

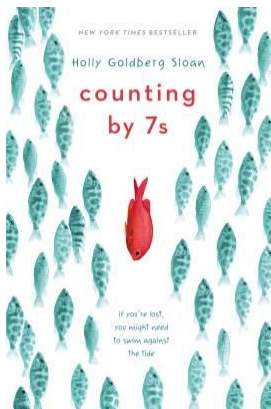


## CSA Suggested Independent Reading List

Below is a list of book recommendations for independent reading. To find out more about these titles, websites such as [commonsensemedia.org](http://commonsensemedia.org) and [goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com) are great resources. Common Sense Media provides more in depth summaries and book details, parent reviews, and ideas for how to engage in discussion about the story with your children. Goodreads provides a variety of reviews, summaries, similar book suggestions and reader Q&As.

### Fiction

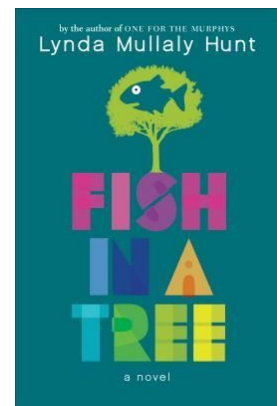
#### **Counting by 7s** by Holly Goldberg Sloan



Willow Chance is a twelve-year-old genius, obsessed with nature and diagnosing medical conditions, who finds it comforting to count by 7s. It has never been easy for her to connect with anyone other than her adoptive parents, but that hasn't kept her from leading a quietly happy life . . . until now. Suddenly Willow's world is tragically changed when her parents both die in a car crash, leaving her alone in a baffling world. The triumph of this book is that it is *not* a tragedy. This extraordinarily odd, but extraordinarily endearing, girl manages to push through her grief. Her journey to find a fascinatingly diverse and fully believable surrogate family is a joy and a revelation to read ([Penguinrandomhouse.com](http://Penguinrandomhouse.com)).

#### **Fish in a Tree** by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Ally has been smart enough to fool a lot of smart people. Every time she lands in a new school, she is able to hide her inability to read by creating clever yet disruptive distractions. She is afraid to ask for help; after all, how can you cure dumb? However, her newest teacher Mr. Daniels sees the bright, creative kid underneath the trouble maker. With his help, Ally learns not to be so hard on herself and that dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. As her confidence grows, Ally feels free to be herself and the world starts opening up with possibilities. She discovers that there's a lot more to her—and to everyone—than a label, and that great minds don't always think alike ([lyndamullalyhunt.com](http://lyndamullalyhunt.com)).



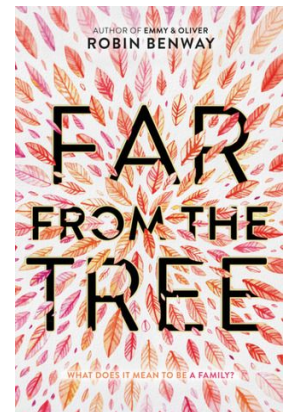
## Amina's Voice by Hena Khan



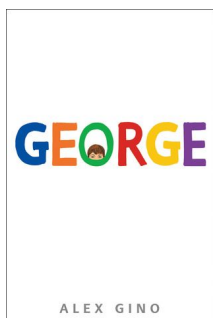
Amina has never been comfortable in the spotlight. She is happy just hanging out with her best friend, Soojin. Except now that she's in middle school everything feels different. Soojin is suddenly hanging out with Emily, one of the “cool” girls in the class, and even talking about changing her name to something more “American.” Does Amina need to start changing too? Or hiding who she is to fit in? While Amina grapples with these questions, she is devastated when her local mosque is vandalized ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

## Far From the Tree by Robin Benway

A contemporary novel about three adopted siblings who find each other at just the right moment. Being the middle child has its ups and downs. But for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family, including—Maya, her loudmouthed younger bio sister, who has a lot to say about their newfound family ties. Having grown up the snarky brunette in a house full of chipper redheads, she's quick to search for traces of herself among these not-quite-strangers. And when her adopted family's long-buried problems begin to explode to the surface, Maya can't help but wonder where exactly it is that she belongs. And Joaquin, their stoic older bio brother, who has no interest in bonding over their shared biological mother. After seventeen years in the foster care system, he's learned that there are no heroes, and secrets and fears are best kept close to the vest, where they can't hurt anyone but him ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



## George by Alex Gino



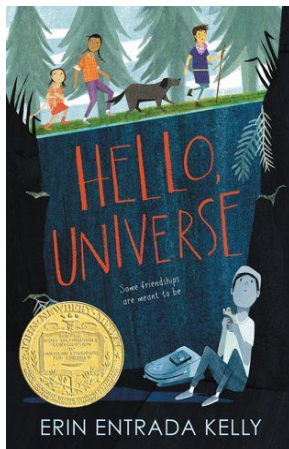
BE WHO YOU ARE. When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl. George thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be Charlotte's Web. George really, really, REALLY wants to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part... because she's a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte – but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

## The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline. Some are calling him a thug, maybe even a drug dealer and a gangbanger. Protesters are taking to the streets in Khalil's name. Some cops and the local drug lord try to intimidate Starr and her family. What everyone wants to know is: what *really* went down that night? And the only person alive who can answer that is Starr. But what Starr does or does not say could upend her community. It could also endanger her life ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



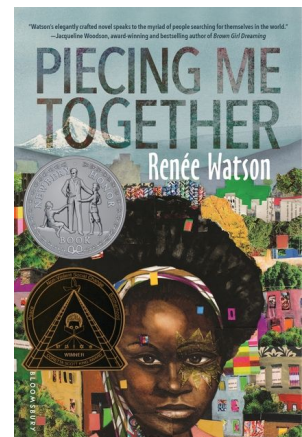
## Hello Universe by Erin Entrada Kelly



In one day, four lives weave together in unexpected ways. Virgil Salinas is shy and kindhearted and feels out of place in his loud and boisterous family. Valencia Somerset, who is deaf, is smart, brave, and secretly lonely, and loves everything about nature. Kaori Tanaka is a self-proclaimed psychic, whose little sister Gen is always following her around. And Chet Bullens wishes the weird kids would just act normal so that he can concentrate on basketball. They aren't friends -- at least not until Chet pulls a prank that traps Virgil and his pet guinea pig at the bottom of a well. This disaster leads Kaori, Gen, and Valencia on an epic quest to find the missing Virgil. Through luck, smarts, bravery, and a little help from the universe, a rescue is performed, a bully is put in his place, and friendship blooms ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

## Piecing Me Together by Renée Watson

Jade believes she must get out of her neighborhood if she's ever going to succeed. Her mother says she has to take every opportunity. She has. She accepted a scholarship to a mostly-white private school and even Saturday morning test prep opportunities. But some opportunities feel more demeaning than helpful. Like an invitation to join Women to Women, a mentorship program for "at-risk" girls. Except really, it's for black girls. From "bad" neighborhoods. But Jade doesn't need support. And just because her mentor is black doesn't mean she understands Jade. And maybe there are some things Jade could show these successful women about the real world and finding ways to make a real



difference. Friendships, race, privilege, identity—this compelling and thoughtful story explores the issues young women face ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

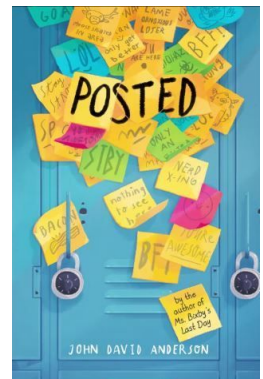
## The Crossover by Kwame Alexander



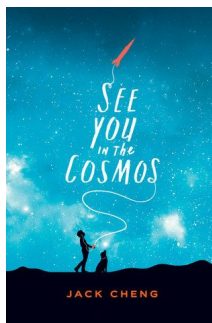
"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . . The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood. Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

## Posted by John David Anderson

In middle school, words aren't just words. They can be weapons. They can be gifts. The right words can win you friends or make you enemies. They can come back to haunt you. Sometimes they can change things forever. When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes—though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well. In the middle of this, a new girl named Rose arrives at school and sits at Frost's lunch table. Rose is not like anyone else at Branton Middle School, and it's clear that the close circle of friends Frost has made for himself won't easily hold another. As the sticky-note war escalates, and the pressure to choose sides mounts, Frost soon realizes that after this year, nothing will ever be the same ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



## See You in the Cosmos by Jack Cheng



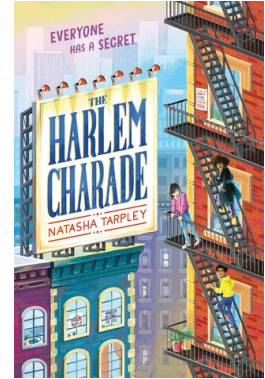
11-year-old Alex Petroski loves space and rockets, his mom, his brother, and his dog Carl Sagan—named for his hero, the real-life astronomer. All he wants is to launch his golden iPod into space the way Carl Sagan (the man, not the dog) launched his Golden Record on the Voyager spacecraft in 1977. From Colorado to New Mexico, Las Vegas to L.A., Alex records a journey on his iPod to show other lifeforms what life on earth, his earth, is like. But his destination keeps changing. And the funny, lost, remarkable people he meets along the way can only partially prepare him for the



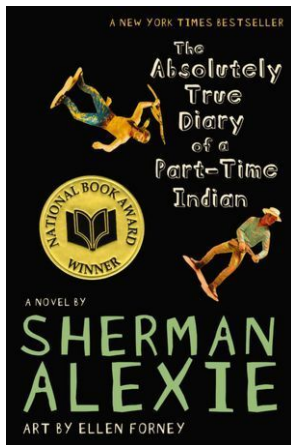
secrets he'll uncover—from the truth about his long-dead dad to the fact that, for a kid with a troubled mom and a mostly not-around brother, he has way more family than he ever knew ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

### **The Harlem Charade** by Natasha Tarpley

WATCHER. SHADOW. FUGITIVE. Harlem is home to all kinds of kids. Jin sees life passing her by from the window of her family's bodega. Alex wants to help the needy one shelter at a time, but can't tell anyone who she really is. Elvin's living on Harlem's cold, lonely streets, surviving on his own after his grandfather was mysteriously attacked. When these three strangers join forces to find out what happened to Elvin's grandfather, their digging leads them to an enigmatic artist whose missing masterpieces are worth a fortune—one that might save the neighborhood from development by an ambitious politician who wants to turn it into Harlem World, a ludicrous historic theme park. But if they don't find the paintings soon, nothing in their beloved neighborhood will ever be the same. . . In this remarkable tale of daring and danger, debut novelist Natasha Tarpley explores the way a community defines itself, the power of art to show truth, and what it really means to be home ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



### **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie

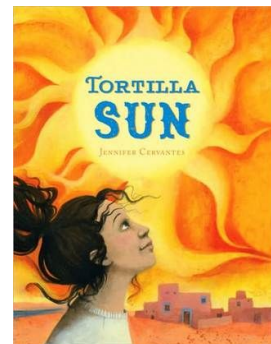


Bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is based on the author's own experiences, coupled with poignant drawings by Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art, chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy as he attempts to break away from the life he was destined to live. With a forward by Markus Zusak, interviews with Sherman Alexie and

Ellen Forney, and four-color interior art throughout, this edition is perfect for fans and collectors alike ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

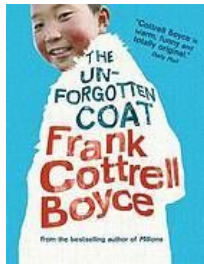
### **Tortilla Sun** by Jennifer Cervantes

When twelve-year-old Izzy discovers a beat-up baseball marked with the words "Because magic" while unpacking in yet another new apartment, she is determined to figure out what it means. What secrets does this old ball have to tell? Her mom certainly isn't sharing any especially when it comes to Izzy's father,



who died before Izzy was born. But when she spends the summer in her Nana's remote New Mexico village, Izzy discovers long-buried secrets that come alive in an enchanted landscape of watermelon mountains, whispering winds, and tortilla suns. Infused with the flavor of the southwest and sprinkled with just a pinch of magic, this heartfelt middle grade debut is as rich and satisfying as Nana's homemade enchiladas ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

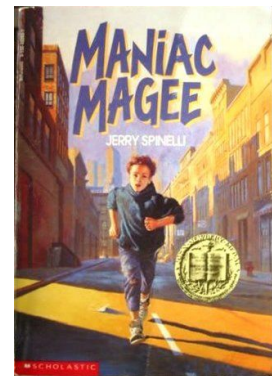
### **The Unforgotten Coat** by Frank Cottrell Boyce



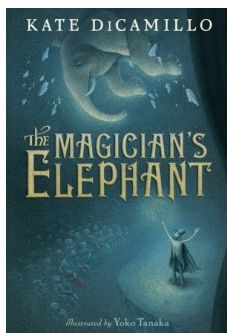
"My brother believes he is being chased by a demon... a demon that makes things vanish." Carnegie Medallist Frank Cottrell Boyce transports readers from the steppe of Mongolia to the streets of Liverpool in a story that is compelling, miraculous and laugh-out-loud funny ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

### **Maniac Magee** by Jerry Spinelli

Maniac Magee is the story of Jeffrey Lionel Magee, a homeless orphan who runs away from life with his unhappy aunt and uncle to a racially divided community in Pennsylvania. While there, Maniac amazes the town with his athletic ability and bravery and is deemed a legend. While there, Maniac meets the Beale family who brings him into their home despite others' racial criticism. Although ensuing racial tensions eventually force Maniac to leave the Beales' household, a series of relationships and events unite the community and Maniac with his newfound family ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



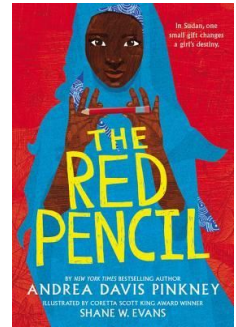
### **The Magician's Elephant** by Kate DiCamillo



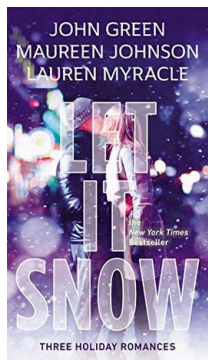
Peter Augustus Duchene is a ten-year-old orphan whose mother's dying wish was for Peter to protect his sister; however, his guardian, a soldier named Vilna Lutz, believes she is no longer alive. When Vilna Lutz gives Peter money to buy food in the market square, he sees a fortuneteller's tent and decides he must use the money to ask her if his sister is alive and how he can find her. The fortuneteller responds that an elephant will lead him to find his younger sister, Adele, who is alive ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

## The Red Pencil by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Amira is a twelve-year-old Sudanese girl living in a village where it is believed that a woman's role in society is to marry, raise children and do chores; not read or write. However, Amira, who draws beautiful pictures in the dirt alongside her home, longs to go to school to learn to read and write. Life as she knows it is shattered when the Janjaweed militia storms her village causing her spirit and hopefulness to dwindle until the gift of one red pencil opens her mind ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



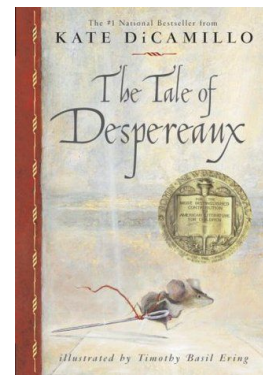
## Let it Snow: Three Holiday Romances by John Green, Maureen Johnson and Lauren Myracle



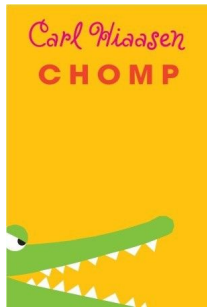
Three interconnected stories about a Christmas Eve snowstorm that transforms one small town into a romantic haven. Well, kinda. After all, a cold and wet hike from a stranded train through the middle of nowhere would not normally end with a delicious kiss from a charming stranger. And no one would think that a trip to the Waffle House through four feet of snow would lead to love with an old friend. Or that the way back to true love begins with a painfully early morning shift at Starbucks.

## The Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo

Despereaux is a mouse, but no ordinary mouse. He is courageous and has gigantic ears, but most of all, he enjoys the company of humans. In this adventure-packed novel, Despereaux is ostracized from his community, makes the most unlikely of friends, and embarks on a mission to save his love, Princess Pea. *The Tale of Despereaux* is a novel that children can easily relate, while also promoting self-confidence. DiCamillo carefully crafts a story that imparts an important message: regardless of individual differences, with courage and determination, a mouse, or even a child, can accomplish the unthinkable ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



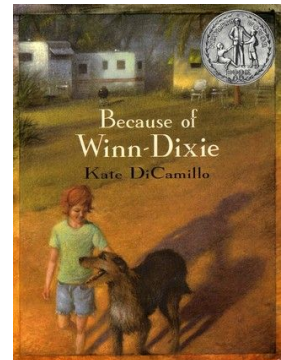
## Chomp by Carl Hiaasen



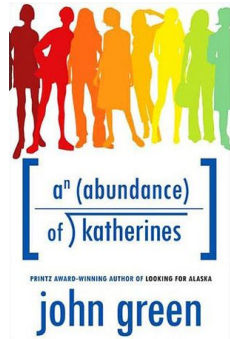
Wahoo Cray lives in a zoo with his unpredictable, animal wrangler, father. When his dad takes a job with a reality TV show called "Expedition Survival!", Wahoo figures he'll have to do a bit of wrangling himself—to keep his dad from killing Derek Badger, the show's boneheaded star, before the shoot is over. But the job keeps getting more complicated after only one day of shooting in the Everglades. It's anyone's guess who will actually survive "Expedition Survival."

## Because of Winn-Dixie by Kate DiCamillo

When Opal and her father, the preacher, move to Naomi, Florida one summer, she goes into the Winn-Dixie supermarket and comes out with a stray dog. She names the dog Winn-Dixie, and because of Winn-Dixie, the preacher tells Opal ten things about her absent mother, one for each year Opal has been alive. Together, Opal and Winn-Dixie make new friends and collect stories about the town and her mother ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



## An Abundance of Katherines by John Green



Colin Singleton has been dumped by nineteen Katherines, and is on a mission to prove "The Theorem of Underlying Katherine Predictability," which he hopes will predict the future of any relationship, avenge Dumpees everywhere, and perhaps finally win him the girl. This mission takes him on a road trip miles from home with ten thousand dollars, a feral hog on his trail, and an overweight, Judge Judy-loving best friend riding shotgun ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

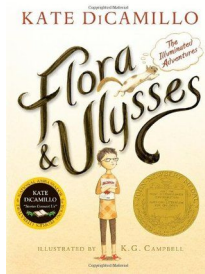
## Crash by Jerry Spinelli

John "Crash" Coogan is a seventh-grade football star who exhibits a rough and aggressive behavior, which he enjoys possessing. However, his opinion of himself begins to shift when he meets his neighbor who makes him reevaluate how he treats others. This book provides a different glimpse into the life and mind of a bully ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).





## Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures by Kate DiCamillo



Self-proclaimed cynic Flora Belle Buckman has read every issue of the comic book, *Terrible Things Can Happen to You!* However, she begins to learn the power of optimism after saving a squirrel, Ulysses, from a vacuum cleaner. After his rescue, Ulysses is born anew with the power of strength, flight, and misspelled poetry, which work together to change Flora's outlook on the world ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

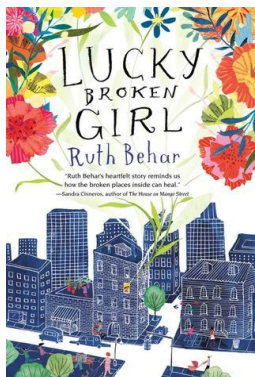
## Historical Fiction

### Betty Before X By Ilyasah Shabazz, with Renée Watson

In Detroit, 1945, eleven-year-old Betty's house doesn't quite feel like home. She believes her mother loves her, but she can't shake the feeling that her mother doesn't want her. Church helps those worries fade, if only for a little while. The singing, the preaching, the speeches from guest activists like Paul Robeson and Thurgood Marshall stir African Americans in her community to stand up for their rights. Betty quickly finds confidence and purpose in volunteering for the Housewives League, an organization that supports black-owned businesses. Soon, the American civil rights icon we now know as Dr. Betty Shabazz is born.



### Lucky Broken Girl by Ruth Behar



Based on the author's childhood in the 1960s, a young Cuban-Jewish immigrant girl is adjusting to her new life in New York City when her American dream is suddenly derailed. Ruthie Mizrahi and her family recently emigrated from Castro's Cuba to New York City. Just when she's finally beginning to gain confidence in her mastery of English and enjoying her reign as her neighborhood's hopscotch queen, a horrific car accident leaves her in a body cast and confined her to her bed for a long recovery. As Ruthie's world shrinks because of her inability to move, her powers of observation and her heart grow larger. She comes to understand how fragile life is, how vulnerable we all are as human beings, and how friends, neighbors, and the power of the arts can sweeten even the worst of times. ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))

## American Street by Ibi Zoboi

On the corner of American Street and Joy Road, Fabiola Toussaint thought she would finally find *une belle vie*—a good life. But after they leave Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Fabiola's mother is detained by U.S. immigration, leaving Fabiola to navigate her loud American cousins, Chantal, Donna, and Princess; the grittiness of Detroit's west side; a new school; and a surprising romance, all on her own. Just as she finds her footing in this strange new world, a dangerous proposition presents itself, and Fabiola soon realizes that freedom comes at a cost. Trapped at the crossroads of an impossible choice, will she pay the price for the American dream? ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))



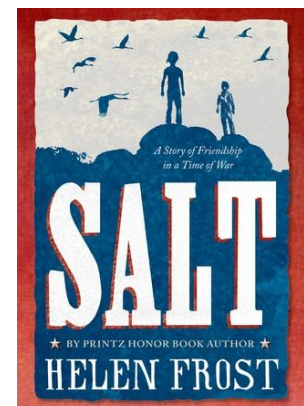
## Caminar by Skila Brown



Carlos knows that when the soldiers arrive with warnings about the Communist rebels, it is time to be a man and defend the village, keep everyone safe. But Mama tells him not yet — he's still her quiet moonfaced boy. The soldiers laugh at the villagers, and before they move on, a neighbor is found dangling from a tree, a sign on his neck: *Communist*. Mama tells Carlos to run and hide, then try to find her. . . . Numb and alone, he must join a band of guerillas as they trek to the top of the mountain where Carlos's *abuela* lives. Will he be in time, and brave enough, to warn them about the soldiers? What will he do then? A novel in verse inspired by actual events during Guatemala's civil war, *Caminar* is the moving story of a boy who loses nearly everything before discovering who he really is. ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))

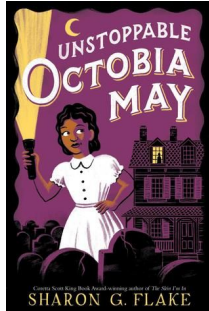
## Salt by Helen Frost

Anikwa and James, twelve years old in 1812, spend their days fishing, trapping, and exploring together in the forests of the Indiana Territory. To Anikwa and his family, members of the Miami tribe, this land has been home for centuries. As traders, James's family has ties to the Miami community as well as to the American soldiers in the fort. Now tensions are rising—the British and American armies prepare to meet at Fort Wayne for a crucial battle, and Native Americans from surrounding tribes gather in Kekionga to protect their homeland. After trading stops and precious commodities, like salt, are withheld, the fort comes under siege, and war ravages the land. James and



Anikwa, like everyone around them, must decide where their deepest loyalties lie. Can their families—and their friendship—survive? ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))

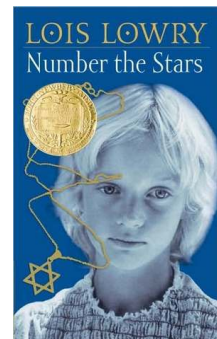
### Unstoppable Octobia May by Sharon G. Flake



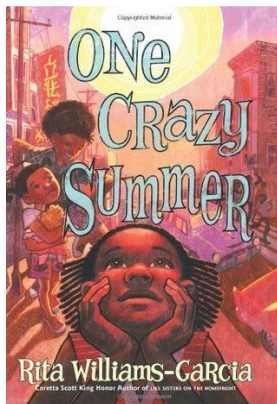
Octobia May is a quick-witted, ten-year-old girl who loves to ask questions, especially the ones no one wants to answer. She lives in her aunt's boarding house in 1953, and through her curiosity and exploration of the house uncovers, what she believes to be, a vampire living in Room 204. In this novel, Octobia May goes on a quest for truths that explore issues of race and community, the impact of war, and secrets best kept hidden.

### Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

Ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen and her best friend Ellen Rosen often think of life before the war. It's now 1943 and their life in Copenhagen is filled with school, food shortages, and the Nazi soldiers marching through town. When the Jews of Denmark are "relocated," Ellen moves in with the Johansens and pretends to be one of the family. Soon Annemarie is asked to go on a dangerous mission to save Ellen's life.



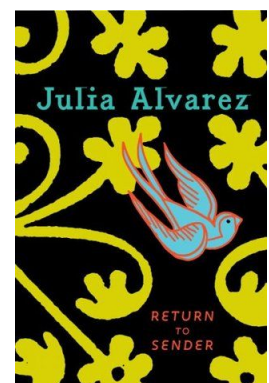
### One Crazy Summer by Rita Williams-Garcia



Abandoned by a mother who doesn't want them, three sisters, Delphine, Fern and Vonetta travel from Brooklyn to Oakland to reunite with their estranged mother for a month. It's 1968 and to keep the girls out of her way, their mother, Cecile, sends them to the local Black Panther Party day camp. Over the course of the next four weeks, the sisters spend time learning about revolution even though what they want is to learn about and bond with their mother. Slowly, they become part of a larger community and the mysterious story of their mom's flight is untangled.

### Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez

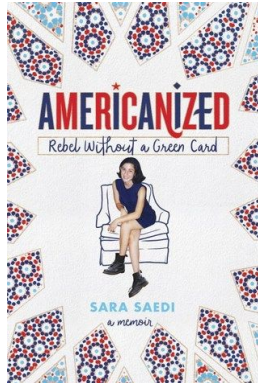
In order to save their family's farm from foreclosure, Tyler's injured father must hire Mexican migrant workers. As a result, Tyler has many questions and concerns about the status and lives of the new workers, especially the three daughters who live in constant fear of being discovered and deported. He is most curious about



Mari, the oldest who is proud of her Mexican heritage, but becomes increasingly connected to her American life. Can Tyler and Mari become friends despite their many differences? ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com))

## **Nonfiction**

### **Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card by Sara Saedi**



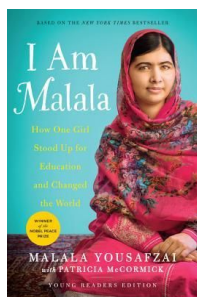
At thirteen, bright-eyed, straight-A student Sara Saedi uncovered a terrible family secret: she was breaking the law simply by living in the United States. Only two years old when her parents fled Iran, she didn't learn of her undocumented status until her older sister wanted to apply for an after-school job, but couldn't because she didn't have a Social Security number. Fear of deportation kept Sara up at night, but it didn't keep her from being a teenager. She desperately wanted a green card, along with clear skin, her own car, and a boyfriend. *Americanized* follows Sara's progress toward getting her green card, but that's only a portion of her experiences as an Iranian-"American" teenager. From discovering that her parents secretly divorced to facilitate her mother's green card application to learning how to tame her unibrow, Sara pivots from the terrifying prospect that she might be kicked out of the country at any time to the almost-as-terrifying possibility that she might be the only one of her friends without a date to the prom ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

### **Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution by Ji-li Jiang**

This book tells the story of Ji-li Jiang who was twelve years old in 1966, the year that Chairman Mao launched the Cultural Revolution in China. An outstanding student and much-admired leader of her class, Ji-li seemed poised for a shining future. But all that changed with the advent of the Cultural Revolution, when intelligence became a crime and a wealthy family background invited persecution or worse. She tells her story and the difficult decisions she and her family were forced to make while living through this political movement ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



### **I am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World by Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick (young readers edition)**



Malala Yousafzai grew up in a once peaceful region of Pakistan transformed by terrorism. Growing up, she was taught to stand up to fight for what she believes in, so when girls were forbidden from attending school, she fought back. On October 9, 2012, she was shot on her bus ride home from school and was not expected to survive. She

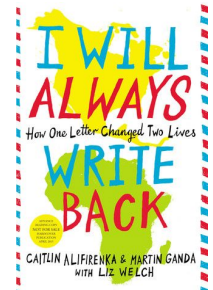


is now an international symbol of peaceful protest and this memoir tells her powerful story ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

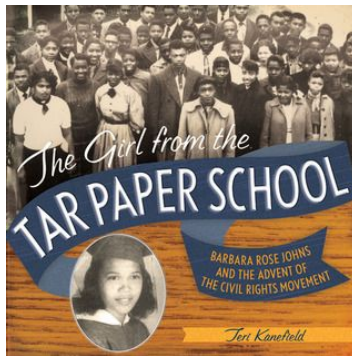
## **I Will Always Write Back: How One Letter Changed Two Lives** by

Caitlin Alifirenka and Martin Ganda with Liz Welch

This book tells the true story of two pen pals: an American girl and a boy from Zimbabwe. It started as a class assignment which had students in Caitlin's class writing letters to an unknown child across the world. Martin was lucky to be one of the ten students, out of fifty in his class, to receive a letter. This one letter led to a correspondence and companionship that spanned over six years ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



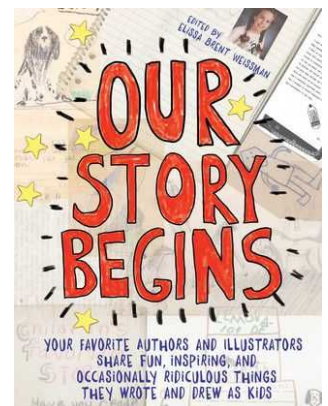
## **The Girl from the Tar Paper School** by Teri Kanefield



Before the Little Rock Nine, before Rosa Parks, before Martin Luther King Jr. and his March on Washington, there was Barbara Rose Johns, a teenager who used nonviolent civil disobedience to draw attention to her cause. In 1951, witnessing the unfair conditions in her racially segregated high school, Barbara Johns led a walkout—the first public protest of its kind demanding racial equality in the U.S.—jumpstarting the American civil rights movement. Ridiculed by the white superintendent and school board, local newspapers, and others, and even after a cross was burned on the school grounds, Barbara and her classmates held firm and did not give up. Her school's case went all the way to the Supreme Court and helped end segregation as part of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Barbara Johns grew up to become a librarian in the Philadelphia school system. *The Girl from the Tar Paper School* mixes biography with social history and is illustrated with family photos, images of the school and town, and archival documents from classmates and local and national news media. The book includes a civil rights timeline, bibliography, and index ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

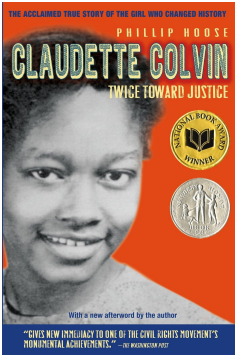
## **Our Story Begins** by Elissa Brett Weissman

Everyone's story begins somewhere... For Linda Sue Park, it was a trip to the ocean, a brand-new typewriter, and a little creative license. For Jarrett J. Krosoczka, it was a third grade writing assignment that ignited a creative fire in a kid who liked to draw. For Kwame Alexander, it was a loving poem composed for Mother's Day—and perfected through draft after discarded draft. For others, it was a teacher, a parent, a beloved book, a word of encouragement. It was trying, and



failing, and trying again. It was a love of words, and pictures, and *stories*. Your story is beginning, too. Where will it go? ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

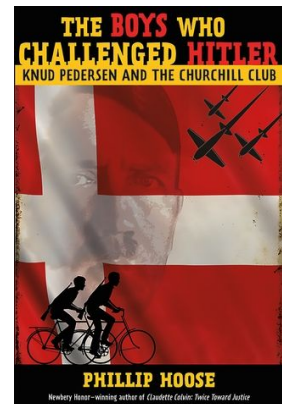
### Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice by Phillip M. Hoose



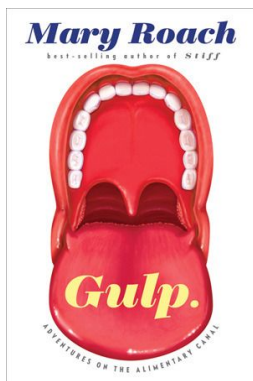
On March 2, 1955, an impassioned teenager, fed up with the daily injustices of Jim Crow segregation, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Instead of being celebrated as Rosa Parks would be just nine months later, fifteen-year-old Claudette Colvin found herself shunned by her classmates and dismissed by community leaders. Undaunted, a year later she dared to challenge segregation again as a key plaintiff in *Browder v. Gayle*, the landmark case that struck down the segregation laws of Montgomery and swept away the legal underpinnings of the Jim Crow South ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).

### The Boys Who Challenged Hitler by Phillip M. Hoose

At the outset of World War II, Denmark did not resist German occupation. Deeply ashamed of his nation's leaders, fifteen-year-old Knud Pedersen resolved with his brother and a handful of schoolmates to take action against the Nazis if the adults would not. Naming their secret club after the fiery British leader, the young patriots in the Churchill Club committed countless acts of sabotage, infuriating the Germans, who eventually had the boys tracked down and arrested. But their efforts were not in vain: the boys' exploits and eventual imprisonment helped spark a full-blown Danish resistance. Interweaving his own narrative with the recollections of Knud himself, here is Phillip Hoose's inspiring story of these young war heroes. This thoroughly-researched and documented book can be worked into multiple aspects of the common core curriculum ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).



### Gulp by Mary Roach



"America's funniest science writer" (*Washington Post*) takes us down the hatch on an unforgettable tour of our insides. The alimentary canal is classic Mary Roach terrain: the questions inspired by our insides are as taboo, in their way, as the cadavers in *Stiff* and every bit as surreal as the universe of zero gravity explored in *Packing for Mars*. Why is crunchy food so appealing? Why is it so hard to find names for flavors and smells? Why doesn't the stomach digest itself? How much can you eat before your stomach bursts? Can constipation kill you? Did it kill

Elvis? We meet scientists who tackle the questions no one else thinks—or has the courage—to ask. And we go on location to a pet-food taste-test lab, a bacteria transplant, and into a live stomach to observe the fate of a meal. Like all of Roach's books, *Gulp* is as much about human beings as it is about human bodies ([goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com)).