

9781250183873

In spite of their differences, Christine and Moon become best friends - until a catastrophe strikes. An accessible, appealing graphic novel.

**OTHER WORDS FOR HOME**

by Jasmine Warga

HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray

9780062747808

Jude and her mother leave the rest of their family behind in Syria, and must learn to navigate the difficulties of being immigrants and new to a country and a culture in the U.S. midwest.

**ENEMY CHILD: THE STORY OF NORMAN MINETA, A BOY IMPRISONED IN A JAPANESE AMERICAN INTERNMENT CAMP DURING WWII**

by Andrea Warren

Holiday House

9780823441518

Personal anecdotes and child-friendly details will fascinate readers of this historical narrative about life at the Heart Mountain internment camp for a nine-year-old boy, who went on to serve twenty years in the House of Representatives.

EST. 1996

CAPITOL  
CHOICES

## FOURTEEN AND UP

### LOVE FROM A TO Z

by S.K. Ali

Simon & Schuster - Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

9781534442726

Something strange and wonderful happens to angry Zayneb, suspended for confronting a xenophobic teacher, and Adam, struggling with his multiple sclerosis diagnosis: they meet.

### THE CANDLE AND THE FLAME

by Nafiza Azad

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

9781338306040

Fatima is thrust into a world of intrigue, war, oppression, and love in a beautifully woven fantasy in a desert setting.

### LOVELY WAR

by Julie Berry

Penguin Random House - Viking Children's Books (Penguin)

9780451469939

The fates of four mortals rest in the hands of the gods in a masterful tale of love and loss, set against the backdrop of World War I. Also recommended is the full cast audio production (Listening Library).

### THE GREAT NIJINSKY: GOD OF DANCE

by Lynn Curlee

Charlesbridge

9781580898003

Vaslav Nijinsky captured the hearts and attention of the world in the early twentieth century, defying accepted cultural and sexual norms to become a world renowned ballet dancer and gay icon before falling into obscurity, plagued by mental illness before an early death. The exceptional design of this fascinating biography includes Curlee's distinctive paintings of the dancer.

EST. 1996

### STEPSISTER

by Jennifer Donnelly

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

9781338268461

How much do you really know about Cinderella's ugly stepsisters? Isabelle is an unconventional girl fighting against her family legacy, a society that says only pretty girls get what they want, and her own inner struggle to become her best self.

CAPITOL  
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**WE ARE LOST AND FOUND**

by Helene Dunbar  
Sourcebooks - Sourcebooks Fire  
9781492681045

In this coming-of-age story set against the background of the early days of the AIDS epidemic, Michael has always been content to stay out of the spotlight, both among his best friends and within his family. As the end of senior year approaches, he knows he must face his fears in order to be true to himself.

**VOICES: THE FINAL HOURS OF JOAN OF ARC**

by David Elliott  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers  
9781328987594

Joan's story is told in verse using the voices of people, objects special to her in her life, and true accounts from both of her trials, offering a glimpse of the girl who became a saint and an inspiration to women everywhere.

**SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS**

by Jessie Ann Foley  
HarperCollins - HarperTeen  
9780062571915

A routine photography assignment turns into a soul searching journey for Pup, the youngest of eight, who is having a hard time finding himself two years after the death of his beloved brother.

**LET ME HEAR A RHYME**

by Tiffany D. Jackson  
HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books  
9780062840325

This ode to hip-hop, rap, and friendship is set in Brooklyn, where a teen rapper's sister and best friends are on a journey together to find his murderer.

**A CURSE SO DARK AND LONELY**

by Brigid Kemmerer  
Bloomsbury  
9781681195087

Harper is thrust into the fantasy kingdom of Emberfall and immersed in the life of Prince Rhen and the curse that is destroying those around him. Will she stay to save them from the vicious sorceress or retreat back to the life she had in D.C.?

**THE MUSIC OF WHAT HAPPENS**

by Bill Konigsberg  
Scholastic - Arthur A. Levine Books  
9781338215502

Jordan offers Max a job on his dilapidated food truck in this romantic novel set in a blazing hot Arizona summer. Though each has his own demons to overcome, they find mutual help, support, and healing.

**THE DOWNSTAIRS GIRL**

by Stacey Lee

Penguin Random House - Putnam (Penguin)

9781524740955

Forced to become a lady's maid to make ends meet in Atlanta in 1890, Chinese Ko Kuan moonlights as an advice columnist. She discovers the true extent of racism in Atlanta and her own hidden past in this story of family, inequality, and finding your voice.

**A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS: JANUSZ KORCZAK, HIS ORPHANS, AND THE HOLOCAUST**

by Albert Marrin

Penguin Random House - Alfred A. Knopf (Random House)

9781524701208

A heart-wrenching, meticulously researched depiction of the Warsaw ghetto chronicles Polish Jewish history from the diaspora to the Holocaust, with a focus on the life and work of pediatrician Janusz Korczak.

**WE SET THE DARK ON FIRE**

by Tehlor Kay Mejia

HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books

9780062691316

Dani, Latinx and queer, must use her wits and elite school training to bring about change in a world where the undocumented have no chance of improving their circumstances, and women of any class are only in supportive roles to powerful men.

**MS. KOIZUMI LOVES RAMEN NOODLES vol 1**

by Naru Narumi

Dark Horse

9781506713274

Laser-focused Ms. Koizumi, a young ramen connoisseur who cannot be bothered with friendships or relationships, introduces many varieties of ramen as she searches for the best noodles in Tokyo.

**BLOOM**

by Kevin Panetta, illustrated by Savanna Ganucheau

Macmillan - First Second

9781250196910

Working for his family's bakery business seems an insurmountable obstacle to musician Ari until Hector arrives in their Maryland beach town and his perspective changes. A gorgeous graphic novel in shades of teal.

**FIELD GUIDE TO THE NORTH AMERICAN TEENAGER**

by Ben Philippe

HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray

9780062824110

French Canadian Norris must learn to navigate—and survive—the uncharted territory of a Texas high school. Irreverent descriptions for the guide are interspersed with the challenging reality of being a black Canadian teen in Austin, Texas.

**PATRON SAINTS OF NOTHING**

by Randy Ribay

Penguin Random House - Kokila

9780525554912

Armed with poignant letters from his cousin Jun, Jay travels to the Philippines to find the truth about Jun's death, including the role Duarte's war on drugs played in it and how his family betrayed him.

**THE FOUNTAINS OF SILENCE**

by Ruta Sepetys

Penguin Random House - Philomel (Penguin)

9780399160318

Daniel accompanies his parents in their business travels to Madrid in 1957 and finds himself befriendng young Spaniards affected by the recent Civil War and the oppressive leadership of Francisco Franco in this compelling, fast-paced narrative. Extensive back matter documents the time period.

**YOU ASKED FOR PERFECT**

by Laura Silverman

Sourcebooks - Sourcebooks Fire

9781492658276

Ariel's life revolved around creating the perfect high school resume, but when he fails a calculus quiz, handsome Amir agrees to tutor him. As everything Ariel has built starts to crumble he isn't sure what is worth holding onto.

**LAURA DEAN KEEPS BREAKING UP WITH ME**

by Mariko Tamaki, illustrated by Rosemary Valero-O'Connell

Macmillan - First Second

9781524720209

Freddy keeps going back to her girlfriend, Laura, even though Laura cheats on Freddy and is emotionally manipulative. A look at the destructive nature of toxic relationships and the beauty of healthy ones.

**RAYNE AND DELILAH'S MIDNITE MATINEE**

by Jeff Zentner

Penguin Random House - Crown (Random House)

9781524720208

Delia and Josie (aka Rayne and Delilah) are seniors facing tough end-of-high school decisions, and an uncertain future for their public access channel horror show (that not many people even watch). Will their friendship stand the test of the daunting decisions each has to make?

EST. 1996

CAPITOL  
CHOICES

## AUDIOBOOKS

### **WITH THE FIRE ON HIGH**

by Elizabeth Acevedo, narrated by the author  
HarperCollins - HarperAudio  
9781982658069

Emoni, pregnant her freshman year of high school, nevertheless dreams of becoming a chef. The author's musical voice and rich description of Emoni's cooking adds to the magic.

### **PET**

by Akwaeke Emezi, narrated by Christopher Myers  
Penguin Random House - Listening Library (Audio)  
9780593153994

The hunter Pet emerges to eradicate a monster that is preying on someone Jam loves, though the people of Lucille believe all the monsters are gone. Nuanced narration immerses listeners in this atmospheric tale.

### **SONG FOR A WHALE**

by Lynn Kelly, narrated by Abigail Revasch  
Penguin Random House - Listening Library (Audio)  
9781984832719

Iris and her grandmother, both Deaf, set out on an Alaskan cruise to test a plan tech-savvy Iris hatched to communicate with Blue 55, a lonely whale who sings on a different frequency than others.

### **SAL AND GABI BREAK THE UNIVERSE**

by Carlos Hernandez, narrated by Anthony Rey Perez  
Penguin Random House - Listening Library (Audio)  
9781984845801

Two middle schoolers join forces to explore rips in the space-time continuum in this offbeat sf romp with its underlying theme of grief and loss. The narration sparkles as Perez delivers a range of Latino accents.

### **LOOK BOTH WAYS**

by Jason Reynolds, narrated by a full cast  
Simon & Schuster - Atheneum (Audio)  
9781508267140

Ten terrific stories—some poignant and some light-hearted—about being a teen, growing up, and keeping things together.

### **FRANKLY IN LOVE**

by David Yoon, narrated by Raymond J. Lee  
Penguin Random House - Listening Library (Audio)  
9780593105597

Frank's parents have one rule when it comes to his dating and that is: Korean girls only. What could go wrong when he falls for a white girl and makes a pact with his friend, Joy Song, to throw them off?

## WHO WE ARE

The first edition of Capitol Choices published in 1996, built on the work of the late Peggy Coughlan at the Children's Literature Center of the Library of Congress, who for many years edited an annual list entitled "Books for Children." The founding members of the Capitol Choices group who worked on these lists appreciated the opportunity to hone their critical skills during those years and wished to carry the work of that committee forward.

Since 1996, Capitol Choices has included librarians, teachers, booksellers, children's literature specialists, reviewers, and magazine editors who work in cities, suburbs, and rural areas in and around Washington, D.C. Most of us work directly with young people, and all of us share a passion for books and a commitment to pairing children with books.

## CRITERIA

Our mission is to identify and select a yearly list of outstanding titles for children and teens. We consider books and audiobooks published in the current calendar year for readers from birth through the high school years. We look not only for those books and audiobooks that are obviously remarkable but also for those whose charm, art, information, or depth of feeling may enhance a young person's world. We especially look for books that may not find an audience without the benefit of special attention.

What does Capitol Choices mean by "the best"? "Best" of the year? "Best" by this author? "Best" of its type? Our discussions are often heated, always serious, filled with good humor and, in the end, the titles we choose meet all of these criteria. In addition to the qualities that mark good titles—clarity, accuracy, credibility, and that most elusive quality of all, distinguished writing, illustration or narration—we place special emphasis on titles which we believe appeal to and reflect the sensibilities of their intended audience.

## JOIN US

We welcome you in person at our monthly meetings. Capitol Choices members are also available to present workshops on the best titles of the year, how to evaluate literature for young people, and other topics related to our passion for books and audiobooks for young readers. Please visit our website [www.capitolchoices.org](http://www.capitolchoices.org) to schedule a workshop or find out more about joining our group.

## MEMBERS

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