

2021 Capitol Choices Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

BIRTH TO AGE SEVEN

ALL BECAUSE YOU MATTER

Charles, Tami

Illustrated by Bryan Collier

Scholastic - Orchard Books

978-1338574852

A powerful book that works in so much recent history, but keeps a strong universal message that the individual child matters. Mentions taking a knee, Trayvon, Tamir, Philando. A book that will matter for years to come.

ALMOST TIME

Schmidt, Gary D. and Elizabeth Stickney

Illustrated by G. Brian Karas

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt – Clarion

978-0544785816

Young Ethan learns patience as he waits eagerly for maple syrup season to begin and for his loose tooth to fall out in this charming story featuring warm, digitally colored, pencil illustrations.

ANTIRACIST BABY

Kendi, Ibram X.

Illustrated by Ashley Lukashevksy

Penguin Random House - Kokila

978-0593110416

“Antiracist baby is bred, not born,” pronounces the opening line of this vibrantly illustrated board book. A series of prompts encourage parents to begin a discussion of antiracism sentiments with young children.

BAND TOGETHER

Douglass, Chloe

American Psychological Association - Magination Press

978-1433832413

Shy, ukulele-playing Duck must decide whether to step out of his shell and take a chance at making new friends by filling in at their band’s show.

THE BEAR AND THE MOON

Burgess, Matthew

Illustrated by Catia Chien

Chronicle

978-1452171913

When Bear accidentally pops his beloved, huggable, red balloon he is filled with sadness and guilt. But the gentle light of the moon turns the story to one of self-forgiveness and joy. The illustrations of the gentle bear are full of emotion.

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THE BEAR'S GARDEN

Colleen, Marcie

Illustrated by Alison Oliver

Macmillan – Imprint

978-1250314819

The vivid imagination of a city girl sprouts a beautiful garden that she must leave in the care of her stuffed bear. Engaging illustrations help to tell this true story of a community garden and a place to grow, play and love.

THE BLUE HOUSE

Wahl, Phoebe

Penguin Random House - Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

978-1984893369

Leo and his dad are devastated when they must move from their beloved house, only to find joy in their memories and home in each other.

THE CAMPING TRIP

Mann, Jennifer K.

Candlewick

978-1536207361

Ernestine goes camping for the first time and finds that swimming in a lake, hiking in the woods, and pitching a tent are quite different from swimming at the Y, walking, and fort-building at home. A graphic style, mixed media camping guidebook -- with s'mores!

FINDING FRANCOIS

Gordon, Gus

Penguin Random House - Dial Books for Young Readers

978-0525554004

A piglet and her grandmother share domestic pleasures in Paris, but Alice needs someone her age. A lonely young dog who lives in a lighthouse finds her message in a bottle and their correspondence results in a warm friendship.

FLASH & GLEAM

Fliess, Sue

Illustrated by Khoa Le

Lerner Publishing Group – Millbrook

978-1541557703

From the sun that helps plants grow to the candles that help us celebrate, light is all around us. Expressive rhyming text describes all the places light is found and the impact it has on our lives.

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GOING UP!

Lee, Sherry J.

Illustrated by Charlene Chua

Kids Can Press

978-1525301131

A community of apartment dwellers squeeze into a single elevator to go to a birthday party on the top floor in a tale of diversity and friendship. The illustrations are filled with details that will have you discovering something new with each reading.

HIKE

Oswald, Pete

Candlewick

978-1536201574

This wordless picture book (save for a few sound effects) about a father and child's day hike in the mountains depicts the beauty of nature through lush, colorful scenes of woods, waterfalls and inspiring views.

I'M NOT A GIRL: A TRANSGENDER STORY

Lyons, Maddox and Jessica Verdi

Illustrated by Dana Simpson

Macmillan- Roaring Brook Press

978-0374310684

Hannah finds the courage to show the world who he really is. This empowering story, cowritten by a twelve-year-old transgender boy, is for cis-gender and transgender children alike.

IF YOU COME TO EARTH

Blackall, Sophie

Chronicle

978-1452137797

Vivid, detailed illustrations and a spare, simple text lovingly describe to an outer space stranger the diversity on earth: the humanity, the natural world, and the inventive man made objects.

IN A JAR

Marcero, Deborah

Penguin Random House - G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers

978-0525514596

Two young rabbits share a passion for collecting things in jars against a glorious backdrop of changing seasons and gathering leaves, shells, sunsets and firelight.

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THE NEST THAT WREN BUILT

Sonenshine, Randi

Illustrated by Anne Hunter

Candlewick

978-1536201536

Descriptive language, the rhythm of a familiar cumulative rhyme, and detailed illustrations tell the story of a pair of Carolina wrens who construct a nest and incubate eggs, and the hatchlings who eventually fly away.

OBOE GOES BOOM BOOM BOOM

Venable, Colleen Af

Illustrated by Lian Cho

HarperCollins - Greenwillow Books

978-0062494375

The enthusiastic band director distributes eight musical instruments to students whose characters are based on real-life musicians. A lighthearted and playful introduction to musical instruments—even with interruptions from an over-enthusiastic drummer!

THE OLD TRUCK

Pumphrey, Jarrett

Illustrated by Jerome Pumphrey

W. W. Norton - Norton Young Readers

978-1324005193

A young girl growing up on a farm finds the red truck by the barn a good place to dream, experience hard work, change, and renewal in this warm depiction of African American rural life.

OVERGROUND RAILROAD

Cline-Ransome, Lesa

Illustrated by James Ransome

Holiday House

978-0823438730

An African American family in the mid-1900s moves north to escape economic and social oppression. The train trip, seen through the eyes of a young girl, draws a parallel between her family's journey and that of those who traveled the Underground Railroad.

PACKS: STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Salyer, Hannah

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

978-1328577887

Dramatic mixed media illustrations beautifully demonstrate the benefit of species working in concert—from packs of wolves to huddles of penguins—and the science, vocabulary, and life lesson that “together we are better.”

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SEAGULLS SOAR

Sayre, April Pulley

Illustrated by Kasia Bogdanska

Boyd's Mills Press

978-1684371976

Seagulls glide, swoop and stomp in a poetic, informative look at those sea birds familiar to all young beach lovers

SEE THE CAT: THREE STORIES ABOUT A DOG

LaRochelle, David

Illustrated by Mike Wahnoutka

Candlewick

978-1536204278

A laugh out loud early reader uses common sight words, plenty of repetition, clues in the simple, clear, cartoonlike illustrations, a pink unicorn, and a surprise ending to make early readers eager readers.

THE SUITCASE

Naylor-Ballesteros, Chris

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

978-0358329602

This simple, resonant story emphasizes the importance of showing kindness to a stranger—in this case the one who arrives with nothing but an old suitcase. Engaging illustrations use color creatively to connect with the text, making this an excellent choice for storytime.

WINGED WONDERS: SOLVING THE MONARCH MIGRATION MYSTERY

Pincus, Meeg

Illustrated by Yas Imamura

Sleeping Bear Press

978-1534110403

Where do the monarch butterflies go when they migrate? The question and its answer, the work of an international community of citizens and scientists, is illustrated in gorgeous reds, oranges, greens, and browns with a simple vocabulary and supplementary information and activities.

WHY DO WE CRY?

Pintadera, Fran

Illustrated by Ana Sender

Kids Can Press

978-1525304774

A boy asks his mother this simple question in a near whisper and his mother's answers might make you tear up. The backmatter describes three kinds of tears and the science behind why we feel better after crying. Two discussion activities provided for further exploration.

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SEVEN TO TEN

ALL THE DEAR LITTLE ANIMALS

Nilsson, Ulf

Illustrated by Eva Eriksson

Translated by Julia Marshall

Gecko Press

978-1776572892

Three children combat summer boredom by orchestrating funerals for deceased bugs and neighbors' pets, a darkly humorous undertaking that yields tender exchanges about grief and loss.

THE BOY WHO DREAMED OF INFINITY: A TALE OF THE GENIUS RAMANUJAN

Alznauer, Amy

Illustrated by Daniel Miyares

Candlewick

978-0763690489

Ramanujan saw numbers everywhere and was captivated by their mystery. His ideas changed mathematics and science forever, but finding an audience for his theories was nearly an impossible challenge.

BRINGING BACK THE WOLVES: HOW A PREDATOR RESTORED AN ECOSYSTEM

Isabella, Jude

Illustrated by Kim Smith

Kids Can Press

978-1771386258

By 1926, the need to protect local cattle ranches meant the gray wolf packs in Yellowstone National Park had been eradicated, and elk populations grew unchecked with no predator at the top of the food chain. When wolves were reintroduced in 1995 Yellowstone's ecosystem was restored in this real-life example of the interconnectedness of life.

CONSENT (FOR KIDS!): BOUNDARIES, RESPECT, AND BEING IN CHARGE OF YOU

Brian, Rachel

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

978-0316457736

The producer of the viral tea consent video ("unconscious people don't want tea!"), this graphic nonfiction explores the concept of consent in various situations with simple, humorous illustrations and language that is clear and accessible for children.

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DRAWING ON WALLS - A STORY OF KEITH HARING

Burgess, Matthew

Illustrated by Josh Cochran

Enchanted Lion Books

978-1592702671

Keith Haring's art had a naturally childlike appeal, and Matthew Burgess brings it to life for a current generation. Kid-centered text makes this a fine introduction to this contemporary artist.

EMMY NOETHER: THE MOST IMPORTANT MATHEMATICIAN YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

Becker, Helaine

Illustrated by Kari Rust

Kids Can Press

978-1525300592

Emmy Noether didn't meet the expectations for girls of her time, but did earn a PhD, solved Einstein's mathematical problem, and formulated Noether's theorem. Her story is told with humor, enthusiasm, simple mathematical explanations. Emmy's golden aura adds to the fun.

FABLED LIFE OF AESOP: THE EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY AND COLLECTED TALES OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST STORYTELLER

Lendler, Ian

Illustrated by Pamela Zagarenski

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

978-1328585523

Equal parts picturebook biography and anthology, this richly illustrated collection weaves themes of Aesop's life as an enslaved person in Ancient Greece with thirteen of his well known fables.

GIRL ON A MOTORCYCLE

Novesky, Amy

Illustrated by Julie Morstad

Penguin Random House - Viking Children's Books

978-0593116296

Inspired by Anne-France Dautheville's solo ride around the world in the 1970s, this poetic journey celebrates independence, curiosity, and determination. The illustrations offer tantalizing glimpses of diverse landforms and cultures.

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HONEYBEE: THE BUSY LIFE OF APIS MELLIFERA

Fleming, Candace

Illustrated by Eric Rohmann

Holiday House- Neal Porter Books

978-0823442850

Precise, poetic language and photorealistic closeup paintings examine the lifecycle of a single honeybee. Perfect pacing, scientific accuracy, backmatter and a climactic gatefold complete this beautiful work of nonfiction.

LIZZIE DEMANDS A SEAT!: ELIZABETH JENNINGS FIGHTS FOR STREETCAR RIGHTS

Anderson, Beth

Illustrated by E.B. Lewis

Boys Mills Press - Calkins Creek

978-1629799391

Striking watercolor illustrations and arresting text transport readers back to 1850s New York, where Elizabeth Jennings was the first to take up the fight for equal rights on public transportation after being thrown off a city street car just for being Black.

LONG ROAD ON A SHORT DAY

Schmidt, Gary D., Stickney, Elizabeth

Illustrated by Yelchin, Eugene

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt – Clarion

978-0544888364

On a snowy, short winter day, Samuel and his Papa make a series of trades that work out well for the entire family. Scenes of a time long past in rural New England add to the traditional feel of this simple story.

MAÑANALAND

Ryan, Pam Muñoz

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

978-1338157864

Max wants to try out for the soccer team but does not have a birth certificate. While his father is away to replace the document, Max sets out on a fantastical quest to uncover family secrets and to guide the way for a refugee to safety.

MONSTER AND BOY

Barnaby, Hannah

Illustrated by Anoosha Syed

Macmillan - Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

978-1250217837

When the not-so-scary monster under Boy's bed accidentally swallows him (and regurgitates a shrunken version sometime later), a swim in the toilet is just one of Boy's amusing adventures for the night. First in a series.

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THE OCEAN CALLS; A HAENYEO MERMAID STORY

Cho, Tina

Illustrated by Jess X. Snow

Penguin Random House – Kokila

978-1984814869

In this picture book full of the swirling colors of sea and sun, a girl takes inspiration from her haenyeo, deep-sea, free-diving grandmother and overcomes her fear of the ocean.

ON WINGS OF WORDS: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF EMILY DICKINSON

Berne, Jennifer

Illustrated by Becca Stadtlander

Chronicle

978-1452142975

This inviting portrait of the poet moves between the realism of nineteenth-century New England and the abstract ideas explored in Dickinson’s poetry, mirroring the poet’s own struggle to reconcile her “inner world” with one outside her door.

RIDE TO REMEMBER: A CIVIL RIGHTS STORY

Langley, Sharon and Amy Nathan

Illustrated by Floyd Cooper

Abrams - Abrams Books for Young Readers

978-1419736858

Sharon Langley was the first African American child to legally ride the carousel at Gwynn Oak Amusement Park in Baltimore. Her story in her own words is paired with dreamy sepia-toned illustrations, while historical photographs are included in the back.

THE SECRET GARDEN OF GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

Barretta, Gene

Illustrated by Frank Morrison

HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books

978-0062430151

Delve into the life and mind of the child George Washington Carver who, despite the limitations in his life, explored, experimented, and educated himself to become the scientist we know, determined to share his knowledge with the world.

SKUNK AND BADGER

Timberlake, Amy

Illustrated by Jon Klassen

Workman - Algonquin Young Readers

978-1643750057

Solitary and grumpy, Badger resents the antics of his exuberant new roommate, Skunk. But when Skunk leaves, Badger discovers how much he misses Skunk—and even his chickens. First of a charming chapter book series illustrated with line drawings and brown-tone paintings.

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SUGAR IN MILK

Umrigar, Thrity

Illustrated by Khoa Le

Hatchette Book Group- Running Press Kids

978-0762495191

A young, homesick immigrant hears the tale of ancient immigrants who are wisely welcomed by a king demonstrating how sugar enhances the taste of milk, and realizes that she can find a welcome in her new home. Blue borders, peacock feathers, and Persian floral patterns in the illustrations dazzle the eye.

THIS IS A BOOK TO READ WITH A WORM

Wheeler-Toppen, Jodi

Illustrated by Margaret McCartney

Charlesbridge

978-1580898973

Little worms teach big facts in this hands-on picture book for backyard scientists. All you need to read this book is you, the book, and a worm.

WAYS TO MAKE SUNSHINE

Watson, Renee

Bloomsbury

978-1547600564

Ryan Hart, a Black fourth grader, bravely faces her family's move to a smaller house, life with a bossy older brother, a rained out parade, and more with humor and a spirit that finds a way to make sunshine.

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TEN TO FOURTEEN

BEFORE THE EVER AFTER

Woodson, Jacqueline

Penguin Random House - Nancy Paulsen Books

978-0399545436

Zi's father—once a professional football player and everyone's hero—suffers from a degenerative brain disease. Poignant chapters in verse capture Zi's growing sense of loss as the illness progresses.

BIRDIE AND ME

Nuñez, J.M.M.

Penguin Random House - Kathy Dawson Books

978-0399186776

Jack and her little brother Birdie live with unreliable Uncle Carl after their mother's death. When gruff Uncle Patrick takes over he can't understand Birdie's nail polish, sparkly clothes, and non-conforming gender.

BLACK BROTHER, BLACK BROTHER

Rhodes, Jewell Parker

Little, Brown & Company - LB Kids

978-0316493802

After bi-racial Donte is unjustly arrested at school, the leader of his prep school's fencing team bullies him with racial taunts. But Donte finds a mentor at a Boy's and Girl's Club, learns to fence and faces him in the final match.

DRAGON HOOPS

Yang, Gene Luen

Colorist- Lark Pien

Macmillan - First Second

978-1626720794

Graphic novelist Yang, a self-confessed nonathlete, explores the history of Bishop O'Dowd High School's elusive bid for the California state basketball championship. An energetic mix of personal history, coach and player profiles, and Yang's growing admiration for the game.

ECHO MOUNTAIN

Wolk, Lauren

Penguin Random House - Dutton Books for Young Readers

978-0525555568

Ellie's family thrives at first in their new life in the Maine woods after The Great Depression. But when her father is injured and falls into a coma Ellie learns to persevere and to realize her gift for healing.

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EFRÉN DIVIDED

Cisneros, Ernesto

HarperCollins- Quill Tree Books

978-0062881687

When his undocumented mother is deported in an ICE raid, Efrén assumes the responsibility of caring for his five-year-old siblings. Cisneros aptly contrasts the effect of forced exile with the powerful determination of a son to reunite his family.

ELATSOE

Little Badger, Darcie

Illustrated by Rovina Cai

Levine Querido

978-1646140053

In a richly imagined world where magic is a matter of course, Apache teen Elatsoe, with her ghost dog, her family, and the help of her ancestors confronts the powerful and supernatural in order to solve and avenge her cousin's death.

FIGHTING WORDS

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker

Penguin Random House - Dial Books for Young Readers

978-1984815682

Readers will fiercely root for Della as she learns to use words appropriately to stick up for herself and her older sister. Their new foster home and new school may finally give them a place to be safe enough to begin to heal from a painfully abusive past.

FROM THE DESK OF ZOE WASHINGTON

Marks, Janae

HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books

978-0062875853

Zoe has never met her father. On her twelfth birthday she receives a letter from him. He is in jail and as they exchange letters she believes he is innocent, as he says. Darcy makes plans to prove it.

LEAVING LYMON

Cline-Ransome, Lesa

Holiday House

978-0823444427

Lymon, the bully from *Finding Langston*, came to Chicago by way of Milwaukee, a long way from his loving childhood home in Mississippi. He becomes caregiver, struggling student, "lost" son, and angry, but music helps his healing.

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THE LIST OF THINGS THAT WILL NOT CHANGE

Stead, Rebecca

Penguin Random House - Wendy Lamb Books

978-1101938096

Changing family dynamics heighten Bea's anxiety in this tender exploration of vulnerability and complicated identities. Bea's father's wedding to his boyfriend means that Bea will have a new sister, but, as with school and other relationships, not everything is as she hopes.

ME AND BANKSY

Lloyd Kyi, Tanya

Penguin Random House - Puffin Books

978-0735266919

The security cameras in Dominica's school are there to keep everyone safe until someone hacks the system and posts embarrassing images. Dominica is inspired to fight surveillance society by the real-life mysterious artist, Banksy.

PHANTOM TWIN

Brown, Lisa

Macmillan - First Second

978-1626729247

A co-joined twin until a faulty operation kills her sister, Isable knows only carny life and life with her now ghost sister. But she is more than just a "freak" in a carnival as this graphic novel reveals.

PRAIRIE LOTUS

Parks, Linda Sue

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt – Clarion

978-1328781505

Hana, half Chinese, half white, born just before the end of the Civil War, accompanies her widowed father to the Dakota Territory. There her father's protectiveness and the ignorance and prejudice of the frontier townspeople are challenges she must overcome to pursue her ambitions.

SHOW ME A SIGN

LeZotte, Ann Clare

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

978-1338255812

Mary, who was born Deaf, has never felt isolated in her hometown of Martha's Vineyard where almost everyone in 1805 can communicate through sign language. Then, one day, she is taken from her home and her whole world changes and goes silent.

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A SPORTING CHANCE: HOW LUDWIG GUTTMAN CREATED THE PARALYMPIC GAMES

Alexander, Lori

Illustrated by Allan Drummond

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

978-1328580795

Ludwig Guttman was a champion for physical health. In the face of prejudice and injustice, he wanted to make people's lives better and offer a sense of purpose, value, and dignity through sports.

SNAPDRAGON

Leyh, Kat

Macmillan - First Second

978-1250171115

Snap investigates rumors of a witch in her town and finds an unlikely friend in the process. This graphic novel tackles issues like rural poverty and gender identity with captivating honesty, magic, humor, and a vibrant palette.

STAND UP, YUMI CHUNG! (AUDIO)

Kim, Jessica

Narrated by Greta Jung

Penguin Random House - Listening Library

978-0593162675

A case of mistaken identity offers shy Yumi a chance to shine at comedy camp, but keeping the secret from her idol, not to mention her academically expectant Korean parents, takes its toll.

THE TIME OF GREEN MAGIC

McKay, Hilary

Simon & Schuster - Margaret K. McElderry

978-1534462762

Abi's blended family moves into a new house and eerie things start to happen. Books seem to come to life for Abi, Max feuds with his best friend, and young Louis finds the fierce something coming into his room growing in size and dangerousness.

WE DREAM OF SPACE

Kelly, Erin Entrada

HarperCollins - Greenwillow Books

978-0062747303

Seventh grade twins Fitch and Bird and brother Cash all cope independently in their dysfunctional family. The Challenger disaster forces the brothers to help Bird whose dreams of space are broken and who is now drifting.

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WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED (AUDIO)

Jamieson, Victoria and Omar Mohamed
Narrated by Ahmed, Faysal and full cast
Penguin Random House - Listening Library
978-0593162583

A full-cast production with sound effects brings the refugee camp to life where co-author Omar grew up, struggling to get an education while caring for his younger brother. The print version in bright graphic novel format brings the heart-wrenching story to life in another way.

WHEN YOU TRAP A TIGER

Keller, Tae
Penguin Random House - Random House Books for Young Readers
978-1524715700

After Lily's family moves back in with her ailing halmoni, a fearsome tiger from her grandmother's magical stories appears and offers a bargain Lily is reluctant to fill.

WINK

Harrell, Rob
Penguin Random House - Dial Books for Young Readers
978-1984815149

You think seventh grade is hard? Try having a rare eye cancer at the same time. Ross learns how to find laughter in the stress of survival in this story based on the author's real-life experience.

A WISH IN THE DARK

Soontornvat, Christina
Candlewick
978-1536204940

Pong, a boy born in and still living in the darkness of Namwon Prison, longs to escape to the shining city he sees from afar. When he gets his chance, he learns things are not as bright as they seem, and that there are more challenges to confront.

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FOURTEEN AND UP

AGAIN AGAIN

Lockhart, E.

Penguin Random House - Delacorte Press

978-0385744799

The relationship between Adelaide and her brother Jack has an infinite number of outcomes in their multiverse. Adelaide's universes reveal how her brother's addiction impacts every aspect of her life. A funny and heart wrenching story that stretches the boundaries of this literary form.

ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE: A MEMOIR-MANIFESTO (Audio)

Johnson, George M.

Macmillan - Young Listeners

978-1250247896

George M. Johnson chronicles and narrates his life as a queer, Black man growing up in New Jersey. Sharp, poised, and elegant, this story breaks you down and builds you back up.

ALMOST AMERICAN GIRL: AN ILLUSTRATED MEMOIR

Ha, Robin

HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray

978-0062685094

Suddenly uprooted from everything Robin knows and loves in Korea, including her beloved comics, she is dropped into a new country where every aspect of her life is different. Robin struggles to navigate this new, strange world until her mother enrolls her in a comics class and she is able to find herself again.

BANNED BOOK CLUB

Sook, Kim Hyun and Ryan Estrada

Illustrated by Hyung-Ju Ko

Iron Circus Comics

978-1945820427

All Kim, a college student in South Korea, wants to do in 1983 is study and stay away from protests happening on campus. When she accidentally joins a Banned Book Club, her eyes are opened to information she didn't know she wanted or needed about political corruption and human rights.

BEARMOUTH

Hyder, Liz

W. W. Norton - Norton Young Readers

978-1324015864

"It onlee taykes one person to start a revolushun." In the deep, darks depths of Bearmouth, miners young and old toil away in misery. Newt aspires to life on the outside, but escape seems impossible until a new boy arrives with ideas of a future.

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THE CAT I NEVER NAMED: A TRUE STORY OF LOVE, WAR, AND SURVIVAL

Sabic-El- Rayess, Amra and Laura L. Sullivan

Bloomsbury

978-1547604531

Amra, a Bosnian Muslim, tells the heartbreaking story of her teenage years in the middle of the Bosnian War and genocide.

CEMETERY BOYS

Thomas, Aiden

Macmillan - Swoon Reads

978-1250250469

Yadriel is trying to prove to his family that he is a brujo but he accidentally summons the resident bad boy's ghost. This mystery has an unexpected romance, plenty of adorable moments, surprising twists, and quick wit.

CLAP WHEN YOU LAND

Acevedo, Elizabeth

HarperCollins - Quill Tree Books

978-0062882769

Half-sisters Camino and Yahaira meet and grieve together over their father's death in this novel in verse, told in the girls' alternating perspectives.

Acevedo co-narrates the audiobook.

DANCING AT THE PITY PARTY

Feder, Tyler

Penguin Random House - Dial Books for Young Readers

978-0525553021

Feder's frank observations in this poignant graphic memoir about the experience of losing her mother to cancer are tender, humorous, and deeply honest.

EST. 1996

FELIX EVER AFTER

Cellender, Kacen

HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray

978-0062820259

When Black, trans artist Felix tries to catfish his bully, things don't go as planned and he ends up not only catching feelings but also heading down a path of self-discovery.

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FLAMER

Curator, Mike

Macmillan - Henry Holt Books for Young Readers

978-1627796415

Aiden has always loved Boy Scout camp and his Catholic upbringing, but his feelings change as he realizes that he's gay. In this raw graphic novel, bold black lines touched with fierce fire-orange illustrate the angst of the homophobia and conformity that Aiden must confront.

GIVEN, VOL 1

Kizu, Natsuki

Sublime

978-1974711826

In this high school manga, guitarist Uenosaya searches for a new lead singer for his band. When he encounters the shy and traumatized Mafuyu, the singer's crystal clear voice surprises everyone and rocks Uenosaya to the core of his soul.

GO WITH THE FLOW

Williams, Lilly

Illustrated by Karen Schneemann

Macmillan - First Second

978-1250143174

This delightful story starts with a girl's worst nightmare—getting your period at school while wearing white pants and knowing everyone will see it—to her and her friends' triumphant crusade for menstrual health awareness. A funny, painful, inspiring graphic novel.

GROWN

Jackson, Tiffany

HarperCollins - Katherine Tegen Books

978-0062840356

Enchanted Jones has her dream come true when she is hand-picked at an open audition by R&B sensation Corey Fields. Chanty thinks she's in love, but she becomes the object of Corey's grooming, kidnapping, misogyny, captivity, and other abuses.

HEARTSTOPPER

Oseman, Alice

Scholastic - Graphix

978-1338617436

When recently-outed skinny-boy Charlie is assigned to sit next to rugby star Nick, he doesn't anticipate that it will result with him on the rugby team, a new friendship, and maybe more. This charmer of a first love, coming-of-age story tackles bullying, homophobia and sexual identity with a color palette and endearing characters to make you swoon.

2021 Capitol Choices Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

LEGENDBORN

Deonn, Tracy

Simon & Schuster - Margaret K. McElderry

978-1534441606

Bree heads to UNC after her mother's death for their Early College Program only to be sidetracked by an encounter with magic. This superbly drawn world, part Arthurian legend, part horrors of enslaved women, and part Black Girl Magic will captivate readers as Bree tries to navigate this "new" world.

THE NEW DAVID ESPINOZA

Aceves, Fred

HarperCollins - HarperTeen

978-0062489883

David decides he's had enough when a video of him being slapped by a bully goes viral. He joins a gym to bulk up but quickly falls into steroid use. His life begins to fall apart as he struggles with addiction and struggle with male body dysmorphia.

POISONED WATER: HOW THE CITIZENS OF FLINT, MICHIGAN, FOUGHT FOR THEIR LIVES AND WARNED THE NATION

Cooper, Candy J. and Marc Aronson

Bloomsbury

978-1547602322

Investigative journalist Cooper chronicles the water crisis in Flint through detailed research along with interviews with local youth and community advocates and reveals the extent of denial of culpability on the part of public officials.

PUNCHING THE AIR

Zoboi, Ibi and Yusef Salaam

HarperCollins - Balzer + Bray

978-0062996480

Salaam goes from being a talented art student and poet to having his life upended as he is accused of assaulting a white male teen. His transfer to a youth incarceration facility results in a story that is real, compelling and heart breaking, but not without some hope. Yusef Salaam, a member of the Exonerated Five, provides critical input to this compelling story of unjust Black youth incarceration.

THE RISE AND FALL OF CHARLES LINDBERGH

Fleming, Candace

Penguin Random House - Schwartz & Wade Books

978-0525646549

He has long been considered an American icon for his accomplishments in aviation and his family tragedy, but this book offers a deeper look at the life of Lindbergh, from his self-image as a "superior specimen", to his extreme political views, racism, xenophobia and white supremacy, showing us the man we didn't know.

2021 Capitol Choices Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

THEY WENT LEFT (Audio)

Hesse, Monica

Narrated by Caitlin Davies

Blackstone Publishing

978-1549131714

Zofia and her brother were sent right at Gross-Rossen concentration camp while the rest of their family was sent left. When the siblings are separated, Zofia makes a promise to find her brother regardless of obstacles. Davies' narration expertly balances Zofia's sorrow and the hope that liberation will unite the siblings and allow them to live their lives.

THIS IS MY AMERICA (Audio)

Johnson, Kim

Narrated by Bahni Turpin

Penguin Random House - Books on Tape

978-0593207949

Tracy Beaumont's father is on death row and she will do anything she can to free him for a crime he didn't commit. Unfortunately, they are African-Americans in Texas and justice seems nowhere to be found. Turpin's riveting narrative brings to life Tracy's all-consuming struggle for truth and justice.

WE ARE NOT FREE

Chee, Traci

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt - HMH Books for Young Readers

978-0358131434

Fourteen Japanese American teens—second generation Japanese American citizens—struggle to survive the years following the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the mass incarcerations and complete upheaval in their lives that followed. Historical photographs and documents throughout.

WE ARE NOT FROM HERE

Sanchez, Jenny Torres

Penguin Random House - Philomel

978-1984812261

Three teens whose lives have become irrevocably tied to a gang in Guatemala flee their home in search of a better life in the US. With only snippets of information and rumors, they set out on a treacherous migrant journey where the outcome is unknown.

WE USED TO BE FRIENDS

Spalding, Amy

Abrams - Amulet Books

978-1419738661

Two girls who have been inseparable for years fall out their senior year of high school. Told in alternating chapters, one told chronologically forwards and the other backwards, this innovative novel smartly tackles how friendships and their dissolutions affect those involved.

2021 Capitol Choices Noteworthy Books for Children and Teens

YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN A CROWN

Johnson, Leah

Scholastic - Scholastic Press

978-1338503265

Liz sees a way out of her small town, but unfortunately it means running for prom queen. Wit and charm both play important roles in this standout title that tackles the humor and difficulties of being a Black teen.

