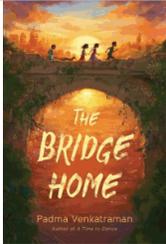
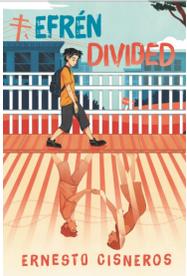


	<p><i>Allies</i> by Alan Gratz</p>	<p>It is June 6, 1944, D-Day, and Dee Carpenter (true name Dietrich Zimmermann), an underage private in the United States Army, is headed for Omaha Beach, seeking revenge for his uncle, who was arrested by Nazis when Dee was a little boy; meanwhile, Samira Zidano, an eleven-year old French-Algerian girl is looking for the French resistance, desperate to deliver the message that the invasion is about to begin, and get their help in freeing her mother--this is the most important day of the twentieth century, and both children want to fight, and survive.</p>
	<p><i>The Battle</i> (Gauntlet, Book 2) by Karuna Riazi</p>	<p>Riazi once again offers a fast-paced story in a changing game world with floating skyscrapers, flying cars, flavorful food and sweets, and a giant talking mouse. It's been a few years since Pakistani American Ahmad Mirza, now 12, entered Paheli. After his sister, Farah, now at Princeton, sends a mysterious package to his school instead of home, Ahmad finds himself in Paheli again with classmate Winnie Williamson, who's black. He does not remember the time spent in Paheli, but everything seems familiar somehow: "Something about the Minaret...reached inside and scratched its nails over old scars in his heart in the worst kind of way. It brought up memories of pain and panic without him even being able to identify what those memories were."</p>
	<p><i>Before the Sword</i> by Grace Lin</p>	<p>Harnessing her talent for storytelling and relating Chinese myths, Lin imagines a compelling account of Mulan's pre-warrior days, told in a style reminiscent of her Where the Mountain Meets the Moon books. The novel opens as an otherworldly spider bites Mulan's sister, Xiu, sending her to death's doorstep. Frantic to save her, Mulan fetches a famous healer, who reveals Xiu can only be cured with a decoction made from a flower grown in the garden of the Queen of the Immortals. Mulan joins the healer – a disguised immortal – on his journey for the flower, but dangerous obstacles plague the pair from the start, courtesy of the wicked White Fox.</p>
	<p><i>The Best At It</i> Maulik Pancholy</p>	<p>Rahul, an Indian American boy in a small Indiana town, finds seventh grade unsettling. His longtime best friend, Chelsea, suddenly blushes and stammers around a friendly eighth-grader. And Brent, a bully, repeatedly makes disconcerting innuendos about Rahul having a crush on a boy he admires. Taking his grandfather's advice to choose one thing and excel in it, Rahul almost breaks his leg at football tryouts and meets racial prejudice at an acting audition, before reluctantly joining the Mathletes team, where he works hard and excels. As his inner tension builds, he begins to check and double-check locks and the stove. After talking with a therapist, he thinks through his worries, confronts his nemesis, and finds that his friends are fully with him.</p>

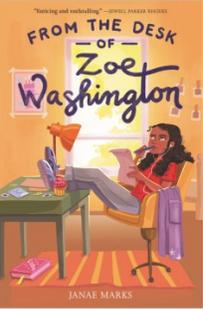
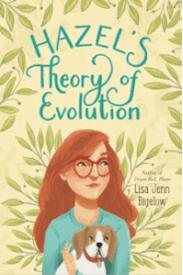
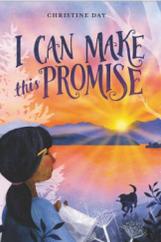
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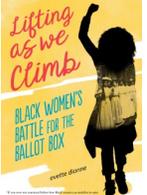
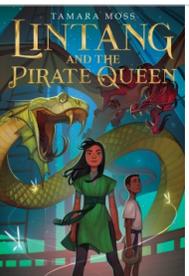
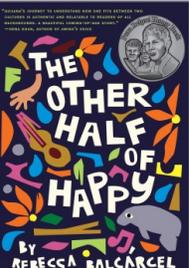
	<p><i>The Bridge Home</i> By Padma Venkatraman</p>	<p>In India, 11-year-old Viji and her 12-year-old sister, Rukku, run away from their village to Chennai. Unprepared for living on the streets, they befriend two homeless boys: Arul and Muthu. Together they pick through garbage dumps for glass and metal scraps to sell, sleep on an abandoned bridge, and form their own family. Rukku's intellectual disability has made her dependent on Viji, who gradually learns that her sister is more capable than she had thought. The four children and their tight-knit relationship are portrayed with conviction and finesse. Written in the form of a letter from Viji to her sister, the affecting narrative transports readers to a faraway setting that becomes vivid and real. -<i>Kirkus</i></p>
	<p><i>Each Tiny Spark</i> by Pablo Cartaya</p>	<p>If you've ever wondered how it is inside the mind of a person with inattentive type ADHD, this book offers a peek. Emilia Rosa struggles with her distractibility, but when something interests her, like tinkering with old cars or the controversies surrounding some district rezoning in her Georgia town, she latches on and digs deep. Her middle-school social studies project on local tourism brings out the activist in her, leading to a chain reaction that causes some minor hullabaloo in her school. Meanwhile, Emilia is trying to reconnect with her father, who's home from active duty; missing her mother, who's working away from home; and struggling to understand her abuela. This story covers themes like honoring your roots, seeking the truth, cultivating empathy, and being a good communicator.</p>
	<p><i>Echo Mountain</i> by Lauren Wolk</p>	<p>After losing almost everything in the Great Depression, Ellie's family moves to the Maine woods on Echo Mountain to start a farm – then tragedy strikes. Not long after getting them established in their new life, Ellie's father is struck on the head by a falling tree and lapses into a months long coma, his recovery unlikely. Never feeling threatened by the wilderness the way her mother and older sister, Esther, do, Ellie takes over many of her beloved father's chores, finding comfort and confidence in the forest. She's fully mindful of her place in the natural world and her impact on the plants and animals she shares it with. Led by a dog, Ellie discovers elderly Cate – called "hag" and shunned as a witch – badly injured, living alone in a cabin on the mountaintop.</p>
	<p><i>Efrén Divided</i> by Ernesto Cisneros</p>	<p>A young boy must become an adult overnight when his mother is deported. Twelve-year-old Efrén Nava's world is turned upside down the day he comes back from school and his mother is nowhere to be found. His neighbor Doña Chana tells him that an ICE raid was conducted at the supermarket and that Amá was picked up and deported to Mexico. When his father takes on a second job to make ends meet, Efrén becomes the primary caregiver for Mía and Max, his younger twin siblings. Unsure of how much information about his mother's fate to give them, Efrén tries his best to make Amá's miracles his own as he struggles to keep his siblings safe, feed them, and take them to school while still dealing with his own schooling.</p>

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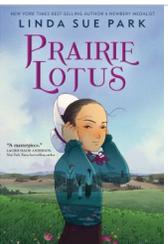
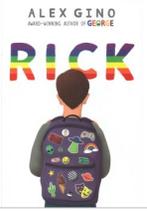
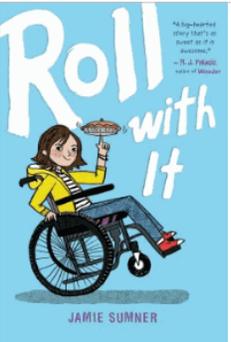
	<p><i>From the Desk of Zoe Washington</i> by Janae Marks</p>	<p>Zoe Washington isn't sure what to write. What does a girl say to the father she's never met, hadn't heard from until his letter arrived on her twelfth birthday, and who's been in prison for a terrible crime? A crime he says he never committed. Could Marcus really be innocent? Zoe is determined to uncover the truth. Even if it means hiding his letters and her investigation from the rest of her family. Everyone else thinks Zoe's worrying about doing a good job at her bakery internship and proving to her parents that she's worthy of auditioning for Food Network's Kids Bake Challenge. But with bakery confections on one part of her mind, and Marcus's conviction weighing heavily on the other, this is one recipe Zoe doesn't know how to balance. The only thing she knows to be true: Everyone lies.</p>
	<p><i>Gloom Town</i> by Ronald L. Smith</p>	<p>When twelve-year-old Rory applies for a job at a spooky old mansion in his gloomy seaside town, he finds the owner, Lord Foxglove, odd and unpleasant. But he and his mom need the money, so he takes the job anyway. Rory soon finds out that his new boss is not just strange, he's not even human--and he's trying to steal the townspeople's shadows. Together, Rory and his friend Isabella set out to uncover exactly what Foxglove and his otherworldly accomplices are planning and devise a strategy to defeat them. But can two kids defeat a group of ancient evil beings who are determined to take over the world?</p>
	<p><i>Hazel's Theory of Evolution</i> by Lisa Jenn Bigelow</p>	<p>Hazel knows a lot about the world. That's because when she's not hanging with her best friend, taking care of her dog, or helping care for the goats on her family's farm, she loves reading through dusty encyclopedias. But even Hazel doesn't have answers for the questions awaiting her as she enters eighth grade. What if no one at her new school gets her, and she doesn't make any friends? What's going to happen to one of her moms, who's pregnant again after having two miscarriages? Why does everything have to change when life was already perfectly fine? As Hazel struggles to cope, she'll come to realize that sometimes you have to look within yourself--instead of the pages of a book--to find the answer to life's most important questions.</p>
	<p><i>I Can Make This Promise</i> by Christine Day</p>	<p>All her life, Edie has known that her mom was adopted by a white couple. So, no matter how curious she might be about her Native American heritage, Edie is sure her family doesn't have any answers. Until the day when she and her friends discover a box hidden in the attic--a box full of letters signed "Love, Edith," and photos of a woman who looks just like her. Suddenly, Edie has a flurry of new questions about this woman who shares her name. Could she belong to the Native family that Edie never knew about? But if her mom and dad have kept this secret from her all her life, how can she trust them to tell her the truth now?</p>



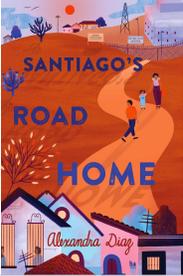
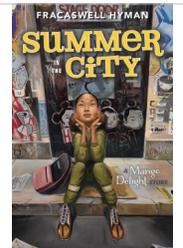
	<p><i>Lifting as We Climb: Black Women's Battle for the Ballot Box</i></p> <p>By Evette Dionne</p>	<p>For African American women, the fight for the right to vote was only one battle. An eye-opening book that tells the important, overlooked story of black women as a force in the suffrage movement--when fellow suffragists did not accept them as equal partners in the struggle. Women of color, especially African American women, were fighting for their right to vote and to be treated as full, equal citizens of the United States. <i>Lifting as We Climb</i> is the empowering story of African American women who refused to accept all this.</p>
	<p><i>Lintang and the Pirate Queen</i></p> <p>by Tamara Moss</p>	<p>It's a pirate's life for Lintang. For Lintang, humans and "mythies," magical powerful creatures, tensely coexist. Inspired by legends, Lintang yearns for adventure beyond her home island of Tulus. However, she only manages to make trouble despite good intentions and warnings from best friend Bayani. Her fortune turns when the infamous pirate captain Shafira appears, offering to rid the island of a deadly Night Terror in exchange for a child from the village – a necessity for a ship's safe passage past Nyasandra, the island's sea guardian. Impressed by Lintang's spunk, Shafira takes the girl onboard, promising a safe return and a priceless necklace to Lintang's mother as collateral. The all-female pirate crew prepares to hunt sirens when attacks from mythies and a stowaway Bayani.</p>
	<p><i>Midsummer's Mayhem</i></p> <p>by Rajani LaRocca</p>	<p>Eleven-year-old Mira "Mimi" Mackson is a baking prodigy from a small Massachusetts town called Comity (a thinly disguised Concord). Mimi is the youngest member of a large family: Her Indian American mom is a successful software consultant, her white dad is a renowned food writer and critic, and her three older siblings (all biracial, like Mimi) excel at acting, dance, and soccer. Although Mimi enjoys creating new treats for her family and experimenting with uncommon flavors, she sometimes feels out of place and invisible amid her accomplished siblings. When a new bakery in town, the White Away Bakery and Café, announces a baking contest for children.</p>
	<p><i>The Other Half of Happy</i></p> <p>by Rebecca Balcarcel</p>	<p>As Quijana begins seventh grade, she finds that her school and classmates aren't the only things that have changed. Her father, who came to the U.S. from Guatemala, is putting more pressure on her to adopt his culture by speaking Spanish and playing guitar so that they can sing boleros – something made difficult by Quijana's lack of fluency in Spanish. Meanwhile, her younger brother, Memito, is behaving differently and having difficulty with words, leaving her desperate to find a way to help him. As the world changes around her, Quijana learns that nothing can stop time, and with the help of her caring friends, loving family, the wisdom of nature, and – of course – Don Quixote, she must find the strength to overcome her fears and discover her true self.</p>

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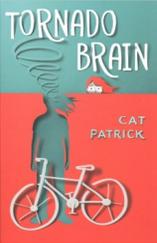
	<p>Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga</p>	<p>A gorgeously written, hopeful middle grade novel in verse about a young girl who must leave Syria to move to the United States. Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the US and her new label of Middle Eastern, an identity she's never known before. But this life also brings unexpected and wonderful surprises.</p>
	<p>Prairie Lotus by Linda Sue Park</p>	<p>Prairie Lotus is a powerful, touching, multilayered book about a girl determined to fit in and realize her dreams: getting an education, becoming a dressmaker in her father's shop, and making at least one friend. Acclaimed, award-winning author Linda Sue Park has placed a young half-Asian girl, Hanna, in a small town in America's heartland, in 1880. Hanna's adjustment to her new surroundings, which primarily means negotiating the townspeople's almost unanimous prejudice against Asians, is at the heart of the story. Narrated by Hanna, the novel has poignant moments yet sparkles with humor, introducing a captivating heroine whose wry, observant voice will resonate with reader</p>
	<p>Rick by Alex Gino</p>	<p>Rick and Jeff have been best friends since the third grade. When they're alone, Jeff shares his video games. Despite their connection, Rick knows he can't tell Jeff that he wants to join their school's Rainbow Spectrum, a safe space for LGBTQIAP+ students, or that he's questioning his own sexuality. An honest relationship develops between Rick and his cosplay-loving grandfather. Grandpa Ray reassures and supports Rick when he comes out as asexual. Adults in the story model moments of vulnerability and admit mistakes.</p>
	<p>Roll With It by Jamie Sumner</p>	<p>Ellie, twelve, loves baking and writing to famous chefs. She dislikes needing help to use the bathroom; people who think she's a sunny, brave, idiot because she is in a wheelchair; and having an aide to follow her around-and she does not mind saying so. Any of Ellie's troubles pall, however, when her grandmother starts having difficulty with her grandfather, who has Alzheimer's. Ellie and her mother move to Oklahoma to help out, and Ellie dreads starting a new school in the middle of the school year. This time is different, though, as she acquires two new friends almost immediately: Coralee, a budding beauty-pageant competitor who lives next door, and Bert, a boy who is probably on the autism spectrum. Ellie's goal is to win the pie competition at the church picnic, although a near tragedy with her grandfather almost overshadows the event. In the end, however, Ellie has a new life that she thoroughly enjoys.</p>



	<p><i>Santiago's Road Home</i> By Alexandra Diaz</p>	<p>"Everyone is separated." Return to la malvada, or try his luck on his own? For 12-year-old Santiago, going back to his abusive abuela leaves him with no choice at all. At a loss as to his next move, he finds an opportunity when he meets a young mother named María Dolores and her small daughter, Alegría, on their way to el otro lado. For María Dolores, a new life on the other side means fleeing from a troubled past, and Santiago heads with them to El Norte. After a brief stop in a town full of treacherous coyotes and los pollos at their mercy, the three Mexican refugees cross the border and embark on an arduous trek over a barren mountain range, with the desert heat slowly chipping away at their lives. Close to death, the trio falls into the clutches of U.S. immigration officers.</p>
	<p><i>Summer in the City: A Mango Delight Story</i> (Mango Delight, Book 2) by Fracaswell Hyman</p>	<p>Where Mango goes, drama is sure to follow! It's summer break, and Mango is content to spend her time babysitting her brother, hanging with her friend Izzy, and binge-watching movies late into the night. Then she runs into her drama teacher, who has some big news: their middle school play Yo, Romeo! is headed to the stage in New York City . . . and he wants Mango for the lead role! After overcoming her mom's initial reluctance--and with some firm rules established--Mango goes off to Brooklyn to stay with her Aunt Zendaya in a teeny apartment and prepare for her theatrical debut.</p>
	<p><i>Sunnyside Plaza</i> by Scott Simon</p>	<p>Sally Miyake is a 19-year-old woman who lives in Sunnyside Plaza, a group home for developmentally disabled adults of all ages and abilities. The staff members are dedicated to providing physical and emotional care as well as a bit of independence and responsibility. The residents have difficulties understanding concepts such as death or the passage of time. But they accept one another's strengths and weaknesses, valuing kindness above all. Sally proudly works in the kitchen under the direction of Conrad, doing small but necessary chores. When one of her family of friends dies from a stroke, detectives Bridges and Rivas are called to investigate.</p>
	<p><i>The Thief Knot</i> (Greenglass House, Book 4) by Milford, Kate</p>	<p>Marzana and her best friend are bored. Even though they live in a notorious city where normal rules do not apply, nothing interesting ever happens to them. Nothing, that is, until Marzana's parents are recruited to help solve an odd crime, and she realizes that this could be the excitement she's been waiting for. She assembles a group of kid detectives with special skills--including the ghost of a ship captain's daughter--and together, they explore hidden passageways, navigate architecture that changes overnight, and try to unravel the puzzle of who the kidnappers are--and where they're hiding. But will they beat the deadline for a ransom that's impossible to pay?</p>

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	<p><i>Tornado Brain</i> By Cat Patrick</p>	<p>In this heartfelt and powerfully affecting coming of age story, a neurodivergent 7th grader is determined to find her missing best friend before it's too late. Things never seem to go as easily for thirteen-year-old Frankie as they do for her sister, Tess. Unlike Tess, Frankie is neurodivergent. In her case, that means she can't stand to be touched, loud noises bother her, she's easily distracted, and she hates changes in her routine. It also means Frankie has trouble making friends. She did have one--Colette--but they're not friends anymore. It's complicated. Then, just weeks before the end of seventh grade, Colette unexpectedly shows up at Frankie's door.</p>
	<p><i>Turtle Boy</i> by M. Evan Wolkenstein</p>	<p>Seventh grade is not going well for Will Levine. Kids at school bully him because of his “funny-looking” chin. His science teacher finds out about the turtles he spent his summer collecting from the marsh behind school and orders him to release them back into the wild. And for his bar mitzvah community service project, he has to go to the hospital to visit RJ, an older boy struggling with an incurable disease. Unfortunately, Will hates hospitals.</p>
	<p><i>Village of Scoundrels: A Novel Based on a True Story of Courage During WWII</i> by Margi Preus</p>	<p>Based on the true story of the French villagers in WWII who saved thousands of Jews, this novel tells how a group of young teenagers stood up for what is right. Among them is a young Jewish boy who learns to forge documents to save his mother and later goes on to save hundreds of lives with his forgery skills. There is also a girl who overcomes her fear to carry messages for the Resistance. And a boy who smuggles people into Switzerland. But there is always the threat that they will be caught:</p>
	<p><i>When Stars Are Scattered</i> by Victoria Jamieson</p>	<p>Heartbreak and hope exist together in this remarkable graphic novel about growing up in a refugee camp, as told by a Somali refugee. Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day.</p>
	<p><i>Woke: A Young Poet's Guide to Justice</i> by Mahogany L Browne</p>	<p>A collection that calls young readers to awareness and justice. Browne’s introduction explains what it means to be woke – “aware of your surroundings” – and connects this awareness to historical movements for justice, stating, “this is where our freedom begins.”</p>

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2020 Summer Reading List

Middle Grade 5-8