

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian</i> by Sherman Alexie	Wanting to better his life, fourteen-year-old Junior, a teenager on the Spokane Indian reservation, begins attending a nearby all-white school. Regarded as a traitor by his own people, Junior struggles to make new friends as he adjusts to his new academic environment. Based on the author's own experiences, this first young adult novel by bestselling author Sherman Alexie features poignant drawings by acclaimed artist Ellen Forney that reflect the character's art as it chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy attempting to break away from the life he was destined to live.	3.4	600	9-12
<i>Acorn People, The</i> by Ron Jones	Counselor Ron Jones is expecting a summer of fun in the sun with able-bodied kids, not those who can barely negotiate the rocky terrain in their wheelchairs. After the first day of camp, he contemplates quitting, but challenges himself to endure while feeling nothing. By the end of the campers' stay, Ron has learned more about beauty and triumph from his campers than during any other time in his life. 80 pages.	7.0	720	7-12
<i>Alias</i> by Mary Elizabeth Ryan	Toby who has spent his life traveling from place to place with his mother, discovers she is a political fugitive from justice.	4.5	560	6-8
<i>Amos Fortune Free Man*</i> by Elizabeth Yates	In this classic tale of an African prince, stolen from his home, made a slave, and taken to America, it is the character of Amos that drives the story forward. At-mun was the son of the chief and would have been a good leader to his tribe if he had not been taken away to Boston. In Boston, a Quaker named Copeland takes the young man and calls him Amos, and his family teaches Amos to read and write. He acquired the last name of "Fortune" because he was so fortunate not to have been broken the way so many other slaves were, and in comparison to them, he was well-treated. Though Copeland died before freeing Amos, Amos does eventually become a free man. With his freedom, Amos is able to then help others to become free. This is a touching story about one man's commitment to freedom and how he achieved it.	8.5	1090	5-7
<i>Bang!</i> by Sharon Flake	Thirteen-year-old Mann lives in a dangerous world. People in his neighborhood are being shot and killed. After his brother is murdered, his family changes. Mann's father abandons Mann while on a camping trip thinking that it will toughen him and force him to grow up.	3.0	590	8-10

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Beowulf: A New Telling</i> by Robert Nye	A narrative form of the 7 th century epic poem, Beowulf. Originally written in old English and based upon Nordic-Germanic folklore, the story tells of the noble character and brave deeds of the warrior, Beowulf. Although Beowulf, a beekeeper, prefers peace to war, he willingly defends his people from attacking evil forces. 94 pages.	5.5	790	6-12
<i>Book of the Dun Cow, The</i> by Walter Wangerin, Jr.	An animal fable and allegory that depicts the battle between good and evil. Chauntecleer, the righteous and wise rooster, is called to defend his part of the earth against Cockatrice and his army of venomous serpents. Chauntecleer and the animals defeat the serpents, but it is an unlikely hero, Mundo Cani, a meek dog, who comes through in the end to lock the evil Wyrms deep within the earth. This gripping, fascinating story's theme, the battle between good and evil, is an ageless one. 241 pages.	7.0	740	7-10
<i>Bronx Masquerade</i> by Nikki Grimes	When Wesley Boone writes a poem for his high school English class and reads it aloud, poetry-slam-style, he kicks off a revolution. Soon his classmates are clamoring to have weekly poetry sessions. One by one, eighteen students take on the risky challenge of self-revelation. Award-winning author Nikki Grimes captures the voices of eighteen teenagers through the poetry they share and the stories they tell, and exposes what lies beneath the skin, behind the eyes, beyond the masquerade.	5.1	670	7-12
<i>Bud, Not Buddy</i> by Christopher Paul Curtis	It's 1936, in Flint, Michigan. Ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but he's on a mission. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: posters of Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression! Bud's got an idea that those posters will lead to his father. Once he decides to hit the road and find this mystery man, nothing can stop him. This book is full of laugh-out-loud humor and wonderful characters, hitting the high notes of jazz and sounding the deeper tones of the Great Depression.	5.2	950	5-7
<i>Call It Courage</i> by Armstrong Sperry	Mafatu, the son of the great chief of an island in Polynesia, has feared the sea ever since a hurricane killed his mother and terrorized him as a young child. He is laughed at by his peers and shamed by his father because he will not learn to fish on the sea, as all boys on Hikueru must, if they are to become men. This story is about a boy who faces his fears to overcome the shame and scorn he has brought upon himself. 95 pages.	8.0	830	5-9

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Call of the Wild, The</i> by Jack London**	The story is about a dog named Buck who is stolen from his affluent, sheltered life in California and sold as a sled dog in the harsh Alaskan wilderness. Buck is able to adapt to this radical change, however, and adjust better and more quickly than other dogs who have been sold to work in the North. Buck's story is complete when he severs all connections to civilization and obeys the call of the wild that has beckoned him throughout the novel. He learns to conquer both animal and man. 134 pages.	7	780	7-11
<i>Can You Sue Your Parents for Malpractice?</i> by Paula Danziger	Loren Allen is in the throes of early adolescent blues. She is fourteen and caught between two sisters, one with whom she shares a bedroom, and the other, who is hardly ever around. Loren feels she's been caught in the middle of all her family struggles and that no one ever considers her feelings, let alone her rights. 141 pages.	5	550	8-12
<i>Cat Ate My Gymsuit, The</i> by Paula Danziger	Thirteen-year-old Marcy has a full plate when 8 th grade begins; she has to deal with an emotionally abusive father, her weight problem, the loss of a favorite teacher, and her first real crush all at the same time! Marcy and her friends learn their first lesson standing up for political convictions while she learns her first lesson in standing up for herself and making healthy choices for her life. 148 pages.	6	610	5-9
<i>Catcher in the Rye, The</i> by J. D. Salinger	This compelling portrait of adolescent angst as seen in three days in the life of protagonist Holden Caulfield. The reader follows Holden through his expulsion from Pencey Prep and a three-day jaunt in New York City where the extent and pervasiveness of his depression are keenly felt. This story is primarily about the grief that accompanies the loss of innocence and Holden's desire to preserve it in others. Adult language. 214 pages.	9	1330	10-12
<i>Catching Fire</i> by Suzanne Collins	In the sequel to <i>The Hunger Games</i> , Katniss Everdeen has won the annual Hunger Games with fellow district tribute Peeta Mellark. But it was a victory won by defiance of the Capitol and their harsh rules. Katniss and Peeta should be happy. After all, they have just won for themselves and their families a life of safety and plenty.	5.4	820	6-8

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Chains</i> by Laurie Halse Anderson	As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom. From acclaimed author Laurie Halse Anderson comes this compelling, impeccably researched novel that shows the lengths we can go to cast off our chains, both physical and spiritual. Winner of the 2009 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction & 2008 National Book Award finalist	4.7	780	5-9
<i>Chosen, The</i> by Chaim Potok	A book about dreams, expectations, parent-child relationships, religion, conflict and resolution, communication, struggles, and the pursuit of knowledge. The novel details how two fifteen-year-old boys mature into men and become college graduates. 271 pages.	8.0	970	10+
<i>Color of Water, The</i> By James McBride	Well-written memoir of what it was like to grow up with a white mother and black father. The author shares his search for identity and understanding, as well as a tribute to his mother. Elicits much thought and discussion on race and what it means.	11	1240	9-12
<i>Define Normal</i> by Julie Ann Peters	In this middle-school drama, two seeming opposites become friends and discover they are not such opposites after all. Define "Normal" has become a word-of-mouth phenomenon. This is a thoughtful, wry story about two girls--a "punk" and a "priss"--who find themselves facing each other in a peer-counseling program, and discover that they have some surprising things in common.	4.5	350	6-8
<i>Divorce Express, The</i> by Paula Danziger	Phoebe Brooks, the fourteen-year-old daughter of newly divorced parents, is having a difficult time adjusting to life in Woodstock and to sharing a house with her father. The book follows Phoebe through a very tough transitional year where she makes new friends, releases old ones, and begins the first significant romantic relationship of her adolescence. 140 pages.	4.5	630	7-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Dogsong</i> by Gary Paulsen	In Paulsen's Newbery Honor novel, 14-year-old Russel Susskit leads a dog team on an arduous trek across the frozen Alaskan wilderness on a life-altering journey haunted by dreams of an ancient warrior whose life oddly parallels his own.	5.8	930	6-8
<i>Double Life of Pocahontas, The</i> by Jean Fritz	This biography on the well-known American Indian, Pocahontas, chronicles the founding of the Jamestown colony in Virginia and the ensuing conflict between the English and Native-Americans. Besides describing the historical figure, Pocahontas, other well-known persons are described, such as Captain John Smith, Powhatan, John Rolfe, and other colony and Native American leaders. The main theme in this tell of Pocahontas' life is the conflict between two cultures and its tragic consequences. Pocahontas embodies this conflict as she lives a double life, being born an Indian princess who later befriends and marries an Englishman. 85 pages.	5.6	910	7.5-9
<i>Emako Blue</i> by Brenda Woods	Brenda Woods presents the gritty story of the beautiful and ill-fated Emako Blue, who was destined to be a star. From the moment she stands up in chorus auditions and her heavenly voice fills the room, Emako Blue profoundly affects anyone who meets her. But even as Emako draws together new friends and catches the attention of an important record producer, the streets of South Central Los Angeles are never far away, where everything changes in one horrific instant. Told in the stark, contemporary voices of Emako's friends, Emako Blue boldly examines how bonds are forged and relationships can be torn apart in a world of unavoidable violence. With the same depth of characterization that marked The Red Rose Box, Brenda Woods shows a remarkable stylistic range for a second novel. Emako Blue will make you think, even as it makes you cry.	5.4	600	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Empress of Elsewhere, The</i> by Theresa Nelson	James Henry Harbert, from rural East Texas, is almost 12 and his tagalong sister, Mary Al, is 7. They are persuaded by their parents to take a summer job next door at wealthy Mrs. Monroe's, caring for her pet capuchin monkey. The elderly woman also happens to have a belligerent granddaughter staying with her, J.D. (she says her initials stand for Juvenile Delinquent, but her actual name is Joy Dolores). Gradual revelations about the girl's family-that her father died in a car accident three years earlier, that her mother is alive but not necessarily well and living in Houston, that her grandmother seems cold and distant-help to explain J.D.'s anger and sadness. Jim, an able storyteller, is often amusing. By the end, J.D. comes to accept her loss and sorrow with the help of her friends. It's the middle section of the book-all about repairing a tree house that the threesome discovers on an island-that bogs the story down, just by sheer volume. Neither the characters nor their adventures are compelling enough to sustain a high level of interest, but Nelson's insights about preadolescent grief are subtle and on the mark.	5.9	780	6-8
<i>Fahrenheit 451*</i> by Ray Bradbury**	A science fiction novel set in the future where firemen start fires rather than stop them. Books have been banned in this high tech society where citizens spend their hours in front of room-sized, interactive televisions or engaged in senseless entertainment. One man, though, fireman Montag, begins to realize his emptiness, despise his employment as a book-burner, and desperately search for answers. 179 pages.	7.0	890	9+
<i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> By Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston & James D. Houston	A haunting memoir that takes place in 1942 when Jeanne's family was uprooted from their home and sent to live at Manzanar internment camp - with 10,000 other Japanese Americans. This is a true story of one spirited Japanese American family's attempt to survive the indignities of forced detention...and of a native-born American child who discovered what it was like to grow up behind barbed wire in the United States.	7.8	1040	9-12
<i>First Part Last, The</i> by Angela Johnson	Story told from the viewpoint of Bobby, a young urban teenager, who is about to become a father.	7.2	790	8-12
<i>Forged by Fire*</i> by Sharon M. Draper	This novel is about the journey through Gerald's childhood, a boy who suffers neglect and abuse at the hands of his mother and stepfather, but who, with determination and assistance from his half-sister and friends, endures to become a mature young man. A story about resilience and hope. 156 pages. This book is highly engaging with multiple themes that students relate to.	5.0	780	7-12

Susan K. Woodruff

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* denotes that Sue has read and personally recommends the book for the grade levels identified ☺

** denotes that the book has been made into a movie

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Freak the Mighty*</i> by Rodman Philbrick**	A brilliant, emotionally-charged novel about a friendship so powerful, it shatters the walls a boy has built around himself since the murder of his mother.	6.3	1000	6-8
<i>Ghost of Spirit Bear</i> by Ben Mikaelson	At fifteen, Cole Matthews faced a prison sentence for slamming another student's head against a sidewalk. To avoid prison, he volunteered for Native American Circle Justice and agreed to a year in exile on a remote Alaskan island. There he was mauled by the legendary Spirit Bear and nearly faced death, but finally found redemption. Now, his banishment is over, he has to return home and face the one thing he may not be able to handle: high school. Gangs haunt the hallways. Cole finds violence at every turn and as the hate-filled school reaches its boiling point, the hibernating rage inside Cole begins to stir. In this tale of urban survival and self-awareness, Cole realizes it's not enough to change himself. He has to change his world.	5.2	700	6-9
<i>Giver, The*</i> by Lois Lowry**	This extraordinary, award-winning account of a futuristic community tells of a place where there are no imperfections, no pain, and no fear. There are also no choices, and every member of the community is assigned a role by the ruling Committee of Elders. When Jonas is appointed the community's next Receiver of Memory, he must begin to make painful choices for the first time in his life. Jonas must risk his life - and the life of his baby brother - to change his community. A Newbery Award book. 180 pages.	6.0	760	5-9

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>God Don't Like Ugly*</i> by Mary Monroe	Story narrated by Annette Goode. Annette was a shy, overweight, dark-skinned young girl who's seen a lot of life at a very young age and yet she maintained a child naiveté. Having left Florida in the 1950s, Annette and her mother set up housekeeping in Ohio on the advice of a family friend, Scary Mary. In an effort of trying to make the ends meet, Annette's mother moves in a border, Mr. Boatwright. Mr. Boatwright, in the first year, becomes Annette pseudo-father and parent. In the second year of boarding with Annette and her mother, Boatwright starts sexually abusing the 7 year old Annette. The abuse continues for the next 10 years. After moving to a new house, Annette meets and befriends Rhoda Nelson, the beautiful daughter of the Negro undertaker. Rhoda is strong, smart, take-no-stuff young woman who has a reputation of being "crazy". Rhoda lives in a house where her mother is a hypochondriac; her white grandmother, Granny Goose, is suffering from senility; along her white Uncle Johnny and her brother Jock and her father with the movie star looks. In Rhoda, Annette sees everything she is not and the end of the sexual abuse. This book follows the relationship of Annette and Rhoda through the turbulent times of the 1960s and 70s." WARNING: Explicit sexual language. The story is excellent, though, and the language is appropriate to the situations. The book is on many high school reading lists.			9-12
<i>Hatchet</i> by Gary Paulsen	This book is a memorable, riveting survival story with broad appeal. When a plane crash leaves Brian stranded alone in the Canadian wilderness with only a hatchet, the city boy must adapt or die. Through painstaking trial and error, Brian learns to build a shelter, hunt, fish, and deal with a painful secret that torments him. A Newbery Honor Book. 195 pages.	7	1020	5-10
<i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar**	A humorous story that includes suspense, mystery, tragedy, and adventure. It is a story about friendship and coming-of-age. Stanley Yelnats, an overweight, unpopular boy, is sentenced to work at a boys' detention camp in the dry, Texas desert for a crime he didn't commit. Stanley blames his poor circumstances on an old family curse. Each camper is required to dig a deep hole in the middle of Green Lake, a dried up lake, every day of the week. Although the boys are told the digging is meant to build character, it isn't long before they discover that the treacherous warden has more sinister plans. <i>Holes</i> has received both the National Book Aware and the Newbery Award. 233 pages.	5	660	5-9

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Hoot</i> * By Carl Hiaasen**	Roy Eberhardt is the new kid--again. This time around it's Trace Middle School in humid Coconut Grove, Florida. But it's still the same old routine: table by himself at lunch, no real friends, and thick-headed bullies like Dana Matherson pushing him around. But if it wasn't for Dana Matherson mashing his face against the school bus window that one day, he might never have seen the tow-headed running boy. And if he had never seen the running boy, he might never have met tall, tough, bully-beating Beatrice. And if he had never met Beatrice, he might never have discovered the burrowing owls living in the lot on the corner of East Oriole Avenue. And if he had never discovered the owls, he probably would have missed out on the adventure of a lifetime. Apparently, bullies do serve a greater purpose in the scope of the universe. Because if it wasn't for Dana Matherson...	5.8	760	6-8
<i>House on Mango Street, The</i> By Sandra Cisneros	This novel is the remarkable story of Esperanza Cordero. Told in a series of vignettes - sometimes heartbreaking and sometimes joyous - it is the story of a Latina girl growing up in Chicago, inventing for herself who and what she will become.	5.6	870	6-8
<i>Hunger Games, The</i> * by Suzanne Collins**	In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capital surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capital is harsh and cruel and keeps the other districts in line by forcing them to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight-to-the death on live TV. One boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and sixteen are selected by lottery to play. The winner brings riches and favor to his or her district. But that is nothing compared to what the Capital wins: one more year of fearful compliance with its rules. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who lives alone with her mother and younger sister, regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her impoverished district in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before - and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.	5.3	810	6-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>I, Juan de Pareja</i> by Elizabeth Borton Trevino	This novel is a fictionalized account of the slave of Diego Valazquez, the great seventeenth century painter. Juan is a young slave of African descent who is inherited by Velazquez. As Juan learns to help his master, he falls in love not only with another young slave, but with the art of painting. Because the law forbids slaves from painting, Juan must practice his beloved art in secret. Eventually, his secret is discovered, and the resolution is suspenseful and satisfying. Newbery Medal, New York Times Best Juvenile Book of the Year. 180 pages.	7.0	1110	6-12
<i>Invisible Thread, The</i> by Yoshiko Uchida	Autobiographical account of Yoshiko's coming-of-age as a Japanese-American during the 1940's. When World War II begins, Yoshiko and her family are imprisoned in an American concentration camp with thousands of other Japanese-Americans. Yoshiko and her family respond with determination, resourcefulness, and patriotism to this shameful treatment at the hands of their adopted country. 133 pages.	5.0	1060	6+
<i>It's Kind of a Funny Story*</i> by Ned Vizzini**	Fifteen-year-old Craig Gilner has the world by a string, especially when he receives his acceptance into Manhattan's Executive Pre-Professional High School. Then everything goes haywire when his drive to be successful is overridden by his deep depression. I thought this was a great book about finding oneself, finding one's voice, love, and life. Themes of suicide, mental illness, and the difference between mental illness and depression. I thought the book was very hopeful, and it might be a good one to pair with Possible Selves at the high school level.	4.0	700	9-12
<i>Jaguar</i> by Roland Smith	A suspense-filled adventure story about an expedition in the Amazon Basin aimed at setting up a jaguar preserve. Soon after high schooler Jake Lansa joins his father, field biologist Doc Lansa, on the expedition, trouble starts. One scientist is killed in an unexplained explosion, a boat is destroyed and Jake is attacked by an unknown assailant. Jaguar touches on many ecological topics, such as preservation of an endangered species, the interaction of wild life in the rain forest, and its encroachment by extended mining and harvesting. 247 pages.	5.0	690	5-9
<i>Jazmin's Notebook*</i> by Nikki Grimes	This is an eight-month look into the life of a fourteen-year-old African-American girl living in Harlem. Through her journal entries, the reader shares Jazmin's experiences such as the death of her father, her relationship with her alcohol-addicted mother.	5.2	980	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key</i> by Jack Gantos	"They say I'm wired bad, or wired sad, but there's no doubt about it — I'm wired." Joey Pigza's got heart, he's got a mom who loves him, and he's got "dud meds," which are what he calls the Ritalin pills that are supposed to even out his wild mood swings. Sometimes Joey makes bad choices. He learns the hard way that he shouldn't stick his finger in the pencil sharpener, or swallow his house key, or run with scissors. Joey ends up bouncing around a lot — and eventually he bounces himself all the way downtown, into the district special-ed program, which could be the end of the line. As Joey knows, if he keeps making bad choices, he could just fall between the cracks for good. But he is determined not to let that happen. In this antic yet poignant new novel, Jack Gantos has perfect pitch in capturing the humor, the off-the-wall intensity, and the serious challenges that life presents to a kid dealing with hyperactivity and related disorders.	5.2	970	4-7
<i>Jungle, The</i> by Upton Sinclair	This novel about Jurgis Rudkis, a young Lithuanian immigrant who arrives in America in search of opportunity and wealth was written in 1906. From the time he and other family members touch American soil, they are the continuous victims of corrupt and oppressive government, political, and business officials. As they go to work in Chicago's packinghouses and related industries, they are subject to poor wages, long hours, hazardous work environments, employment instability, and mistreatment by corrupt and overbearing bosses. Although Sinclair's novel was a personal attempt to promote the cause of socialism, it was his accurate and sensational depiction of the unsanitary meat handling practices that caused a stir in America when the novel was published. Both the Pure Food and Drug Act and Beef Inspection Act were soon passed after the publication of <i>The Jungle</i> . The novel's depiction of man's inhumanity to man is one of the most powerful in literary form. 346 pages.	7	1170	9+
<i>Just Another Hero</i> by Sharon M. Draper	In <i>Just Another Hero</i> , a follow-up to Sharon Draper's <i>Battle of Jericho</i> and <i>November Blues</i> , a distraught student with an AK 47 holds a class hostage. 288 pages.	5.8	660	7-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Juvie Three, The</i> by Gordon Korman	Gecko, Arjay and Terence are three juvenile delinquents who are candidates for an experimental alternative living program in New York City. As their group leader, Mr. Healy, explains: "Here's how it works: you live with me and two other boys in an apartment. You go to school; you go into counseling; you do community service. To be blunt, you work your butt off and keep your nose clean." One of the boys was convicted of manslaughter, one was the driver of a get-away car, and one plans to see more of New York City than the inside of the grungy walk-up apartment that is now an installation of the United States Department of Juvenile Corrections. The night Terence makes his move and slips out of the apartment, things go terribly wrong. As a result, Mr. Healy is hospitalized. 288 pages.	6.2	730	7-12
<i>Killer Angels, The</i> by Michael Shaara	A Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about the battle of Gettysburg, where over 43,000 men were killed or wounded in three days of fighting. Gettysburg marked a turning point in the war and was a high-water mark for the Confederacy. While this novel would be especially appropriate as a companion piece to U.S. History studies, it can also stand alone as a fine piece of literature. The author uses multiple points-of-view to draw the reader into the characters of Robert E. Lee, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, James Longstreet, and other important historical figures. 355 pages.	10	610	7
<i>Lightening Thief, The</i> by Rick Riordan**	Classic Greek mythology is mixed with modern adventure in this brand-new, action-packed series. Twelve-year-old Percy is always in trouble, and it doesn't help that he's started seeing monsters everywhere! Things become clearer when Percy discovers he is the son of Poseidon, God of the Sea. Percy is sent to a summer camp on Long Island, but trouble starts all over again when Percy is sent on a quest to prevent war on Mount Olympus.	4.7	740	6-8
<i>Like Sisters on the Homefront</i> by Rita Williams-Garcia	When Gayle gets into trouble with her boyfriend, her mother sends the street-smart 14-year-old -- and her baby, Jose -- down to Georgia, to live with Uncle Luther and his family. There's nothing to do, nowhere to go, and no one around except kneesock-wearing, Jesus-praising cousin Cookie. Then Gayle meets Great, the family matriarch -- and her stories of the past begin to change how Gayle sees her future.	5.8	750	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Long Walk to Water, A*</i> by Linda Sue Park	This short novel begins as two stories, told in alternating sections, about a girl in Sudan in 2008 and a boy in Sudan in 1985. The girl, Nya, is fetching water from a pond that is two hours' walk from her home: she makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan, refugees who cover the African continent on foot as they search for their families and for a safe place to stay. Enduring every hardship from loneliness to attack by armed rebels to contact with killer lions and crocodiles, Salva is a survivor, and his story goes on to intersect with Nya's in an astonishing and moving way.	4.4	720	6-8
<i>Lyddie</i> by Katherine Paterson	The time is during the Industrial Revolution in New England. It is the story of a young girl who has assumed responsibility for her fledgling family since the abandonment of her father some years before. She and her brother, Charles, act as parents to their younger siblings and mother, who has emotionally deteriorated as a result of her husband's departure. One decision Lyddie's mother makes determines the course of all their lives and forces Lyddie to become more autonomous through the experience of grappling with the horrors of the textile industry and the emerging woman within herself. Throughout the course of the story, Lyddie must decide what she will hold most dear: her determination to save a family that is beyond repair, or saving herself and making choices that will allow her to stand up for her principles. 182 pages.	6.5	860	6-12
<i>Maniac Magee</i> by Jerry Spinelli	He wasn't born with the name Maniac Magee. He came into this world named Jeffrey Lionel Magee, but when his parents died and his life changed, so did his name. And Maniac Magee became a legend. Even today kids talk about how fast he could run; about how he hit an inside-the-park "frog" homer; how no knot, no matter how snarled, would stay that way once he began to untie it. But the thing Mania Magee is best known for is what he did for the kids from the East Side and those from the West Side. He was special all right, and this is his story, and it's a story that is very careful not to let the facts get mixed up with the truth.	5.4	760	4-8
<i>Maze Runner, The</i> By James Dashner**	Sci fi thriller. Made into a movie in 2014. The first book in a series for young people. Themes of fear, change, and what it means to be human.	5.7	770	7-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Mexican White Boy</i> by Matt de la Pena	Danny's tall and skinny. Even though he's not built, his arms are long enough to give his pitch a power so fierce any college scout would sign him on the spot. Ninety-five mile per hour fastball, but the boy's not even on a team. Every time he gets up on the mound he loses it. But at his private school they don't expect much from him. Danny's half Mexican. And growing up in San Diego means everyone else knows exactly who he is before they find out he can't speak Spanish, and before they realize his mom has blond hair and blue eyes. And that's why he's spending the summer with his dad's family. To find himself, he might just have to face the demons he refuses to see right in front of his face. 256 pages.	4.3	680	9-12
<i>Milkweed</i> by Jerry Spinelli	Spinelli paints a vivid picture of the streets of Nazi-occupied Warsaw during WWII, as seen through the eyes of a curious, kind, heartbreakingly naïve orphan.	5.2	510	5-9
<i>Monster*</i> by Walter Dean Myers	While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in jail and on trial.	5.0	670	9-12
<i>Necessary Roughness</i> by Marie G. Lee	The story of Chan Kim, a sixteen-year-old Korean-American who moves with his family from Los Angeles to a small town in Minnesota where he must cope not only with racism on the football team, but also with the tensions in his relationship with his strict father, who struggles financially after taking over his brother's failing business. As much as the story is a chronicle of Chan's coming of age and the development of his character, it is a study in the joys and sorrows that exist in every young person's relationships with family and friends. It is also a true testament to the greater perspective team sports can give to the adolescent mind and heart. 228 pages.	6	750	7+
<i>Night</i> by Elie Wiesel	<i>Night</i> is a terrifying account of the Nazi death-camp horror that turns a young Jewish boy into an agonized witness to the death of his family, his innocence, and his god. Penetrating and powerful, as personal as <i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> , <i>Night</i> awakens the shocking memory of evil at its absolute and carries with it the unforgettable message that this horror must never be allowed to happen again.	8.7	590	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Nightjohn*</i> by Gary Paulsen	Nightjohn is a former slave who gives up his freedom in the North to return to the South to teach slaves how to read and write. When he is caught and sold back into slavery, he becomes a field hand on Clel Waller's plantation. Waller is a cruel slave owner. **Nightjohn contains obscenity and descriptions of physical and sexual violence. It is essential that teachers read Nightjohn before deciding whether or not it is appropriate reading for the age and maturity levels of their students. It is also strongly advised that the students' parents be given information on the novel's content and that their permission be obtained for the use of Nightjohn in the classroom. It might be necessary for teachers to provide an alternative novel for students whose parents do not want them to read this book. 92 pages. I COMPLETELY AGREE WITH THIS CAVEAT. ALSO, THE BOOK IS WRITTEN IN DIALECTICAL WAY, THAT OF A 18 TH CENTURY SLAVE GIRL. IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE WAY LANGUAGE AND SENTENCES ARE STRUCTURED.	4.6	770	5-12
<i>No Laughter Here*</i> by Rita Williams-Garcia	Akilah can't wait to start fifth grade with her best friend, Victoria, who has been in Nigeria for the summer. But Victoria returns completely changed: withdrawn, physically unwell, and unable to laugh. A fifth-grade puberty film gives Victoria the words to tell Akilah what has happened to her: "I don't have what other girls have." Victoria has survived female circumcision, and Akilah is furious but sworn to secrecy, until her warm, supportive parents discover the truth and expose Victoria's family secret. Of the several recent novels about FGM (female genital mutilation), including Pat Collins' <i>The Fattening Hut</i> [BKL N 1 2003], for older readers, Williams-Garcia's story, written in Akilah's colloquial African American voice, is most successful. It combines a richly layered story with accurate, culturally specific information in language that's on-target for the audience, and the author tempers what could have been strident messages with interesting contrasts: Akilah's parents view FGM as an atrocity, even as they revere African culture; Akilah's aunt, who beats her children, raises questions about the forms of brutality ingrained in many families. Then there's Akilah herself, simultaneously confronted with her first menstrual period and the gravity of what has happened to her friend. Readers will have lots of questions for adults after reading this skillfully told, powerful story. 133 pages.	5.7	690	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>No Promises in the Wind</i> by Irene Hunt	During the Great Depression, fifteen-year-old Josh runs away from his impoverished home when tensions become unbearable between him and his unemployed, angry father. Josh and his little brother Joey cross the country trying to find work as musicians, and see how hardship has brought out the best and worst in human nature. As Josh tried to father Joey and realizes his own failings, he comes to forgive his father. 223 pages.	7	930	7-10
<i>Nothing But the Truth</i> by Avi	A humorous satire that depicts the consequences of lies, distorted truth, poor communication, and self-centeredness. Philip Maloy is a funny, well-liked high school freshman who loves track but hates English class. When he discovers that his poor grade in English will keep him off the track team, he begins humming along when the National Anthem is played Mrs. Narwins' class to irritate her. Philip's lies escalate which brings the ensuing episode into national limelight. 121 pages.	6.9		7-12
<i>Number the Stars</i> by Lois Lowry	A suspense-filled historical novel set in Denmark during World War II. As ten-year-old Annemarie Johansen and her family watch the persecution of the Jews by the occupying Nazi army, they are frightened for their Jewish friends, the Rosens. But to save the Rosens from "relocation," they must risk their own lives, and Annemarie must face the terrifying Nazis - and her own fears - on a dangerous mission. A Newbery Award winner, an ALA Notable Book, a <i>School Library Journal</i> Best Book of the Year, and an <i>American Bookseller</i> Pick of the Lists. 137 pages.	5.2	670	4-9
<i>Numbering All the Bones</i> by Ann Rinaldi	Thirteen-year-old Eulinda is torn between being a slave and being the master's daughter. When asked to go North, Eulinda must refuse because she has important work to complete before leaving the South.	6.1	600	6-8
<i>Out of the Dust</i> by Karen Hesse	A poem cycle that reads as a novel, <i>Out of the Dust</i> tells the story of a girl named Billie Jo, who struggles to help her family survive the dust-bowl years of the Depression. Fighting against the elements on her Oklahoma farm, Billie Jo takes on even more responsibilities when her mother dies in a tragic accident. A testament to the American spirit, this novel is an instant classic.	5.1	N/A	6-8
<i>Outsiders, The</i> by S. E. Hinton**	This book chronicles the coming of age of its protagonist, Ponyboy Curtis, and the series of events that leads to his reconciliation with his brothers. Through the heroism and consequent death of his best friend, Ponyboy realizes the importance of family and choosing a better life for himself than that of a street hoodlum. 156 pages.	4.6	750	8-12

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Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Pictures of Hollis Woods</i> by Patricia Reilly Giff	Hollis Woods was an infant when she was abandoned and for 12 years she has been transferred from one foster home to another. To the social agency, she is a "mountain of trouble" because she skips school and runs away, even from the Regans, a family willing to give her a real home. When she is placed with Josie, an elderly artist who is becoming very forgetful, Hollis begins to feel needed and doesn't ever want to leave this eccentric old woman who knows a lot about friendship and love. Fearful that the social agency will take her from Josie, Hollis plans a winter escape. This time she takes Josie with her and returns to Branches, the summer home that belongs to the Regans. All along, Hollis longs for her life with the Regans, and records every special moment with them in a gallery of pictures.	4.5	650	5-8
<i>Pigman*</i> by Paul Zindel	A teenage boy befriends an eccentric elderly man and discovers the value of true friendship.	5.1	950	7-10
<i>Parvana's Journey*</i> by Deborah Ellis	Parvana, a young Afghan under Taliban rule, must pretend to be a boy in order to work and to move outside the home. Ellis dedicates these stories to, "Children we force to be braver than they should have to be."	5.5	640	6-9
<i>Pretties, The</i> by Scott Westerfield	Tally has finally become 'pretty'. Her looks are beyond perfect, her clothes are cool, her boyfriend's gorgeous, and she's completely popular. It's everything she's ever wanted. But beneath all the fun -- the nonstop parties, the high-tech luxury, the total freedom -- is a nagging feeling that something's wrong. Something important. And sure enough, when a message from Tally's 'ugly' past arrives, the fun stops cold. 384 pages.	5.7	860	7-12
<i>Road to Paris, The</i> by Nikki Grimes	Paris has just moved in with the Lincoln family, and she isn't thrilled to be in yet another foster home. She has a tough time trusting people, and she misses her brother, who's been sent to a boys' home. Over time, the Lincolns grow on Paris. But no matter how hard she tries to fit in, she can't ignore the feeling that she never will, especially in a town that's mostly white while she is half black. It isn't long before Paris has a big decision to make about where she truly belongs.	4.6	700	5-7

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Rules</i> by Cynthia Lord	Twelve-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. Which is near impossible when you have a brother with autism and a family that revolves around his disability. She's spent years trying to teach David the rules-from "a peach is not a funny-looking apple" to "keep your pants on in public"-in order to stop his embarrassing behaviors. But the summer Catherine meets Jason, a paraplegic boy, and Kristi, the next-door friend she's always wished for, it's her own shocking behavior that turns everything upside down and forces her to ask: What is normal? Newbery Honor Medal, Schneider Family Book, and Award ALA Notable Children's Book	4.5	780	4-7
<i>Rules of the Road</i> By Joan Bauer	Jenna Boller is the best employee at her branch of Gladstone's Shoes - she can sell anybody anything. But her family problems are harder to handle, and there are times when she wishes she could get out of town. She is hired as a cross country driver, and a funny, strong and jubilant story of two lives intersecting ensues. 1998 LA Times Book Prize.	5.9	850	6 - 10
<i>Sassy</i> by Sharon Draper	It's not easy being nine — especially when you're Sassy Simone Sanford. Especially when you've been named for sticking out your tongue on the day you were born. Especially when everyone in the family calls you Little Sister. And if that's not bad enough, imagine being the youngest in the family. Imagine watching your big brother and sister have all the fun. Imagine being left out of the cool stuff your older sibs get to do — just because you're younger. Just because you're in the fourth grade. Just because Mom and Dad rule.	3.5	630	5-7

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Single Shard, A</i> by Linda Sue Park	Tree-ear, an orphan, lives under a bridge in Ch'ulp'o, a potters' village famed for delicate celadon ware. He has become fascinated with the potter's craft; he wants nothing more than to watch master potter Min at work, and he dreams of making a pot of his own someday. When Min takes Tree-ear on as his helper, Tree-ear is elated — until he finds obstacles in his path: the backbreaking labor of digging and hauling clay, Min's irascible temper, and his own ignorance. But Tree-ear is determined to prove himself — even if it means taking a long, solitary journey on foot to present Min's work in the hope of a royal commission . . . even if it means arriving at the royal court with nothing to show but a single celadon shard. A Newbery Medal Winner	6.8	920	6-8
<i>Skin I'm In, The</i> by Sharon Flake	Maleeka Madison is a strong student who has had enough of being teased about her "too black" skin and handmade clothes. So when she starts seventh grade, she decides to adopt a sassier attitude and a tougher circle of friends. The last thing she expects is to get "messed up" with another "freak," but that's exactly what happens. After a new teacher, whose face is disfigured from a skin disease, enters her life, will Maleeka be able to learn to love the skin she's in? Winner of the 1999 Coretta Scott King & John Steptoe Award for new authors.	9.1	670	9-12
<i>So B. It*</i> by Sarah Weeks	Story of a young girl being raised by a mentally impaired mother. The novel is about her odyssey and journey to find out where she came from. Protagonist is a 12 year old girl, but high school teachers have used the book to explore themes of resilience, love, finding oneself, and many others.	5.6	860	6-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Somewhere in Darkness</i> by Walter Dean Myers	A father, who has recently escaped from prison, is reunited with his long estranged son. In their journey across the country together, they learn to face each other and their shattered dreams and gain a better understanding of themselves and their relationship. Crab, the father, longs to communicate his love to his son, Jimmy, to prove he is innocent of murder, and to start a new life outside of prison. Jimmy dreams of having the kind of relationship with his father that he has always imagined a father and son should have. Both are soon disappointed. Crab discovers that neither he nor the world outside of prison have changed. He is unable to clear himself of murder and faces the reality that he has been a poor father to his son. Jimmy, on the other hand, must overcome his fear of his father and lack of respect for him. Jimmy learns to accept and even care for his father before he dies of a serious illness. He is saddened by his brief relationship with his father and is determined that, if he has a son, he will work to develop a strong, close relationship with him. 168 pages.	5.5	640	7-12
<i>Space Station Seventh Grade</i> by Jerry Spinelli	Jason, a twelve-year-old soon-to-be seventh-grader lives with his mother, stepfather, "cootyface face," and an annoying younger brother. Jason enjoys the simple things in life: baseball and eating his stepfather's food. Jason begins junior high, and soon learns that life is really not too simple. His fear of ninth-graders and infatuation with a cheerleader are just a couple of additions to his life which are compounded by his changing mind and not-yet-changing body. the space station that Jason builds serves both as an intellectual pursuit and as an analogy to the new world he creates as he enters the passage to adulthood. The story, both funny and sad, is a realistic portrayal of the issues that face adolescents. 232 pages.	5.3	600	7-12
<i>Stargirl</i> by Jerry Spinelli	Stargirl. From the day she arrives at quiet Mica High in a burst of color and sound, the hallways hum with the murmur of "Stargirl, Stargirl." She captures Leo Borlock's heart with just one smile. She sparks a school-spirit revolution with just one cheer. The students of Mica High are enchanted. At first. Then they turn on her. Stargirl is suddenly shunned for everything that makes her different, and Leo, panicked and desperate with love, urges her to become the very thing that can destroy her: normal. In this celebration of nonconformity, Newbery Medalist Jerry Spinelli weaves a tense, emotional tale about the perils of popularity and the thrill and inspiration of first love.	6.1	590	5-7

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Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>That Was Then, This is Now</i> by S. E. Hinton	This novel traces the adolescence of two best friends, Mark and Byron, who are as close as brothers, and provides an in-depth look into their lives. Mark is the charming, albeit stagnant, fixture in the piece, destined to come to an unfortunate end. Byron is a less-than-perfect adolescent, a foil to Mark in that his character evolves by the novel's end, and has made definitive decisions about saying good-bye to the streets and the most pivotal relationship of his life. 145 pages.	5.1	780	6-10
<i>Three Cups of Tea</i> By Greg Mortenson & David Oliver Relin	This young readers' edition of the worldwide bestseller <i>Three Cups of Tea</i> has been specially adapted and updated by Greg Mortenson to bring his remarkable story of humanitarianism up-to-date. It includes brand-new photos, maps, and illustrations, as well as a special afterword by Greg's twelve-year-old daughter, Amira, who has traveled with her father as an advocate for the Pennies for Peace program for children.	6.2	910	4-10
<i>Tituba of Salem Village</i> by Ann Petry	The novel is a fictionalized account of the witch trials in Salem Village in 1692. Tituba Indian and her husband John are slaves of the cruel, arrogant Reverend Samuel Parris, who pastors a church in Salem Village. The people there, like many others in Puritan New England, are highly superstitious and fearful of witchcraft. In early 1692, during the long, harsh winter, Betsey, the pastor's young daughter, begins to have seizures. Soon, many other girls begin to exhibit strange behavior, which the townspeople attribute to witchcraft. Tituba and eventually many others are arrested and put on trial for witchcraft. Winner of the ALA Notable Book Award in 1964. 254 pages.	5	840	5-10
<i>Touching Spirit Bear*</i> by Ben Mikaelson**	Mikaelson tells a gory survival story that evolves into an inspiring and sophisticated coming-of-age journey. . . . Cole's journey to self-realization and truth through hardship, confrontation, and ritual will fascinate young and old . . . and have everyone waiting for the sequel.	5.4	670	6-8
<i>Twilight*</i> by Stephenie Meyer**	After seventeen-year-old Bella begins living with her father in Forks, a small town in the Olympic Peninsula, she is haunted by Edward Cullen, a mysterious and handsome boy at school who she later learns is a vampire. Unfortunately, Bella falls in love with him and puts her life at risk just to be with him.	4.4	720	9-12

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>Uglies, The</i> by Scott Westerfield	Tally is about to turn sixteen, and she can't wait. Not for her license -- for turning pretty. In Tally's world, your sixteenth birthday brings an operation that turns you from a repellent ugly into a stunningly attractive pretty and catapults you into a high-tech paradise where your only job is to have a really great time. In just a few weeks Tally will be there. But Tally's new friend Shay isn't sure she wants to be pretty. She'd rather risk life on the outside. When Shay runs away, Tally learns about a whole new side of the pretty world -- and it isn't very pretty. The authorities offer Tally the worst choice she can imagine: find her friend and turn her in, or never turn pretty at all. The choice Tally makes changes her world forever. 448 pages.	5.6	770	7-12
<i>Waiting for the Rain</i> by Sheila Gordon	Tengo and Frikkie have grown up together on a farm in the South African Veld, where Frikkie's uncle, Koos, is the boss. At the beginning of the story, Tengo is feeling the first pangs of dissatisfaction with the status quo. He knows he was meant for more than being a farm worker. He has an unrivaled thirst for knowledge and a burning desire to see the sea. Frikkie, on the other hand, yearns for an education-free life, and finds his education more a source of stress than anything else. Spanning years, the story chronicles the escalating violence associated with apartheid, and the tension it places on the boys' friendship. 214 pages.	6	940	7-12
<i>Walk Two Moons</i> by Sharon Creech	This is a story of a 13 year old girl's journey to emotional recovery after the loss of her mother. Salamanca Hiddle, a girl of Native American descent, is on a trip across the country with her grandparents. As she travels, Salamanca tells them the story of her friend, Pheobe, a story with parallels her own. 280 pages.	5	770	5-9
<i>Watsons Go to Birmingham, The*</i> by Christopher Paul Curtis	The year is 1963, and self-important Byron Watson is the bane of his younger brother Kenny's existence. Constantly in trouble for one thing or another, from straightening his hair into a "conk" to lighting fires to freezing his lips to the mirror of the new family car, Byron finally pushes his family too far. Before this "official juvenile delinquent" can cut school or steal change one more time, Momma and Dad finally make good on their threat to send him to the deep south to spend the summer with his tiny, strict grandmother.	5.5	1000	6-8

Title & Author	Information	RL	L	IL
<i>What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin</i> by Jean Fritz	A biography written in a casual, often humorous, style. Ben Franklin's life is chronicled from his birth in Boston in 1706 to his death in Philadelphia at the age of 84. Franklin, unhappy with his life as a printer's apprentice, ran away from home as a young man. He soon became a successful printer in Philadelphia, but it was only the beginning of his many accomplishments. 48 pages.	4.7	830	4-11
<i>Where the Red Fern Grows</i> by Wilson Rawls**	In this classic, Billy, a 10-year-old boy growing up in the Ozark mountains, wants to own two hunting dogs more than anything else. Because his family is too poor to afford them, he saves money for two years in order to get his dogs. Having trained them to be the best hunting dogs around, Billy and his inseparable pair of coonhounds have many adventures, some ending in tragedy. Billy's life changes as a result of these adventures, and he must learn to adjust to the changes. Great Stone Face Award. 212 pages.	6	700	5-8
<i>Wonder*</i> By R. J. Palacio	Great novel about a boy named August Pullman (Augie) who is born with an extreme facial deformity. The story begins shortly before he starts "real" school for the first time in 5 th grade. The book chronicles his fifth grade year with all of the trials and tribulations that it brings, as well as the joys. I love how the book has very short chapters that are told from a variety of points of view.	5.0	790	5-7
<i>Woodson</i> by Gary Paulsen	In his memoir Gary Paulsen tells the story of his intimate relationship with Minnesota's north woods and the dog team he trained for the Iditarod dogsled race across Alaska. With thrilling immediacy, Paulsen pulls us into the breathtaking drama of his own story. For a rugged outdoor man and his family, life in northern Minnesota is a wild experience involving wolves, deer, and the sled dogs that make their way of life possible. This book includes a harrowing account of the author's first Iditarod. His life-changing adventure begins with sparkling days and moonlit nights spent running with his dogs in the Minnesota wilderness.	7.2	1090	6-8
<i>Zlata's Diary</i> by Zlata Filipovic	This best-selling journal of a young Bosnian girl is reminiscent of Anne Frank's diary. Readers will be engrossed as they read how Zlata's "normal" life was shattered by war. The voice of an innocent girl who can touch and engage our hearts.	5.1	640	6-8