Title	Author	ISBN #	Positive Review #1	Positive Review #2	Genre	Grade Level	Quantity
The 21: The True Story of the Youth Who Sued the US Government over Climate Change	Rusch, Elizabeth	0-06-322085-7	Compelling and timely, award-winning author Elizabeth Rusch's The Twenty-One tells the gripping inside story of the ongoing landmark federal climate change lawsuit, Juliana vs. United States of America. The Twenty-One is for readers of Christina Soontornvat's All Thirteen, fans of Steve Sheinkin's books, and anyone interested in the environment and climate change, as well as youth activism, politics and government, and the law.	Gr 8 Up-Legal buffs and climate activists will appreciate this complex and detailed journey through the U.S. court system. In 2015, lawyer Julia Olson filed a lawsuit against the U.S. government on behalf of 21 youths on the grounds that government actions contributed to climate change, depriving them of their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Ranging in age from eight to 19, the plaintiffs' argument was based on the fact that they had suffered numerous problems due to climate change, and since they were too young to vote, had no other legal recourse but to sue. Over the next eight years and three administrations, the Justice Department hit the plaintiffs with endless motions, arguing that dealing with climate change is the purview of the legislature, not the courts. The extensive legal proceedings read like a tennis match as the suit gets bounced from one federal court to another with the many motions, appeals, denials, hearings, and briefs. Most recently, in June 2023, they received a historic ruling putting them back on the path to a trial. Rusch smartly adds human interest into the narrative with quotes and personal stories from the lives of several of the 21. The passion and determination of the plaintiffs and their lawyer are awe-inspiring. Also included is a summary of other climate-based lawsuits, the science of climate change, a plan to help fix the climate, along with extensive and useful back matter. VERDICT With its legal focus, this makes a compelling and important addition to the growing body of climate change literature for teens. Recommended.-Karen T. Bilton © Copyright 2023. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. School Library Journal (October 1, 2023)	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
All That Consumes Us	Waters, Erica	0-06-311596-4	All That Consumes Us will pull readers into a hypnotizing, dark reverie that blurs the lines of reality and shows that the addictive nature of ambition—and its inevitable price—always claims its due.	In the wake of the tragic death of a gifted classmate at elite Corbin College, 17-year-old Tara Boone, a white university student, is offered the chance to take the deceased's place in the exclusive and secretive Magni Viri program. Tara eagerly accepts, lured by the promise of a full-ride scholarship and a tight-knit community of talented peers, and hoping to fulfill her lifelong ambition of becoming a famous novelist. With her fledgling membership comes mandatory Sunday night ragers in the school cemetery, as well as long walks in picturesque Tennessee woods with her crush. But Tara soon starts having recurring nightmares of being buried alive and often wakes up at her desk to new pages of a brilliant, twisted story that she can't remember writing. As her nighttime drafting becomes increasingly disturbing, and her mental and physical health drastically decline, Tara must ask herself what she's willing to sacrifice for greatness. In this slow-burn psychological horror novel, Waters (The Restless Dark) creates tension around the pressures of class inequality and impostor syndrome, filtered through Tara's acerbic first-person narration. Moody and disquieting prose combine with paranormal intrigue to drive this dark tale of exploitation and academic greed. Ages 13-up. Agent: Lauren Spieller, Folio Literary Management. (Oct.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.	Horror	Middle	1
American Spirits: The Famous Fox Sisters and the Mysterious Fad That Haunted a Nation	Rosenstock, Barb	978-1-635-92805-1	CAN THE DEAD TALK TO THE LIVING? Discover the astonishingly true story of Maggie, Kate, and Leah Fox—the Civil War-era sisters and teen mediums who created the American séance.	Gr 7 Up-A detailed and engaging account of the Fox sisters, who started the 19th-century Spiritualist movement. In 1847, in rural upstate New York, the Fox family was plagued by mysterious, nighttime rapping sounds, to the point that they asked neighbors for help. People speculated it was the spirit of a man killed on the property. Soon enough, Maggie, 14, and Kate, 11, were interpreting the strange sounds and communicating with the dead. News of the sisters' abilities spread, and they quickly became local celebrities, holding seances for people eager to speak with deceased loved ones. With older sister Leah as their manager, the family was soon able to afford a house in upscale Rochester and later Manhattan as their popularity exploded. The Spiritualist movement grew exponentially, with many others working as mediums; newspapers and organizations also emerged with the Fox sisters at the center of it all. Much detail is given to Maggie's turbulent romance with famed arctic explorer Elisha Kane while Rosenstock also covers the lives of Leah, who had multiple marriages, and Kate, the quiet workhorse who kept the money coming in. Late in life, Maggie proclaimed it was all fake, that they made the sounds by cracking their joints, but she later recanted when she found she had no other way to make money; however, the Spiritualist community rejected her. Pages turn quickly with short chapters and Rosenstock's intriguing ghost story-writing style. Extensive documentation is provided, including source notes, bibliography, and index. VERDICT A great choice for teens who enjoy ghost stories and those interested in con artists or history. Recommended for all libraries.-Karen T. Bilton © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Horror	Middle	1
American Wings: Chicago's Pioneering Black Aviators and the Race for Equality in the Sky	Smith,Sherri L.	0-593-32399-8	"A vivid and accurate recounting of the struggles and triumphs of the desegregation of Chicago aviation."—School Library Journal, starred review	Smith (The Blossom and the Firefly) and Wein (Stateless) chronicle the history of Black pilots in this essential and richly informative work. Opening with the story of Cornelius Robinson Coffey (1903-1994), a Black teen who was determined to fly despite a white pilot's attempts to scare him, the authors detail how white people believed that Black people were incapable of flying because they were seen as unintelligent, lazy, and gutless. The creators assert that Coffey, among others, were likely motivated by Bessie Coleman (1892-1926), the first Black female pilot, whom straightforward text notes as having "opened the skies up to her people." Black Americans soon flocked to aviation, upending white society's unfounded beliefs. Despite massive progress, however, Black women pilots such as Janet Harmon Bragg (1907-1993), the first woman to attend the Curtiss-Wright School of Aviation, still found it difficult to pursue their dreams. Inspirational singular stories feature famous names and institutions such as the Tuskegee Airmen, b&w archival photographs imbue the historical narrative with contemporary-feeling familiarity, and nail-biting tales of flights gone wrong add verve, making for an exciting and richly rendered addition to the history of Black aviation. An epilogue contextualizes Black pilots' impact on society, including pop culture media such as Star Trek. Ages 12-up. (Jan.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.	Biography	Middle	1
Bad Sister	Alexander, K.R.	1-546-11651-6	Chelsea has now traded places with her evil twin... and finds herself trapped in a ghost space while Angelica takes over. Is it possible for her to get her life back?	Gr 5-9-Twin sisters Chelsea and Angelica are best friends, even in death. Angelica has been dead for five years, but clings to 12-year-old Chelsea, jealous of any other friends Chelsea might make. Following Identikill, the story picks up as Angelica has secretly stolen Chelsea's identity and trapped Chelsea in the gray vermin-infested Underside. Friend-turned-enemy-turned-sorta-friend Riley is also stuck in the Underside while her imposter haunts both worlds. Only Chelsea's friend Janette, who lives with her two fathers, realizes something is amiss and is willing to save the girls, even as Angelica bullies and threatens her. The text is sparse, and the characters are not given physical descriptions or detailed backgrounds. However, readers will like this book for its succinct yet poignant insights into middle school drama, as well some age-appropriate unsettling scenes. Riley's unknown imposter in particular is creepy. A brief recap of the first book is offered at the beginning, but this story can be difficult to follow without reading the previous title. VERDICT Fans of the "Identikill" series will want to know the ending; purchase where the first title is popular.-Elissa Cooper © Copyright 2026. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Horror	Middle	1
The Ballerina of Auschwitz (Young Adult Edition of the Choice)	Eger, Edith Eva	1-665-95256-3			Biography	Middle	1

Banana Ball: The Unbelievably True Story of the Savannah Bananas	Cole, Jesse	0-593-47341-8	For his entire childhood, Jesse Cole dreamed of pitching in the Majors. Now, he has a life in baseball that he could have only imagined: he met the love of his life in the industry; they shaped Savannah, Georgia's professional team into the league champion Savannah Bananas; and now the Bananas have restyled baseball itself into something all their own: Banana Ball.	This baseball-like game makes up the rules as it goes along. The heroes of this charming story are the Savannah Bananas, a goofball gang of athletes whose motto is, "Fans First. Entertain Always." At their helm is Cole, a baseball-loving Bostonian who went south to pitch in college but didn't quite have the right stuff to hit the majors. As he puts it, "I wasn't hugely projectable," meaning he wasn't likely to develop the ability to compete with the pitchers in Major League Baseball. Regardless, studying humanities and theater, he also knew that he was a "natural ham" and able entertainer, and he wasn't about to be kept out of the show. So he decided to pull together a squad that would do for baseball what the Harlem Globetrotters did for basketball. Seeking to change the game and make it move faster, he put a clock on the game to cap it at two hours, allowed batters to steal first, and counted it as an out if a fan caught a foul ball in the stands, among other tweaks. Small-market teams usually "had no shot at all," but suddenly, the Bananas proved, "the little guys could actually win." Cole has steadily grown the market for his version of baseball, drawing big crowds through traveling games as well as through the skillful use of social media. He was so successful with his vision that the Red Sox came calling for tips on how to liven up Fenway Park, and Cole had plenty of answers: Do as the Bananas do and have a parade, fireworks, dancing in the streets, and sheer anarchy such that, as one Sox official put it, "This will be like an actual circus coming to our ballpark." True enough, and this particular circus is reimagining baseball as a game that not only purists and traditionalists can love. Anyone who can think outside the diamond will enjoy Cole's entertaining yarn.	Sports	Middle	1
Baseball's Shining Season: America's Pastime on the Brink of War	Sandler, Martin W.	1-547-60797-1	From National Book Award winner Martin W. Sandler and his son, a fascinating look at the intersection of baseball and society in America on the eve of World War II. In 1941, as America stood on the brink of World War II, the country was in sore need of a diversion at home. They found exactly that on the baseball diamond, where the rivalry between the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Yankees captivated fans as superstars Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio went head to head, breaking every record imaginable. But the pastime known as "America's game" wasn't really a game that welcomed everyone: Black citizens were segregated into the widely dismissed Negro Leagues, and though women had played baseball for years, they struggled for acceptance and to establish a professional league of their own. As the country reached a turning point, so, too, did the sport of baseball--and after 1941, neither would ever be the same. Through extensive archival photographs and thrilling accounts of the game and the country that became obsessed with it, Martin W. Sandler and Craig Sandler vividly portray the season that would change baseball forever.	Gr 7 Up-An excellent and insightful book that delves into the extraordinary 1941 baseball season, placing it against the dramatic backdrop of World War II. This nonfiction chronicle provides legendary feats, including Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak and Ted Williams's pursuit of a .400 batting average, while highlighting the sport's significance as a national distraction during an anxious time. Beyond the major leagues, the book powerfully illuminates the segregated world of sepia ball, focusing on the Negro Leagues and the East-West All-Star Game, drawing record crowds and offering a vital sense of pride and community for Black Americans. The narrative also details baseball's role in the war effort, from players enlisting to the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, and its unique contribution to rebuilding international relations post-war. The authors effectively contrast the baseball of 1941-with its modest salaries, daytime games, and lack of playoffs or instant replay-with the modern game. The book's design, including numerous historical photographs and illustrations, enhances the immersive historical context, bringing figures like DiMaggio, Williams, and Satchel Paige to life for readers. It thoughtfully integrates the escalating global conflict and America's internal struggles with segregation, showing how baseball provided hope and spurred questions of equality. This well-researched and engaging account culminates with the eventual integration of baseball, recognizing its crucial role as a catalyst for broader Civil Rights advancements. VERDICT Skillfully interweaving sports history with critical social and political context, this nonfiction work is an invaluable resource for students interested in American history, Civil Rights, and the enduring power of sports. A must-have addition for school libraries.-Richard Winters © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Sports	Middle	1
Basketball: Amazing but True Stories!	Barnes, Derrick	1-523-50554-0	From superstar author Derrick Barnes, here is a middle-grade celebration of the people and stories that helped shape the game of basketball, from unsung pioneers to unforgettable moments of the game.	Two-time Kirkus Prize winner Barnes highlights some potentially unfamiliar records and achievements on the court. The author positively pours out facts and anecdotes about lesser known, or at least less celebrated, "batters, buzzer-beaters, and record-breakers"—from tributes to the early barnstorming "Black Fives" and Wataru "Wat" Misaka, the NBA's first non-white player, to accounts of Scott Skiles' 30 assists in 1990 and Bernard King, who came back to finish a Hall of Fame career after shattering a knee. Despite noting that basketball is enjoyed across the world, "from Boston to Barcelona to Beijing," he seldom glances overseas, and notwithstanding a nod to Title IX, the scattered accounts of the feats of women high school, collegiate, or WNBA players and teams definitely don't get equal time. Still, with contagious enthusiasm, he invites readers to marvel at trick dunks and full-court shots of the past, weird games such as the NCAA contest that ended up 258-141, and other wonders—not to mention the careers of players, coaches, and even announcers and executives from the usual marquee names to coach Pat Summitt (1,098 wins), A.C. Green (1,192 consecutive games), and 5'3" pro Tyrone "Muggsy" Bogues. Even non-fans will enjoy the breathless tales of miracle comebacks Barnes dishes out on his way to a closing pep talk. The mostly brown-skinned cartoon figures in Tuya's action scenes properly underscore the narrative tone by sporting fierce game faces or appropriately amazed expressions. Fast-break fun for both students and non-students of the game. (glossary, web sites) (Nonfiction. 10-13)	Sports	Middle	1
Behind the Mask: A Revealing Look at a Dozen of the Greatest Goalies in Hockey History	Druzin, Randi	1-7716-4963-1	A dozen incredible stories about hockey's legendary goalies, on and off the ice--including Carey Price, Marc-André Fleury, Roberto Luongo, and Henrik Lundqvist. "Hockey goaltenders have forever been thought of as unique, eccentric, weird and wacky. Also misunderstood. Randi Druzin's Behind the Mask is a fascinating examination of a dozen of those who have played the position at the highest levels. This well-researched and well-written book is revealing and delightful at the same time."--	Though part of a team, hockey goalies stand alone to protect their nets, while their teammates rush frantically all over the ice in pursuit of the puck. In this book, journalist Druzin (Between the Pipes) profiles 12 famous goalies to reveal their impetus to pursue that particular position of the game. Goaltenders face inherent danger, with pucks coming at them at 100 mph or faster, and opposing players (often 200 pounds or more) hurtling toward them in a perilous 60-minute ballet of near misses and catastrophic crashes. To explain the attraction to the role, the book features retired goalies, such as Gerry Cheevers, known for wearing a face mask decorated with marks that look like stitches-adding to it each time a puck hit him in the face-and Soviet player Vladislav Tretiak, inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1989. Active goalies, such as Marc-André Fleury, are spotlighted too. VERDICT With information and interviews culled from magazine articles and other works, this book does a nice job of capturing the character of each player and divulging what enticed them to become hockey goalies in the first place. An insightful exploration of the psyches of 12 accomplished goalies.-Brian Renvall © Copyright 2023. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Biography	Middle	1

The Better to Eat You With	Mejia, Tehlor Kay	0-593-64707-6	For twelve-year-old Evan, summertime has always meant carefree days with her family and unlimited time with her best friend, Billie. This year, with her parents on the brink of divorce, she's staying at Billie's summer cabin. But Billie only seems to care about crushes these days, and to make matters worse, Evan's mom's health obsession has climbed to new heights. The more Evan tries to appease her mom and control her hunger, the sharper it seems to get, until it threatens to drag her under.	Gr 6-Summer trips to the quiet resort town of Sonrisa were always a source of family fun for 12-year-old Evan, and a chance to reconnect with friends Billie and Jackson. But Evan can't enjoy herself this year amid pressing worry over the disintegration of her parents' marriage and scrutiny from her mother Moira over everything Evan eats. Moira says it's all about building healthy eating habits, but the restrictiveness of the diet leaves Evan feeling faint and spent. Additionally, the quiet of Sonrisa is disrupted by a mysterious nocturnal beast that kills animals and leaves strange tracks and marks around the camp. Evan and her friends sneak out to find answers, and Evan is disquieted by the connection she seems to share with the creature. While this presents a light horror element, the book's scare factor lies in how Moira has pushed her daughter into anorexia. The pressure and worry that Evan feels every time she strays from her diet is palpable, and her body's weakness leads to a couple of dangerous situations while swimming and hiking. Helpfully, author Mejia provides a compassionate voice in Billie, who shows herself to be a true friend as she begins to understand what Evan is dealing with. The creature ultimately reveals itself to be an empowering force for Evan and guides her to understand her body's needs. VERDICT Mejia's deft exploration of a distressing topic provides a window into disordered eating and shows the importance of providing help to someone in crisis. Highly recommended.-Michael Van Wambeke © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Horror	Middle	1
Beyond the Board: The Untold Story of the World's Most Daring Big Wave Surfer	Gabeira, Maya	1-419-76002-5	In this thrilling YA memoir, pro surfer Maya Gabeira tells the awe-inspiring true story of her journey from unstoppable teenager to the Guinness World Record-holding legend she is today. Who am I, beyond the board? Surf legend Maya Gabeira is famous for her nerve. Her surfing journey began at the age of fourteen and reached a high when she set (and later broke) a Guinness World Record for highest wave conquered by any big wave surfer--man or woman--after bouncing back from a near-fatal accident. Gabeira has been heralded as one of the top surfers of her generation. But who is the ferocious personality beyond the board? What are the stories behind the relationships and challenges that shaped her into the indomitable surfer, women's rights advocate, and champion for mental health awareness she is today? For the first time ever, Maya looks back on her formative years: the romances, career highs, vulnerabilities, and setbacks that defined her at an early age. At seventeen, she left her home in Rio de Janeiro in order to chase waves around the world, toting a single backpack and waiting tables to get by. Maya carved her own path as a teen, defining her own remarkable narrative: that of a vulnerable, passionate, and driven young woman who learned never to flinch--even in the face of death.	Gr 9 Up-Gabeira, the world's top female big-wave surfer, began her surfing journey at the age of 14. She left her home in Rio de Janeiro in to chase waves around the world at the age of 17. She surfed in many countries including Brazil, Australia, the United States, South Africa, and Tahiti. Gabeira won her first big-wave award at the age of 19. She enjoyed the amazing journey to be a professional, but at the same time, she felt enormous pressure and criticism. She knew that she was no longer a novelty, an underdog, a surprising Brazilian teenager who chased big waves on occasion. She felt even more pressure to pursue excellence. In this memoir, Gabeira chronicles her remarkable journey from a determined yet anxiety-plagued adolescent to a Guinness World Record holder. She depicts her formative years: the romances, career highlights, vulnerabilities, and setbacks that defined her at an early age. She noticed the alcohol abuse commonly in the field and learned how to withstand the abuse that comes with being a woman in a male-dominated field. Gabeira's amazing surfing journey has provided many opportunities to live in different countries and some surprising culture-shock experiences. VERDICT This book will inspire young athletes to break barriers, such as gender and age, to charter their own course and pursue excellence. Highly recommended.-Anna Ching-Yu Wong © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Biography	Middle	1
Boarding Schools and the Indigenous Story	Fairbanks, Ashley	0-593-81139-9	he newest title in the "Race to the Truth" nonfiction series is a powerful nonfiction narrative of the Indigenous struggle throughout United States history. The title starts with a story of Little Bear, an Indigenous boy taken from his family, where he is forced to remove cultural signifiers and attend a boarding school. The narrative is framed in a way for young readers to empathize with Little Bear's situation and put themselves in his shoes. The book then moves away from that narrative to explain the history that isn't always present in curriculum: the brutal colonization of the Americas, the horrors of the Trail of Tears, the creation of reservations, Captain Richard Henry Pratt's idea of the Indian Boarding Schools, the forced adoption and foster care placements of Indigenous children, the American Indian Movement during the Civil Rights era, and finally, Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As the book progresses, there are points of reflection for young readers titled "Let's Think About This" scattered throughout the text that ask how students feel about the heavy topics discussed. Real photographs are included to elevate the storytelling and show the eradication of the cultural genocide, along with a list of every boarding school in the United States. This history is essential for students to know, and essential for all nonfiction collections. VERDICT An important title for upper elementary and middle school collections, as hardships faced by Indigenous communities since the colonization of the Americas are explained in a reflective and informative way that leaves no detail behind.-Alexa Dumas © Copyright 2026. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Fairbanks (Anishinaabe) skillfully narrates the complex history of the treatment of Indigenous people in the present-day U.S. from the pre-colonization era to contemporary cultural revitalization. Although this book is focused on boarding schools, the author begins the narrative long before their creation, offering crucial background knowledge by introducing readers to cultural values that guided daily life and intertribal relations in the Americas before the arrival of European colonizers. She carefully outlines the frameworks that affected the relationships between tribes and early explorers, settlers, and the federal government, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny. Next, breaking down the treatment of Indigenous peoples into seven eras from the 1770s through today, she discusses the many shifts in attitudes, treaties, and laws, including harsh efforts to “civilize” Native children. Written in a conversational style, the substantive narrative helps readers comprehend the policies that led to the establishment of boarding schools and understand how they were run. While Fairbanks doesn’t shy away from describing children’s mistreatment in the schools, she includes stories of survivors who went on to excel in their careers despite these experiences. The narrative is interspersed with occasional historical photographs, vignettes, and poems that add to an understanding of the boarding school experience. Each chapter ends with engaging questions that support deeper discussions. Text boxes furnish definitions of terms like Indigenous, genocide, treaties, assimilation, and self-determination. A balanced, well-written, and compelling survey of broad significance and usefulness. (author’s note, list of boarding schools, resources, bibliography) (Nonfiction. 10-14)	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
The Boys of Riverside: A Deaf Football Team and a Quest for Glory	Fuller, Thomas	0-385-54987-3	The incredible story of an all-deaf high school football team’s triumphant climb from underdog to undefeated, their inspirational brotherhood, a fascinating portrait of deafness in America, and the indefatigable head coach who spearheaded the team, by New York Times reporter and Page One Correspondent, Thomas Fuller.	How an all-deaf football team from Southern California beat the odds to become state champions. Fuller’s beat as San Francisco bureau chief for the New York Times included reporting on hard-hitting “heavy stuff” like in-state natural disasters, mass shootings, and poverty. Yet when he ran across the story of the Cubs, a football team from the California School for the Deaf, Riverside, he felt called to investigate. “This team’s journey, a tale of belonging and excellence, was the story I wanted to write,” he notes. “It felt like a salve at a time of such turmoil for the country.” In 2022, Fuller temporarily gave up his bureau chief position and moved to Riverside, where he followed the team for one extraordinary season when the team “wanted to prove that being deaf on the gridiron gave them an edge.” Watching games and immersing himself in interviews conducted through American Sign Language interpreters, he came to know the players and their community. He also learned about the eight-man game the Cubs played—which some called the purest form of football—while observing how team members, though often physically smaller than those they played, relied on inborn gifts like speed, agility, and their ability to understand their world through heightened powers of observation. What makes Fuller’s book such a page-turner—and very much a story for a wide audience beyond sports enthusiasts—is its deep involvement with the Cubs as people. From the first chapter, the author makes it clear that his story is not just about a winning team, but about human resilience and the players who exemplified it—e.g., Phillip Castaneda, an unhoused student who dazzled on the field with quickness, and Felix Gonzalez, who broke his leg just before the playoffs that the Cubs ultimately won in his honor. An uplifting book about triumphing over adversity.	Sports	Middle	1

Buzzkill: A Wild Wander Through the Weird and Threatened World of Bugs	Maloney, Brenna	1-250-32792-X	You may not think so. You may think insects are gross. Or scary. Or dangerous. But there's so much more to insects than what meets the eye. Told through hilarious prose and packed full of jaw-dropping facts, Brenna Maloney's first-person narrative presents the big picture on bugs. Insects play a critical role on our planet-as pollinators, garbage collectors, artistic muses, research partners, and even as "dinner." As weird and wonderful as they are, insects and their habitats are under threat in our changing world. Using thorough research and investigative techniques, as well as employing a healthy dose of humor, Maloney helps readers see the world through their eyes.	Maloney uses a humorous conversational tone as she begins with comparisons of size, then moves on to the role of insects as pollinators, decomposers, and even food sources. Readers will goggle at the idea of a bug as large as a Quarter Pounder but also learn the importance of insects to forensic scientists and which species are in danger of extinction. The author warns, "I just need to blurt stuff like that out...I lose friends this way; I really do." It is not an idle warning; there are graphic descriptions of the destruction a swarm of locusts can cause or how mosquitoes spread diseases. Tales of how her family reacts to experiments with chocolate chip cricket cookie mix or having to catch escapees from her ant farm give the book a personal, rather than a dry scientific feel. Illustrations, such as that of a bug slowly roasting on a spit over a fire in the section on insect-based food options, reinforce the humor. Back matter includes organizations to contact, books to read, and actions to take to help support insect populations. This title is densely packed with information and a bit lengthy for primary grade readers, but should please middle grade bug enthusiasts. VERDICT An approachable text on a wide range of insect lore, this title has high appeal for those curious about bugs and would also be helpful for research.-Suzanne Costner © Copyright 2022. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Caitlin Clark	Wetzel, Dan	1-250-38762-0	"An unusually informative and enjoyable sports biography for young readers." --Booklist , starred review for Epic Athletes: Stephen Curry In this inspiring sports biography of Caitlin Clark featuring eye-catching photographs, acclaimed journalist Dan Wetzel tells the incredible true story of one of the greatest women's college basketball players of all time, who is now a major talent in the WNBA. With her shooting range, swagger, and play-making prowess, the electrifying Caitlin Clark became one of the greatest college basketball players of all time and helped skyrocket women's basketball to a new level of popularity. Then she immediately took the WNBA by storm, winning Rookie of the Year and breaking multiple records. This inspiring biography recaps Caitlin's journey from multiple-sport star growing up in West Des Moines, Iowa, to becoming the all-time leading scorer in college basketball history, a two-time national champion, and one of the biggest stars in the WNBA. It's a story of dedication, hard work, competitiveness, and belief that has made her a barrier-breaking hero to people across America and beyond.	An insightful and inspiring look into the career of Caitlin Clark, an ambitious player and one of the most electrifying talents in basketball. It captures the highs and lows of her career, detailing the dedication, resilience, and skill that have propelled her from college basketball star to success in the WNBA. Readers gain a deeper understanding of not just her accomplishments but also the hard work and determination required to reach the top. The book's greatest strength is its multimedia approach, incorporating dynamic action shots. These images bring the story to life, immersing readers in key moments of her career and making the book feel fast-paced and engaging. The visuals enhance the storytelling, drawing readers deeper into her world and making them feel like they are right there on the court with her. The book includes a lot of basketball terminology and does an excellent job of breaking it down in a way that is easy to understand. Whether readers are longtime fans or new to the sport, the explanations make it accessible without losing the excitement and energy of the game. VERDICT An engaging and well-crafted tribute to a talented athlete, offering an inspiring read for sports enthusiasts, Clark fans, and aspiring athletes alike.-Jessica Calaway © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Biography	Middle	1
Civic Minded: What Everyone Should Know About the US Government	Fleischer, Jeff	979-87-656-1149-4	Since the publication of his 2016 Votes of Confidence (updated and revised in 2020), Fleischer has been asked about the concepts included here by students and educators. Many of those questions, originally asked by students, are answered in this concise, informative, and accessible text that takes 45 different topics related to the U.S. government and breaks them down into brief chapters. In part, the book is founded in the realization of how much misinformation has been spread by adults in the last few years, and Fleischer hopes to provide basic, understandable information so that readers can have "intelligent, informed conversations." With that in mind, he covers a wide range of topics, from immigration to government agencies and holidays, as well as all things related to taxation, social security, health insurance, spending, and more. With statistics, text boxes, and photographs—and, importantly, guidance on where to find even more detailed information—this evenhanded book provides the reader an easy-to-comprehend text supported by robust, thorough back matter. A strong choice for public and school libraries any time but particularly during an election year.	Multiple topics relating to United States' civics are explored in this extensive volume. Primary subjects include taxation, spending, Social Security, Medicare, citizenship, infrastructure, international relations, and similar government functions. Using percentages and other statistics, Fleischer informs readers of how all these laws and programs benefit the American people. For example, he explains tax brackets and likewise points out the value of the U.S. Postal Service, which is required to deliver mail everywhere unlike privatized services. Fleischer points out that the Public Broadcasting System receives 15 percent revenue from taxes, while the rest comes from charitable donations so that prominent issues are covered fairly. Those looking for information on the three branches of government and how they work will be disappointed as none of that is addressed. Fleischer employs a somewhat condescending tone as he refers to those with differing or misinformed points of view as providing "boneheaded" arguments. The information will quickly date as well; for example, 2024 expansions to DACA are not included. Unfortunately, this work provides very dull reading on subject material that is more accessible elsewhere, e.g., the U.S. Treasury website. VERDICT The dense text, tedious prose, and somewhat proselytizing tone will cause browsers to pass while report writers will be better served with government websites. Selectors, consider alternatives.-Margaret Nunes © Copyright 2024. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Climate Is Just the Start: How We Can Stop the Climate Crisis and Start Building a Better World for Everyone	Loach, Mikaela	0-593-89732-3	A high-energy but uneven primer on climate justice. UK activist Loach, who is of Jamaican descent, presents a call to action to tweens on climate justice issues. In this passionate and friendly narrative, she shares jaw-dropping facts like how 20 percent of people are responsible for 80 percent of the world's consumption. Loach never talks down to readers; her tone and voice are that of a cool older sister who loves the color pink and encourages them to never stop feeling things and caring about their causes. However, the work often gets bogged down by complex ideas that aren't always discussed accessibly. A big focus is on how the environmental issues we are facing have been caused by the intersection of capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy. This will be revelatory for most kids (and adults), but often, these very important themes are given short shrift. Suggestions, such as protests, strikes, letter campaigns, making pledges to consume less, and veganism are doable for the audience, but details on how to make these happen aren't fleshed out. The bright and attractive cover will draw in readers, and the black-and-white interiors with illustrations and infographics scattered throughout will engage them. Text is bolded for emphasis and pull quotes help break up the narrative. A poem written by Loach closes each part, adding a personal touch. A glossary and resources for further action round out the back matter. VERDICT Purchase where there are already initiated environmental activists. Those in need of a more practical how-to should look elsewhere.—Shelley Diaz	A climate activist calls for action. Loach, author of the adult bestseller It's Not That Radical (2023), restates her argument in this title for younger readers. Acknowledging that many kids and teens are rightfully disturbed by global warming and other injustices, she uses understandable metaphors, a conversational tone, and relatable stories to encourage them to listen to their feelings, imagine a better world, and work to make a difference. A Jamaican immigrant who now lives in England, Loach discusses how her own identity as a Black woman informs her work and beliefs; notably, she teases out systems of oppression such as white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism as she stresses that the impacts of climate change disproportionately affect those living in the Global South. As bleak as things may seem, her passion is evident as she urges readers to “fight against fossil fuels, against exploitation, against capitalism, and for a world where we all live in dignity.” She decries consumerism, explores how the burning of fossil fuels has resulted in disappearing beaches, and pushes readers to organize for change. Her vision may seem radical to some, but, as she points out, “Lots of things that most people now would find ridiculous used to be accepted.” Infographics break up the text, and the book concludes with an appendix of resources and glossary (unseen). Final art not seen. A rousing appeal for those concerned about the state of the world.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
A Course Called Home: Adventures of an Accidental Golf Course Owner	Coyne, Tom	1-668-03055-1	Globe-trotting golf writer Tom Coyne is ready to put down roots. For a fanatic like Coyne, that means living out every golfer's dream—or nightmare?—and buying his very own golf course. It also involves Bill Murray and Jason Kelce, for some reason.	"Globe-trotting golf writer Tom Coyne is ready to put down roots. For a fanatic like Coyne, that means living out every golfer's dream--or nightmare?--and buying his very own golf course . . . This book is a chronicle of restoration, resilience, and finding purpose in unexpected places. It's a story about digging in--literally and figuratively--as Coyne trades tee times for mower hours, learning how to contour a fairway, water a green, and revive a course rich in history but fading from memory"--Provided by publisher.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Dead Ends!: Flukes, Flops and Failures That Sparked Medical Marvels	Fitzharris, Lindsey	1-547-61502-8	A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year A Chicago Public Library Best Kids' Book of the Year From New York Times bestselling author Lindsey Fitzharris, a riveting middle grade nonfiction book about medicine's most fascinating failures and dead ends. Beheadings! Bloodletting! Bodysnatching! Journey down a snaking road bristling with medicine's most astonishing "dead ends." Marvel at the diagnoses, experiments, and treatments that were frequently useless, and often harmful, but that sometimes led doctors to discoveries that changed the world for the better. Enjoy a whirlwind tour of the human body-from brain, to heart, to limbs-during which New York Times bestselling author Lindsey Fitzharris and caricaturist Adrian Teal will guide you through centuries of medical mistakes, festooned with riveting facts, pitch-perfect humor, and vivid illustrations. Celebrate the flukes, flops, and failures that have given science a better understanding of our bodies and ways to treat them. This fascinating book of foul-ups is sure to delight young readers, and inspire them to embrace their failures, too!	An informative and entertaining dive into the successes and failures of medical history. Fitzharris's latest title introduces readers to the world of medicine long before the tried-and-true methods used by doctors today. Fascinating, often perplexing, information is included throughout, such as a doctor who thought he should remove the colon from his patients or a surgeon who would keep his bloody knife between his teeth during amputations. There are also plenty of examples, as the title states, of medical marvels stumbled upon by doctors trying to find cures for a disease or trying to make humans live forever. Chapters are named by the part of the body being discussed and illustrations enhance the text. Fitzharris excels at making medical history accessible to young readers, simplifying topics and defining medical terms. This is an engaging title with a multitude of positive messages: keep trying, everyone makes mistakes, and be open to new ideas. It is important to note, this book may be off-putting to some. Descriptions of historical medical practices, while not graphic, can be gross or disturbing. VERDICT Another excellent title from Fitzharris. Recommended for all middle schools.-Lisa Buffi © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1

Dead Fake	Ralph, Vincent	1-250-37212-7	Welcome to Bleak Haven: The town you won't (or can't!) leave... Deep fake murders have taken over the high school, but what happens when they start to become real? Would you Swipe to Die? When the new craze takes over Bleak Haven High, Ava Wilson refuses to join in. As the niece of an infamous murderer, it's the last thing she needs. The mysterious website allows people to view their own 'death' - an AI generated version of their final slasher-movie-moments. But, when some of her classmates' deepfakes are replicated in real life, Ava can either catch the killer...or be the next victim.	An unknown assailant reproduces the killings found in deepfake videos of murder scenarios in this entertaining and gory series launch from Ralph (One House Left). Sixteen-year-old Ava Wilson is no stranger to the horrors of a knife-wielding killer: she was six when her uncle Miles stabbed three members of a local family to death before succumbing to a defensive wound. So when Ava's Bleak Haven High classmates begin participating in a game called Swipe to Die, Ava refuses to show interest in the viral website, which allows people to view an AI-generated video of their own death, each of which occurs in increasingly disturbing and gruesome ways. But after Ava stumbles upon her best friend's body, his throat slashed open exactly as it was in the Swipe to Die deepfake of his demise, other replicated murders begin popping up throughout Bleak Haven. Upon discovering notes referencing Uncle Miles's crime, Ava vows to uncover the truth behind Swipe to Die and its connection to her family's bloody history. While some befuddling subplots lessen the impact of the central narrative, the mystery's credible and deeply unsettling catalyzing events deftly highlight timely issues surrounding misinformation and artificially generated media. All major characters read as white. Publishing simultaneously: Night Terror. Ages 13-up. Agents: Peter Knapp and Stuti Telidevara, Park, Fine & Brower. (Jan.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.	Horror	Middle	1
A Deathly Compendium of Poisonous Plants: Wicked Weeds and Sinister Seeds	Hirsch, Rebecca E.	1-7284-9328-5	In A Deathly Compendium of Poisonous Plants: Wicked Weeds and Sinister Seeds author Rebecca Hirsch takes you on a wild journey to look at how toxic chemicals in the natural world have been used for medicine, warfare, and sinister acts of foul play. Tread lightly as we explore these plants ominous deeds.	Hirsch, who has a doctorate in plant biology, offers an enthralling journey into the deadly side of botany. Her captivating guide covers 25 toxic plants in meticulous detail, combining science, history, and real-life horror stories. From well-known poisons like tobacco and poison ivy to the more obscure and lethal mandrake and gympie-gympie, the book is both informative and chilling. Each chapter dives deep into the effects of these plants on the human body, explaining the toxins they harbor in clear, accessible language. The writing remains sharp and engaging; it is never overwhelmed by technical jargon, making the book easy to follow while still offering an intriguing sense of discovery. Hirsch balances science with a conversational tone filled with dark humor, making the often-gruesome subject matter both entertaining and educational. The book's layout is stunning and includes botanical drawings, vivid photographs, and informative sidebars. Bullet lists offer quick, deadly details and surprising facts, keeping readers hooked. Harrowing anecdotes about poison victims, historical references such as the Salem Witch Trails, and information about unintentional poisonings add to its considerable appeal. The author's prologue and epilogue serve as cautionary tales, reminding readers to use the knowledge learned within for good. Back matter includes a glossary, source notes, further reading suggestions, and index. VERDICT This compendium is perfect for science buffs, true-crime lovers, herbalists, and teens drawn to the macabre. A must-have for anyone with a curiosity about nature's most sinister secrets.-Lynne Stover © Copyright 2024. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
The Devouring Light	Ellis, Kat	0-06-335524-8	"A group of rival musicians find themselves stranded in an abandoned house that seems to know everything they want--and will provide it to them ... at a cost"--Provided by publisher.	Bandmates Haden and Kizi are heading for a huge music festival when their car breaks down in the middle of nowhere, with no sign of help coming anytime soon. Fortunately, a top musician's tour bus is nearby and offers them a ride. Unfortunately, that bus contains Haden's rival Deacon Rex, as well as her ex, Cairo. Telling herself she'll put up with anything to not miss a gig, they continue on. One wrong turn later, and all of them are marooned in a disgusting swampland where their only haven is an eerie old house. As they uncover the secrets of previous visitors, this motley group wonders if they will ever escape. Ellis, known for her compelling stories integrating the mysterious and supernatural with diverse youthful casts, is masterful at building suspense. The tension remains strong throughout the novel. This page-turner has all the ingredients of a hit horror film. VERDICT This amazingly cool and super scary book is recommended for teen readers.-Adam Fisher © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Horror	Middle	1
The Doll House	Gillespie, D.W.	0-593-81492-4	When a boy moves into his late grandfather's mansion, he discovers eerie spell books, creepy dolls, and strange noises. But one doll feels especially off—maybe it's nothing, or maybe it's...watching. This creepy middle grade read is perfect for fans of the Goosebumps series.	The dolls and puppets in this read will send shivers down spines. Garrett Weathers, a lanky, blond 13-year-old, is floored when a random lawyer shows up on his doorstep. His estranged grandfather has just died, leaving him and his mother a grand and unbelievable fortune. The catch? Garrett and his mother must spend a week in his grandfather's estate, Inkwell Point, before they can pocket the money. Seems simple enough, until they take residence in the manor known locally as the Doll House. Garrett is now taxed with finishing his grandfather's story, but as he grows closer to his grandfather through the mystery of Inkwell Point, readers will begin to question if it might be a mystery best left cold. This novel toes a delicate line between fantastical and realistic horror. Each chapter's end grips readers as they desperately try to put the puzzle pieces of the Doll House together alongside Garrett. Generational and familial trauma is the backbone of this spooky story, and Gillespie handles the topic with grace and realism. The pace is gripping, the dolls horrifying, and the ending tender and true. The descriptions of the dolls will stay with readers who may find themselves asking why Garrett ever entered the house in the first place. VERDICT A gripping, thrilling, and bone-chilling read; perfect for fans of "Goosebumps" and other middle grade horror stories.-Ashton Conley © Copyright 2026. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Horror	Middle	1
Enigma Girls: How Ten Teenagers Broke Ciphers, Kept Secrets, and Helped Win World War II	Fleming, Candace	1-338-74957-9	A Robert F. Sibert Honor Book. With numerous starred reviews and accolades, from award-winning author Candace Fleming, comes the powerful and fascinating story of the brave and dedicated young women who helped turn the tides of World War II for the Allies, with their hard work and determination at Bletchley Park.	In this WWII narrative that ranges from 1939 to 1945, Fleming (Crash from Outer Space) chronicles the experiences of 10 young women who, with "record players and teddy bears in tow," took up top secret work at Bletchley Park. Urgent prose sets the scene, detailing a period of barrage balloons, blackouts, and ration cards as government agencies-such as the "hush-hush" Government Code and Cipher School that inhabited Bletchley Park-move to countryside haunts in hopes of wartime safety. Quick-paced, thoroughly researched chapters subsequently intersperse a survey of WWII movements with specifics about Bletchley Park's operations and individuals' assigned tasks, including listening for encrypted Morse code messages, breaking ciphers, translating and indexing information, and working revolutionary machines such as the Bombes and the Colossus. In following the 10 teens' often painstaking experiences, Fleming delivers a fascinating and cohesive overview of Bletchley Park's necessarily siloed, collaborative inner workings that reveals how the figures' ardent efforts affected the outcome of WWII. Engaging interstitials tackle the nuts and bolts of ciphers, clues, codes, and cribs, and b&w photograph reproductions help anchor era-specific information. An author's note, extensive bibliography, and source notes conclude. Agent: Ethan Ellenberg, Ethan Ellenberg Literary. (Mar.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.	Biography	Middle	1
The Extraordinary History of Witches	Pham, Camelia	0-593-96551-5	This book delves into a variety of topics, such as the ways women have been unfairly treated throughout history, offering a fresh approach to the topic. Subjects such as witch hunts and trials are covered sensitively and appropriately for the age group. With magic, mystery, and a whole lot of history at your fingertips, this book will leave children totally charmed.	"The Extraordinary History of Witches is a book filled with magickal inspiration and information. It houses wonderful illustrations which capture the imagination and showcase the short articles beautifully--highly recommended for all ages as a collection piece for the bookshelf." - Amber Raven, author of The Weybourne Witches.	Horror	Middle	1

Fashionopolis (Young Readers Edition): The Secrets Behind the Clothes We Wear	Thomas, Dana	0-593-32501-X	Did you ever think about where your jeans come from? How about the people who made your T-shirt, or what happens to the clothes you grow out of when you're done wearing them? The fabrics clothes are made of, the way they are designed and sewn and shipped around the world, and the way we consume them and get rid of them--every step in this process has a big impact on our environment, on the people who work in clothing factories, and on our cultures. This nonfiction book shows us how the clothes we wear--and throw away--every day are made, and what that means for our planet and for people around the world.	Paris-based journalist Thomas adapts her 2019 erudite exposé for younger audiences, and also (again) narrates. For a writer careful enough to include phonetic guidelines-"Maria Cornejo (pronounced "Cor-nay-ho")," for example-her inconsistencies surprise: Ikeda is not "ai-kee-dah"; "Iris (pronounced "EEE-reece")" is followed by Iris, like the flower. Missteps aside, her delivery carefully balances between objective and impassioned. Her content, however, might provoke polarizing reactions. Within the three-part fashion pyramid-haute couture (for women)/bespoke (for men), ready-to-wear, fast-fashion-her readers here are majority fast-fashion consumers (Zara, H&M, Gap). Fast-fashion, she irrefutably proves, sabotages the planet while rapaciously abusing desperate workers. And yet most sustainable options-which get detailed origin stories-are impossible for her target audience: $400 sweatpants; $1500 sweaters; $2,000 jeans, waitlist notwithstanding! Additional sustainability suggestions feel glossed over: trade, buy used, rent. And never wash your jeans? VERDICT Enraging? Perhaps. Ironically, the enlightenment feels worth every minute. © Copyright 2022. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Fatal Forecast: An Incredible True Story of Courage in a Savage Storm	Tougias, Michael J.	0-316-55631-9	As harrowing as The Perfect Storm --but with a miraculous ending-- Fatal Forecast is one of the greatest survival stories ever told. Read all the books in the True Survival Stories series! On the morning of November 21, 1980, two small boats set out from Cape Cod for Georges Bank, a prosperous fishing ground one hundred miles out to sea. The National Weather Service had forecast typical fall weather, and the young crew aboard the Sea Fever and the Fair Wind had no reason to expect that this trip would be any different from the dozens they'd made earlier in the season. What they didn't know was that the only weather buoy in the area was malfunctioning as the National Weather Service had failed to reveal this critical data. As the two boats headed out, a colossal storm was brewing, a furious maelstrom that would batter the boats with sixty-foot waves and hurricane-force winds. This true story of catastrophe and survival at sea is a vivid moment-by-moment account of seventy-two hours in the lives of eight men. Most amazing is the story of Ernie Hazard, who spent more than fifty terrifying hours in--and out of--a tiny life raft, careening in the monstrous waves. Gripping and heart-pounding, this page-turning young readers edition is an unforgettable story about the collision of two spectacular forces: the brutality of nature and the human will to survive. An adaptation for young readers of Fatal Forecast: An Incredible True Tale of Disaster and Survival at Sea . "Plunges into the action with pulse-pounding panache ... Readers will be rooting for all these courageous men in this thrilling, edge-of-your-seat survival tale." -- Booklist , starred review	Three small lobster boats unknowingly head into a massive storm in Georges Bank, off Cape Cod, in this nautical survival story that is a young readers' adaptation of Tougias' 2007 adult work of the same name. Thanks to governmental delay in replacing a defective weather-forecasting buoy, the crews of the Fair Wind, Sea Fever, and Sea Star set out in November 1980, unaware that they were heading straight into 87-knot winds and waves as tall as 10-story buildings. Highlighted by the nearly 50-hour ordeal of Ernie Hazard, the sole survivor of the Fair Wind, on a leaky, wave-tossed life raft, the ensuing events were certainly harrowing. But despite the removal of some (but not enough) repetitive and extraneous detail from the original edition, Tougias' narrative remains a slog, alternating prolonged, similar-sounding passages featuring tough men struggling to endure pounding seas with flights of overwritten melodrama and insufficient efforts to individualize the people involved. Aside from a paragraph explaining the specially designed Givens raft, the author likewise neglects to provide specific descriptions of either the working boats or the vessels involved in the eventual rescue, details that would have helped readers better visualize events. While the material is promising, the presentation unfortunately fails to make the conditions seem real or the participants come alive for audiences. Tragic but at once both sketchy and too long. (list of characters and vessels, appendix, author's note) (Nonfiction. 10-14)	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Fighter in the Woods: The True Story of a Jewish Girl Who Joined the Partisans in World War II	Greene, Joshua M.	1-546-13585-5	A complement to Greene's previous Holocaust narrative, The Girl Who Fought Back (2024), and based on recordings of Holocaust testimonies, this true story describes how Celia Cimmer, a Polish Jewish teenager during WWII, joined partisans to sabotage Nazi forces. Despite the title, Celia's tale intentionally pays scant homage to her time as a partisan fighter. Instead, combining real events and fictionalized dialogue, the author concentrates on the teen's path to resistance after being awoken in 1941 by German bombings. The harrowing path includes being tortured by Nazi soldiers, escaping a Jewish ghetto as family members are killed around her, and hiding on a farm in a small hole covered by straw and manure and exposed to the cold, damp, and rats. Once Celia makes her way to a partisan group, Greene gives brief accounts of the partisans' plots rather than glamorizing their achievements and survival. This notable story of courage concludes with a look at Celia's life in America after the war, an author's note, and archival photographs.	A gripping and graphic biography of a young Holocaust survivor based on interviews with the subject. This is the true story of Celia Cimmer, a young Jewish teen living in Poland at the start of World War II, who showed incredible bravery and determination in the face of unimaginable brutality and loss. Cimmer was away at school when the war started, and after bombs fell on her school she made her way home only to find that former friends and neighbors have turned against her, the family home has been taken over by the Nazis, and the area has been turned into a Jewish ghetto. Cimmer and her siblings had to choose either to work for the Nazis or join the resistance. Most of Cimmer's family were murdered trying to escape from the ghetto, but Cimmer and her sister survived and made their way to join their two older brothers in the Partisan resistance fighters in the woods. After the war, Cimmer married and emigrated to the U.S., where she eventually agreed to tell her story. A series of nine explanatory text blocks on subjects including antisemitism, the Holocaust, various types of camps, and resistance appear throughout the book, providing critical historical background without disrupting the narrative. Back matter includes an extensive author's note, historical photographs, and previews of other Focus books on the same topic. VERDICT An important addition to any collection, perfect for fans of Tarshis's "I Survived" series who are ready to move on to more complex books.-Sue Morgan © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Biography	Middle	1
Follow the Water: The Unbelievable True Story of a Teenager's Survival in the Amazon	Cochrane, Ellen	1-523-52863-X	This incredible true story details how 17-year-old Peruvian German Juliane Koepcke was the sole survivor of a plane crash in the Amazon rainforest on December 24, 1971, and her 11-day solitary struggle to survive in the unforgiving jungle before she found help. Debut author Cochrane includes sidebars that explain the science and pure luck that enabled Koepcke to survive the two-mile fall from the plane, losing a shoe and her glasses along the way. The book has information about the insects, reptiles, animals, flora, fauna, and Indigenous people living in the jungle. The latter part of the book recounts her life after the crash taining a PhD in zoology, writing her autobiography, being the subject of a Werner Herzog film, and battling the Peruvian government to keep control of the biological research station her scientist parents established. Illustrations by Church begin each chapter (art not seen at time of review), and end matter includes definitions, tips for becoming a field scientist, examples of noted scientists, further reading and viewing, and a bibliography. This is a riveting memoir and survival story of a remarkable teenager.	The account of a plane crash survivor and her journey through the rainforest to safety. Turbulence rocked the plane; luggage fell from compartments. Seventeen-year-old Juliane Koepcke drifted in and out of consciousness as the plane hurtled through the air; her fall was broken by the rainforest canopy. Thus began the teenager's harrowing struggle. In 1971, the plane on which she and her mother, Maria, were traveling was struck by lightning while crossing the Andes Mountains. Utterly alone (she would later learn that Maria likely made it through the crash but died waiting for help) and wounded but mobile, she set out in search of help rather than await rescue. Cochrane chronicles Juliane's 11-day trek, spotlighting the wilderness skills that the teen had developed growing up on the rainforest research station run by her parents, zoologists who had relocated from Germany to Peru before her birth. Moving through the Amazon, Juliane ate nothing but a scavenged stash of hard candy, weighed the risks of drinking river water, sterilized maggot-infested injuries with gasoline, and followed small streams toward a larger river in search of human contact. Fascinating sidebars provide finer focus on rainforest animals, the dangers that Juliane faced, and Peruvian culture. Concluding chapters explore the trauma Juliane confronted and her own career as a zoologist specializing in bats; tips for aspiring scientists are appended. Journalistically direct, occasionally graphically grisly, always compelling, this tale is more riveting than any work of fiction. Final art not seen. Gripping and unforgettable. (rainforest guide, further reading, bibliography) (Nonfiction. 10-14)	Biography	Middle	1
The Forgotten War: A World War II Battle on American Soil	Fleming, Candace	979-8-225-00436-1	Starred Review Fleming's powerful, personal story reveals her father's experiences as a medical litter-bearer during WWII. Charlie Groth was sent to to Alaska's Aleutian Islands pecifically Attu and Kiska area the U.S. government kept under wraps, because they were embarrassed that the Japanese had invaded American soil there undetected. The Battle of Attu was the second costliest in the Pacific Theater after Iwo Jima. Along with her father's story, the work contains diary entries from Paul Nobuo Tatsuguchi, a Japanese surgeon stationed at Attu, as well as descriptions of what happened to the Indigenous Saskinax population captured by the Japanese. Fleming's stirring writing immerses readers in the soldiers' struggle with hostile weather conditions, illness, inadequate clothing, inaccurate maps, and friendly fire. The emotional toll the men experienced is evidenced by Groth stating, "These are stories a father doesn't tell his daughters." When Fleming isn't sure of the facts, she poses guiding questions, such as, "Can experiences like this leave wounds?" Readers will appreciate Fleming's tips on how they can uncover their own loved ones' stories. Conveyed through firsthand accounts, primary sources, personal and official photographs, maps, illustrations, and remembrances from Fleming's sisters, this thoroughly researched, compelling story of Groth and others who fought on Attu Island deserves to be widely known.	Fleming's powerful, personal story reveals her father's experiences as a medical litter-bearer during WWII. Charlie Groth was sent to to Alaska's Aleutian Islands— specifically Attu and Kiska—an area the U.S. government kept under wraps, because they were embarrassed that the Japanese had invaded American soil there undetected. The Battle of Attu was the second costliest in the Pacific Theater after Iwo Jima. Along with her father's story, the work contains diary entries from Paul Nobuo Tatsuguchi, a Japanese surgeon stationed at Attu, as well as descriptions of what happened to the Indigenous Saskinax population captured by the Japanese. Fleming's stirring writing immerses readers in the soldiers' struggle with hostile weather conditions, illness, inadequate clothing, inaccurate maps, and friendly fire. The emotional toll the men experienced is evidenced by Groth stating, "These are stories a father doesn't tell his daughters." When Fleming isn't sure of the facts, she poses guiding questions, such as, "Can experiences like this leave wounds?" Readers will appreciate Fleming's tips on how they can uncover their own loved ones' stories. Conveyed through firsthand accounts, primary sources, personal and official photographs, maps, illustrations, and remembrances from Fleming's sisters, this thoroughly researched, compelling story of Groth and others who fought on Attu Island deserves to be widely known.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1

The Formula 1 Encyclopedia	Lamichhane, Priyanka	1-09-829441-6	Formula 1 cars are streamlined machines. Every detail is tracked to ensure each car fits the perfect formula of speed and safety. This encyclopedia provides a look into the history of Formula 1, from the first Grand Prix to the drivers who tackle complex courses around the globe today and the races they run in. Features include a glossary, additional resources, and an index. Aligned to Common Core Standards and correlated to state standards. Encyclopedias is an imprint of Abdo Reference, a division of ABDO.	"Formula 1 cars are streamlined machines. Every detail is tracked to ensure each car fits the perfect formula of speed and safety. This encyclopedia provides a look into the history of Formula 1, from the first Grand Prix to the drivers who tackle complex courses around the globe today and the races they run in"--Publisher.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
The Formula: How Rogues, Geniuses, and Speed Freaks Reengineered F1 into the World's Fastest-Growing Sport	Robinson, Joshua	0-06-331862-8	In The Formula, Wall Street Journal reporters Joshua Robinson and Jonathan Clegg tell the riveting motor racing saga of how Formula 1 broke through in America. Taking you inside the paddock, The Formula details the eclectic culture of racing obsessives, glamorous settings, gearheads, engineering geniuses, dashing racers, and bitter rivalries that have made F1 the world's fastest-growing sport.	The engineers employed as crew on Formula One teams are driven by the need for a decisive edge. In 2022, Mercedes thought they'd found that edge with their W13 model, which would restore them to F1 glory. But the car's unveiling in Bahrain was desultory, revealing a design flaw—the W13 was slower than anticipated. Since the racing organization's founding in 1950, F1 championships have been determined by driver skill, along with vehicle innovation. The sport itself has evolved as the need for speed was balanced with safety precautions. Meanwhile, executives like Bernie Ecclestone, former CEO of the Formula One Group, increased the sport's popularity and branding through various television deals. Today, F1 has grown from a strictly European-followed sport into a global phenomenon. In this exceptional account of an intense sport, Robinson and Clegg (The Club, 2019) paint larger-than-life personalities behind the wheel (like Michael Schumacher) as well as those behind the corporate backers (Enzo Ferrari). The authors go beyond the adrenaline-drenched action of the racetracks in portraying the progression of Formula One.	Sports	Middle	1
Girls with Goals: How Women's Soccer Took over the World	Castro-Malaspina, Clelia	1-8360-0189-4	An account of the long road to attaining equality for women's soccer and the pitfalls met along the way, including the sport's hardscrabble origins and its prominence as the most popular women's sport in the world. The author, a soccer fan and former player, opens by describing her deep love for "the world's beautiful game." Although she focuses on English and American teams, textboxes labeled "Global Game" spotlight women's soccer worldwide, and significant events from other countries are woven into the general history. The text introduces readers to notable players and figures in the history of women's soccer, emphasizing the sport's broad geographic reach and including women who represent a range of ethnicities, nationalities, and sexualities. Each chapter relates a particular hurdle along the path to seeing women players' efforts and achievements recognized and legitimized. Unabashedly feminist in tone, the book is well-researched, and Castro-Malaspina relates her findings with enthusiasm. Readers will be drawn into the energy of the struggle: The broad-strokes history is combined with a vivid narrative that evokes what it might have been like to be present at pivotal moments. Following those generations of women as they lose and gain ground in the fight to play feels almost like watching an actual match, ending on a sweet note of victory. Ample photos and spot art enhance the text. A spirited, well-told success story, all the better for being true.	Whether you are just starting out in your football journey or you are an experienced player who already loves the sport, you'll come to understand women's football in a completely new way through intriguing tales and anecdotes, and meeting important characters in the sport from past and present – including from the perspective of marginalized sportspeople.	Sports	Middle	1
Great Escapes: Inspiring Real Life Adventures...	Long, David	0-571-38294-0	A brisk, globe-trotting collection recounting over 150 years of daring real-life escapes. British historian Long delivers high-stakes adventure steeped in historical insight. From downed pilots to enslaved people in 19th-century America and humanitarian workers fleeing conflict zones—as well as some whose "lives were hardly heroic" yet showed "extraordinary cunning and imagination"—the subjects make their bids for freedom. Some stories, like that of Indian aviators lost in Pakistan following the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 or a Japanese man who repeatedly escaped after being imprisoned for robbery and murder in the 1930s, read like fast-paced thrillers. Others highlight inventive wartime tools—maps hidden in playing cards, compasses concealed in false teeth—designed to help prisoners of war escape. Of the 32 chapters, about a third center on women and/or people of color. Many of the subjects—Harriet Tubman and Winston Churchill excepted—may be new to readers. Long's prose is lively, and the swift pacing within each five-to-six-page vignette offers accessible entry into history. Some of his subjects endured horrific treatment, such as Yazidi human trafficking survivor, activist, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Nadia Murad, although Long's middle grade–friendly language hints at atrocities without being excessively graphic. Unfortunately, the book doesn't contain sources. Coe's stylized, full-page color portraits open each chapter, breaking up the text and visually enhancing the book's momentum. An energetic read, rich in details and suited for readers drawn to unusual tales of resilience and ingenuity. (Nonfiction. 9-12)	Gr 3-7-This collection of true stories introduces readers to everyday individuals from around the world who escaped from tight situations. Spanning from the early 19th century to the present, each chapter focuses on a different escape attempt, with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds. A portrait of the person starts off each chapter, in an art style reminiscent of graphic novels. Chapters are short and contain a lot of information but often leave out much of the context. This makes the text read more like a summary of events than a retelling, which could appeal to reluctant readers. At times, stories fail to go into detail regarding tough topics of slavery, colonialism, and Nazi Germany. While this may make the read less distressing to young readers, it could leave them with the impression that escapees' captors and circumstances weren't particularly severe. Some escapees in the book are violent criminals, and the epilogue does address this, pointing out that these individuals should not be admired. This sentiment is somewhat at odds with the introduction's claim that the book's stories are meant to inspire young readers. VERDICT Daring escapes are a popular topic; this may interest readers of the "I Survived" series. Reluctant readers will appreciate the short chapters, but those clamoring for detail may want to look elsewhere.-Laura Nan Hargrove © Copyright 2025. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
A History of Basketball in 15 Sneakers	Bengtson, Russ	1-523-51028-5	Bengtson (Nike SB: The Dunk Book, 2018), sneaker editor at Complex and former editor-in-chief of the basketball magazine SLAM, writes about the historical, symbiotic, and evolving relationship between sneakers and basketball through the lens of 15 shoes. This book uniquely explores basketball's rich past by diving into marketing practices of companies like Nike and Adidas and the sneakers they make, the athletes who wear them (such as Lisa Leslie, Michael Jordan, and the late Kobe Bryant), and the sneaker-collecting culture that they've created. Images of sneakers and sports scenes layered throughout the book create a vivid history and clear account of the intricate and crucial relationship between the two. Readers interested in modern sports history, fashion history, sports photography, and the footwear industry will be fascinated as they more fully understand the deep connection between sneakers and basketball and how both entities influence and depend on each other.	The ultimate book for both hoops fans and sneaker obsessives, A History of Basketball in Fifteen Sneakers is an exciting and fascinating look at the sport written with authority and experience by former Complex and SLAM magazine editor Russ Bengtson. From primeval Converse Chuck Taylor All Stars to baroque Reebok Pumps and myth-making Air Jordans to super-high-tech Nike Adapt BBs, each chapter breaks down how a specific sneaker defined an era of basketball, transformed the culture, or changed the game. With full-color sneaker photographs and detailed illustrations throughout, the book is a kaleidoscopic celebration of the players, styles, and iconic moments that have shaped hoops both on and off the court.	Sports	Middle	1
House of Ash and Bone	Sutherland, Joel A.	1-7748-8096-2	Gr 7–10 —A week-long vacation to the house her family inherited from an unknown great-aunt turns into a nightmarish fight for survival for Josephine, 16. As soon as the Jagger family steps into the mansion, they are enamored with its enormity and furnishings. Their love of the house becomes almost obsessive and, after only a few days, her parents are ready to move in permanently. There is no reason to leave the house. Ever. But Josephine can see what her family cannot. The house does not want them to go. She has seen glimpses of the ghost that haunts its rooms, a witch who has cursed the family and plans to keep them there for her own needs. As the witch's magic causes her family to forget nearly everything that happens, Josephine finds herself battling the witch alone knowing failure could mean a fate worse than death for everyone she loves. Sutherland lets readers know from the start that something is wrong with the house and its inhabitants. A feeling of being unmoored permeates the book as Josephine tries to understand what is real and what is delusion. Readers learn a little about her family, but Josephine and Dorcas, the witch, are the only characters with backstories. A brief interlude with a local girl has Josephine questioning her sexuality, but it feels like an afterthought. Some gruesome scenes are scattered throughout the book. The Jaggers are white. VERDICT A creepy and unsettling ghost story. Recommended.—Cathy DeCampli	Something wicked this way comes in acclaimed horror writer Sutherland's YA debut. When 11th grader Josephine and her family head off on a winter vacation to their newly inherited mansion in Vermont, they are each dreaming of a place to relax and recharge for a week. Josephine is especially eager to escape the burgeoning powers that allow her to hear and enter other people's thoughts but leave her with debilitating headaches. As they settle in, the house seems perfectly tailored to their family of seven. The family's dreams, however, soon turn into nightmares, as Josephine begins seeing apparitions, while her parents and siblings start suffering from short-term memory loss. As events grow stranger and more dangerous, Josephine starts to suspect that there is an evil lurking behind their closed doors. When a ghost named Dorcas appears to her, Josephine is unable to determine whether this specter is friend or foe. But when she finds out the truth about the house's history and Dorcas' past, Josephine realizes that her family's lives are in grave danger, and she's the only person who may be able to save them. Major characters are coded white; after experiencing attraction to a local girl, Josephine questions her inkling that she might be asexual. Grimm's fairy-tale references are sprinkled throughout, adding a macabre veil to an equally creepy story. This moody, atmospheric novel ramps up to a spine-tingling surprise twist after a slow-burn first half. A thoroughly enjoyable, suspenseful supernatural tale. (author's note) (Supernatural. 12-18)	Horror	Middle	1

The House of Quiet	White, Kiersten	0-593-80657-3	From 08/29/2025 Copyright 2025 © Library Journals 1 LLC. Used with Permission. Not for republication in any manner. Gr 8 Up —After her younger sister, Magpie, receives the mysterious procedure that is meant to grant her powers and lift her family out of poverty, she goes missing. Birdie uses her station and training as a maid to infiltrate her sister's last-known location, the House of Quiet. There, she finds a handful of rich teens who somehow have powers despite never receiving the procedure. Not willing to give up on her sister, Birdie begins investigating the house and its residents and starts to realize that none of them are what they seem; there is something deeper and darker than she ever imagined occurring in the house. This refreshing, dark, Gothic fantasy is deliberately slow-paced, vague, and disorienting, leaving readers on edge and turning the pages. While Birdie is the main character, the story is told from the perspective of other teen residents in the house. This can be frustrating at first, until readers start to pay attention to the tone and actions of these characters—they become easy to distinguish, based on their powers and individual quirks. The book is odd, cryptic, and claustrophobic at times, and that is what makes it enticing. It touches on themes of class, war, medical horrors, found family, and trauma in a way that young readers will grasp. While there are two romance subplots, one LGBTQIA+, they are light despite the heaviness of the world, feel natural amongst the teens, and don't detract from the central mystery. The conclusion is a bit lackluster, but it does leave the door cracked open to expand the world. VERDICT A good addition to collections where White's other works are popular or where patrons are into Wednesday , X-Men , New Mutants , and other dark, quirky fantasy.—Kara Jonson	Seventeen-year-old Birdie blackmails a former employer to get a job as a maid at the House of Quiet in hopes of finding her missing younger sister, Magpie, whom Birdie believes may be captive there. The House of Quiet, an ominous mansion in the middle of a peat bog, is a treatment facility for those who've undergone an expensive and dangerous procedure that can awaken supernatural abilities such as future-sight and telepathy. Nothing about the House is as Birdie expects. Instead of being filled with the procedure's usual demographic—under-resourced youth "who'd waited years for an opportunity" to undergo the process—the House's residents seem to be strange aristocratic youth with powerful gifts, all being treated behind locked doors by a mysterious woman known as the House Wife. As Birdie searches for her sister, she becomes embroiled in a conspiracy that forces her to reevaluate her priorities and her knowledge of her country. White (the Camelot Rising trilogy) capably weaves alternating, dreamlike third-person perspectives and tantalizing hints of terrible secrets into an atmosphere of creeping dread. This gothic tale boasts hidden motivations, government propaganda, and forbidden	Horror	Middle	1
I'm That Girl: Living the Power of My Dreams	Chiles, Jordan	0-06-344340-6	The sensational two-time Olympian Jordan Chiles's heartfelt, inspiring memoir chronicling her unlikely path to the podium—including the unprecedented challenges, the joy of winning, the crushing pain of defeat, and the love and support of her devoted family and teammates that helps her stay strong.	"A memoir from the two-time Olympian gymnast chronicles her journey to the awards podium while overcoming racism, childhood trauma and devastating setbacks, highlighting the importance of family support and the resilience of the human spirit"--OCLC.	Sports	Middle	1
Innovative Octopuses, Half-Brained Birds, and More Animals with Magnificent Minds	Couch, Christina	1-536-22972-5	Starred Review At first glance, this offering might seem to be a simple overview of the comparative cognitive abilities of various animals. In reality, this is an inviting and accessible introduction to neuroscience and brain function. There are six chapters, each dedicated to one type of critter. Interviews with researchers and animal handlers, as well as profiles of individual animals, effectively demonstrate various aspects of intelligence, incorporating multiple examples and kid-friendly facts (herrings communicate through farts). For instance, octopuses provide good examples of how neurons, dendrites, and transmitters work together, while parrots effectively model how different parts of the brain (the hippocampus, amygdala, and thalamus) evoke different responses to stimuli. Other examples include squirrels (amazing memory), birds (sleep patterns), whales (communication), and tortoises (longevity). Ample additional wildlife observations provide measured analysis on topics such as astrobiology, PTSD, sense and perceptions, DNA research, gene therapy, and right- and left-brained animals and humans (scientists who moonlight as DJs or high-flying circus performers). Pages are filled with full-color photos and illustrations, with multiple highlighted information bubbles and sidebars. Each chapter ends with engaging activities, and the back matter is noticeably rich, supporting additional inquiry. This is an especially appealing addition to STEM collections.	Insights into how our brains resemble, and are different from, those of other animals. With this lively overview of the animal kingdom's "most extraordinary organ," Couch delivers lucid descriptions of how humans and other creatures perceive the world, interact with their bodies, sleep, learn, remember, and communicate. Punctuating her narrative with comments from a large and racially diverse group of brain scientists and other workers, she visits research sites ranging from an outdoor squirrel lab to a trauma center where people with PTSD form mutually beneficial relationships with abused birds. She explores natural mysteries, such as an apparently immortal jellyfish and another species that sleeps even though it has no brain. The author expands her focus with profiles of a DNA researcher studying the remains of victims of the slave trade on St. Helena and an entomologist whose passion for roller derby has helped her become a better scientist, among others. As if all this isn't stimulating enough, Couch also provides instructions for keeping a dream journal, testing short-term memory, and tackling other brain-related projects for hands-on readers before closing with a substantial bibliography, source notes, and further reading. Duncan includes anatomical cutaways, charts, and cartoon spot art featuring a diverse cast of young enquirers into the already generous mix of animal photos and portraits. Widely angled and unfailingly intriguing.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Killer Harvest	Krovatin, Christopher	1-339-02181-1	Marcus, Kris, and Angie, the "problem" kids at school, together with their families are in Gentle Valley for the harvest festival--but there is no real harvest here, just a sick corn maze with an old evil lurking at the center.	It's harvest season... and in this town, that means corn mazes, sinister scarecrows, and plenty of horror. At the center of the corn maze lies... secrets and horror.	Horror	Middle	1
The Library of Lost Girls	Pipps, Kristen	0-593-90047-2	A traumatic incident four years ago left Gwen with a scar on her face, spurring their parents to send her wild-but-beloved older sister, Izzy, off to a finishing school known as the Delphi School for Girls. But the version of Izzy, who now goes by Isolde, that returns from Delphi is a very different and eerily hollow version of her former self. Extremely unsettled by her sister's sudden desire to marry and frustrated with Isolde refusing to answer any of her questions, Gwen realizes that she has only one way to find out what has happened to her sister t herself sent off to Delphi. Once "she arrives, secrets begin to spill out of the remote, frigid school packed to the brim with strange books, though the mechanism of its dark influence over its students and especially its alumni is dangerously guarded. Trust becomes hard to come by for Gwen, and alliances are found in unlikely places in this surprising and well- crafted tale with a sapphic romantic twist. A highly entertaining historical take on power, agency, and responsibility.	A secluded island finishing school off Canada's coast harbors sinister secrets in Pipps's bone-chilling 1893-set debut. Sixteen-year-old Gwendolyn Donovan is devastated when her formerly feisty older sister, Izzy, returns home to Manhattan a vapid socialite with inexplicable memory gaps following a four-year stint at the Delphi School for Girls. When Izzy eagerly and uncharacteristically weds a virtual stranger shortly after her homecoming, Gwen engineers her own conscription to Delphi, desperate to learn what's been done to Izzy and how to reverse it. At Delphi, Gwen discovers that students are confined year-round to a largely windowless manor, where bookshelves hold off-limits volumes that "symbolize the history of the girls who came before." Disobedient pupils get sent to the Writing Room for a grueling punishment they promptly forget but that supposedly "pull the evil from veins." It's clear that something predatory hides in the shadows, and, upon making friends (and developing a crush), Gwen redoubles her efforts to uncover Delphi's dark truth. But dangerous forces are determined to stop her. Gwen's indomitable spirit and candid first-person-present narration enrich this feminist gothic horror, underscoring stakes, heightening suspense, and injecting heart. Though some members of the intersectionally diverse cast lack depth, the twisty plot and creepy trappings command readers' attention. Ages 12–up. Agent: Caitlin White, Emerald City Literary. (Oct.)	Horror	Middle	1
The Long Game: U. S. Men's Soccer and Its Savage, Four-Decade Journey to the Top, or Thereabouts	Schaerlaeckens, Leander	0-593-65387-4	World Cup contenders at last? Its subtitle notwithstanding, Schaerlaeckens' well-researched book opens with enlightening chapters about soccer's popularity in America a century ago. More than 45,000 fans filled a New York stadium for a 1925 game. But "administrative bickering" hampered the sport's development. The Great Depression "killed it off." The U.S. Men's National Soccer Team's long run of failing to qualify for the World Cup ended in 1990. The nation has since developed numerous elite players, but has never come close to winning a World Cup. Why not? The seasoned soccer writer offers several persuasive answers. High-profile coaches have made woeful tactical moves. The American system long prized size and speed over "clever and gifted players who could run all day." Also, there's still a relative lack of "high-level youth academies" in the U.S. Although Dallas-Fort Worth is more populous than Madrid, the Spanish capital "has twelve times as many spots for elite youth players." Schaerlaeckens smartly blends accounts of key tournaments with locker-room color. He notes that a love triangle involving two 1990s American stars didn't exactly help team chemistry; nor did superstar coach Jürgen Klinsmann's unaccountable decision to cut high-scoring Landon Donovan in 2014. Six of Schaerlaeckens' chapters are profiles of contemporary U.S. players. These read like competent magazine articles that don't always mesh with the book's broader scope. One precocious player, his mother still in her 20s, leaves home to train full-time with pro instructors. Another, signed by an Italian team, douses Continental cuisine with ranch dressing. Given that most of these chapters go deep on moderately accomplished players who may soon be forgotten by many fans, they're apt to be less durable than the rest of this solid book. An authoritative, strenuously timely history of America's efforts to compete with traditional soccer powerhouses.	"The ascent of the American men is something akin to a sporting miracle," writes sports journalist Schaerlaeckens in this thorough debut history of the U.S. men's national soccer team. The team formed in 1916 and finished third at the inaugural FIFA World Cup in Uruguay in 1930 (its best result to date). American soccer struggled over the next several decades, however. As Schaerlaeckens explains, the sport had a "foreignness" that pushed people away, while attempts to create a sustainable professional league were thwarted by low attendance and financial troubles. The country hosted the 1994 World Cup, which helped elevate the sport and made celebrities out of players like Alexi Lalas and Cobi Jones. The U.S. Soccer Federation later began investing in youth development with a soccer academy in Bradenton, Fla., which produced some of the program's current stars, including Tyler Adams and Christian Pulisic, who led the team out of the group stage at the 2022 World Cup. The team is entering the 2026 World Cup as an "ascendant program, hoping to summit sometime soon," Schaerlaeckens writes. He vividly chronicles the tumultuous journey of American men's soccer by placing the team's recent rise in the context of decades of institutional disorganization and on-field struggles. Fans will find this a boon. (May)	Sports	Middle	1

Messi Mania: The Ultimate Story of the World's Greatest Soccer Star	Echegaray, Luis Miguel	1-8360-0120-7	A fulsome tribute to the soccer superstar, with select career highlights. In rapid montage style, sports presenter and writer Echegaray slips back and forth in time to trumpet Messi's 2023 arrival in the U.S. and retrace his long, storied career from a first match at age five in his home city of Rosario, Argentina, until October, 2024, when he was playing for Inter Miami. The author slips in frequent asides on topics including Messi's style of play, his charity work, appreciative comments from other soccer stars, and what it was like as a fan and journalist to interview him. The hero worship comes out as much in panegyrics on Messi's character as in tallies of his on-pitch accomplishments. Along with repeatedly linking his subject to terms like humble and introvert, Echegaray holds him up as a role model: a hardworking immigrant who overcame a growth hormone deficiency in childhood and has made good with help from coaches and his devoted family. And lest any reader fail to draw proper lessons from his example, the author makes them explicit: "When you fail, that's when you're at your strongest because you have the chance to get up and try again. And that's the true meaning of character." Frequent on-field photos and flurries of specific match notes supply light doses of game action. Tasty fare for readers inclined to hail the coming of soccer's "Messi-ah."		Biography	Middle	1
The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, a Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity	Day, Nicholas	0-593-90421-4	The story of how the Mona Lisa was painted and, centuries later, how it was stolen, recovered, and in the process became the most famous portrait in the world. Day tells his tale with considerable verve, delivering in alternating sections accounts of the life of Leonardo da Vinci ("an extraordinary, ingenious, wondrously weird man," with "a mind on fire") and of the 1911 theft of a then-respected but not particularly popular painting from the musty, dusty Louvre. He traces the way it mushroomed into a huge public sensation—complete with conspiracy theories, ineffectual police work, and suspects ranging from plutocrat J.P. Morgan to young artistic firebrand Pablo Picasso. Helquist's art adds tongue-in-cheek notes with a bountiful array of scenes depicting expressive, lightly caricatured figures, from the thief (who turned out to be not a slick professional but, at least supposedly, an impulsive Italian patriot) to detectives, officials, and suspects, generally sporting early-20th-century dress and comically diverse mustaches. The painting was recovered in 1913, but the sensation over it has yet to die down, which the author pointedly explains as partly the influence of the press in whipping up controversy, partly the enduring power of conspiracy theories ("People will choose the better story every time"), and partly the painting's own compellingly enigmatic features. Readers will love the brouhaha and will be tempted to take closer looks at the art too. A multistranded yarn skillfully laid out in broad, light brush strokes with some cogent themes mixed in.	The book opens in 1503 in Florence, where Leonardo da Vinci begins painting the portrait known as the Mona Lisa. A second story takes place in 1911 in Paris, where a thief hides out in the Louvre overnight, removes the portrait from its glass case, and walks away with it the next morning. Initially, no one realizes that the painting has been stolen, but afterward, the theft becomes front-page news internationally. Suddenly, the painting becomes a cultural icon, familiar mainly through reprinted photographs in newspapers. Alternating between Leonardo's lifetime and the years between the theft and the return of the Mona Lisa, the story lines take unexpected twists and turns, from the personal and societal forces driving Leonardo down unconventional paths to the testimony in a Paris courtroom by a young, clearly terrified artist named Picasso. The narratives in both time periods are enhanced by Day's clear explanations of events and their contexts, his appreciation for irony, and his skillful storytelling, which is continuously compelling and often brightened by understated humor. Best known for illustrating Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events books, Helquist contributes occasional black-and-white illustrations that capture the look of each time period while reflecting the droll tone of the writing. A completely engaging book.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
The Monarch Effect: Surviving Poison, Predators, and People	Church, Dana L.	1-338-74922-6	The plight of the monarch butterfly comes into focus through a variety of perspectives in Church's study of this insect. She begins with larvae munching on milkweed to absorb its toxic properties, which will eventually manifest in the monarch's signature black-and-orange wings ngs that have inspired cultures, scientists, and citizens to care for these charismatic creatures in different ways. The monarchs in question are the western hemisphere's migrating varieties, whose numbers have dramatically fallen in recent years. While pursuing the questions of how, why, and what can be done to help, Church introduces pioneers in monarch research, such as Dr. Lincoln Brower (a champion of conservation) and Dr. Fred and Norah Urquhart (vanguards of migration studies), in addition to important contributions from citizen scientists (e.g., Catalina Trail) and Indigenous communities in Mexico where the butterflies overwinter. In addition to fascinating scientific insights into monarch butterfly biology and behavior, Church puts forth considerable food for thought on best practices for protecting this beloved animal, encouraging a holistic approach that puts Indigenous knowledge on equal footing with Western science	An overview of monarch butterfly science. Church offers an extensive account of the discovery of the phenomenon of monarch migration from the east and central U.S. and Canada to their winter home, north of Mexico City. She opens with what locals knew at the time, describing 1940s school trips (recalled by Homero Aridjis, later Mexico's UNESCO ambassador) to see "rivers of butterflies" in sanctuaries in Michoacán. She later details Aridjis' successful efforts to protect them through UNESCO World Heritage Site status. In between, the author describes monarch development and recounts the series of experiments that led to scientific understanding of their life cycle. Similarly, she describes the procedures that two different sets of scientists developed to track migrating monarchs. Church devotes a full chapter to the experience of Catalina Trail, the Mexican woman who led Canadian scientists to the actual wintering sites. She then describes efforts to protect these sites, human pressures on the sanctuaries, the rise of citizen science tracking efforts in the U.S., and the impact of changing agricultural practices. She even discusses monarch populations west of the Rocky Mountains and beyond North America. Occasional black-and-white photos supplement the text. This thoroughly researched work is not easy reading for the intended audience, but educators and determined science-minded readers will appreciate the clear presentation of the complexities of environmental protection in the modern world. An enthusiastic and information-packed narrative.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Race Against Death: The Greatest POW Rescue of World War II (Scholastic Focus)	Hopkinson, Deborah	1-338-74616-2	Starred Review That war is hell is evidenced by this dramatic account of the greatest POW rescue of WWII. First, however, Hopkinson (We Must Not Forget, 2021) provides a contextual examination of military action and the suffering that American soldiers endured in the Philippines. This is dramatized by the stories of a number of participants whom the author follows through their often-ghastly experiences of the war. Chief among these horrors is arguably the notorious Bataan Death March, which forced POWs, many of them sick and starving, to walk some 65 miles to Camp O'Donnell, one of the deadliest POW camps in history. As for the march, one of its survivors recalls that it was "a macabre litany of heat, dust, starvation, thirst, filth, flies, stench, murder, torture, [and] corpses"; any of those who could march no farther were killed. The action subsequently moves from Camp O'Donnell to Camp Cabanatuan, which is the site of the rescue. Hopkinson's brilliant account of this event is cinematic and irresistibly readable, as, indeed, is the entire book, which is beautifully written, generously illustrated with black-and-white period photographs, and enhanced by extensive back matter. The book will be invaluable for both classroom use and independent reading. And kudos to it for memorializing human courage and compassion.	This well-researched work chronicles the experiences of American prisoners of war in the Philippines during WWII, beginning just after the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor and continuing through the 1945 Cabanatuan prison camp raid. Hopkinson (We Must Not Forget) interweaves eyewitness accounts and archived testimonies, maps and b&w photographs, and a lively third-person narrative history across three sections, lending a feeling of immediacy to the work; interstitials ("Before We Head to Bataan: A Bit of Background") contextualize specific aspects of the conflict. While the title highlights the rescue, the telling surveys the U.S. retreat from the Philippines, the fall of Bataan and the Bataan Death March, and the POW prison camp rescue, incorporating experiences of American and Filipino citizens, nurses, and soldiers, among others. Never shying away from the brutal realities ("In Germany in WWII, POWs died at a rate of 1.2%.... In the Philippines, POWs died at a rate of 40%"), this work of narrative nonfiction directly relates conditions endured—including sickness, starvation, and acts of war and torture—and the risks of the subsequent rescue mission, making for an informative look at this under-reported part of WWII. An author's note offers context; an epilogue and extensive back matter conclude. Ages 9–12. Agent: Steven Malk, Writers House. (Apr.)	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Radar and the Raft: A True Story About a Scientific Marvel, the Lives It Saved, and the World It Changed	Lantos, Jeff	1-623-54345-2	Interwoven storylines link a triumphant technological advance with a harrowing tale of survival at sea. In a real pleaser for readers with an expansive range of interests, Lantos twines a meaty account of the invention of radar with the story of how that device came into play in rescuing a raft crowded with the survivors of an American cargo ship torpedoed weeks before by a U-boat in shark-infested waters. He traces the history of radar from 18th-century Italian anatomy professor Luigi Galvani's experiments with twitching frog legs to the powerful detection device that gave the Allies a significant, perhaps even decisive, advantage in World War II. Lantos also tells some absorbing side stories along the way. He not only describes the development of electromagnetic theory in specific but largely non-mathematical terms, but also—drawing from eyewitness accounts of raft survivors who were Christian missionaries returning from Ivory Coast—vividly captures the perils faced by those deemed enemy foreigners, trapped in countries suddenly under Nazi control. Likewise notable are his follow-up passages on radar's myriad offspring from microwave ovens to GPS, as well as thrilling mentions of the still-unrecovered $50 million in Congolese gold that went down with the torpedoed cargo ship. The illustrations mix old photos and documents with Marks' watercolor views of figures in West African and nautical settings in a mishmash that somehow suits the broad range of themes and topics. The bibliography and endnotes are likewise admirable in both bulk and scope. A rare and exhilarating mix of hard science and seagoing terror.	At the onset of World War II, German U-boats (submarines) mercilessly sank the military and civilian ships of the Allies, making transatlantic travel a risky endeavor. Americans living abroad had to weigh the risks of remaining in German-occupied territories against the treacherous weeks-long voyage back home. U-boat attacks were unrelenting until late in the war when advances in microwave radar detection allowed the Allies to pinpoint their locations, rendering them virtually useless. As the title suggests, this book divides its focus between the heart-wrenching story of survivors of the torpedoed SS West Lashaway awaiting rescue on a small wooden raft in shark-infested waters and a concise and highly readable history of the science of electromagnetic fields. Beginning with discoveries in the eighteenth century, Lantos provides background on each advancement in the science as well as biographical information about the scientists involved, finally introducing the American military scientists and engineers who figured out how to use microwaves to precisely locate distant objects. He ups the tension by alternating the harrowing experience of the shipwreck survivors with development of the radar equipment that was critical to both their rescue and the Allied victory in WWII. This page-turning account, with archival images and occasional chapter-opening illustrations (by Alan Marks), provides equal parts suspense and wonder for readers of history and science alike. Appended with thorough source notes, a bibliography, and an index. Eric Carpenter November/December 2024 p.113	Non-Fiction	Middle	1

Realm of Ice and Sky: Triumph, Tragedy, and History's Greatest Arctic Rescue	Levy, Buddy	1-250-28918-1	Levy (Empire of Ice and Stone, 2022) continues his literary foray into the far north with this intriguing look into aerial exploration of the North Pole. After a brief overview of nineteenth-century "polar mania," including the famously doomed Franklin and Greely expeditions, he focuses on the period from 1900 to 1928, when hot air balloons and aircraft joined the international frenzy to reach the Pole. While readers will likely be familiar with Roald Amundsen, whose disappearance and assumed death make for a significant part of the narrative, it is the travails of lesser-known American journalist Walter Wellman and Italian balloonist Umberto Nobile that will likely spark acute reader interest and discussion (this is an excellent choice for book groups). Levy writes not only of the key events impacting these men as they competed to win the pole, he also considers their fears and excitements, their failures and disappointments, and, for Nobile in particular, the implications of a crushing loss. Levy excels at writing vivid history about the polar regions and exploration, and he's written another winner.	Award-winning Levy (Empire of Ice and Stone: The Disastrous and Heroic Voyage of the Karluk) details how polar airships replaced dogsled teams in Arctic exploration in the early decades of the 20th century. These were dangerous missions made possible through developments in engineering and technology, but expeditioners still risked losing their lives and limbs. This book focuses on the expeditions of three men-Walter Wellman, Roald Amundsen, and Umberto Nobile-who raced to reach the North Pole. Representing the U.S., Norway, and Italy, these explorers became international celebrities due to daily media coverage of their journeys. Levy shows that their successes were built on the work of supporters and competitors, such as Chester Melvin Vaniman, Robert Peary, Frederick Cook, and Frank Purdy Lahm. But Wellman, Amundsen, and Nobile also faced many physical and mental hardships during their expeditions as they watched their fame, fortunes, and reputations rise and fall repeatedly. VERDICT This highly recommended adventure narrative makes for great reading.-Catherine Lantz © Copyright 2024. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Sole Survivor	Ollestad,Norman	0-374-39261-7	Recasting, with a coauthor's help, portions of his 2009 memoir, Crazy for the Storm, Ollestad recounts with moment-to-moment intensity his descent down a steep, slickly icy California mountain in the wake of a small plane crash at age 11 that killed his dad and two others. Cutting out the original's rough language and at least most of the explicit detail, he fills in the ordeal's background with a sketchy picture of his life with his birth mom and her drunken, abusive companion, Nick. Then, to close, he recounts heading out to Topanga Beach to surf the huge waves as a way of both paying tribute to his father's "Anything's possible, Boy Wonder" teaching and to mark his recovery from the trauma. Linked by a "beating the odds to survive" theme, the three are all scary in different ways and punctuated by exhilarating bits. An intense and unconventional survival story.	In 1979, 11-year-old Norman was the only survivor of a plane crash in Southern California: This is his true story. This book for middle-grade readers, co-authored with Kiely, covers much of the same material as Ollestad's 2009 memoir for adults, Crazy for the Storm. Flying in a four-seater Cessna with his father, his father's girlfriend, Sandra, and the pilot, Norman was excited to reach Big Bear to receive his ski-racing trophy. (As a vivid example of his busy childhood, they'd driven the 300 miles there yesterday for Norman to compete—and then driven back to Topanga Canyon in the evening for his hockey game.) But the plane tragically crashed on a mountain in a blizzard. Nothing is sugarcoated; readers encounter graphic descriptions of the pilot and Norman's dad, who died, and Sandra, who suffered a gaping head wound. Eventually accepting that he had to figure things out on his own, Norman drew upon the extreme training his father had put his "Boy Wonder" through—training that had bullied Norman into facing difficult physical and mental challenges that he feared and resented. During his trek to safety, Norman performed incredible mental and physical feats and encouraged the barely functioning Sandra—until she fell to her death. Norman's conflicted feelings about the father he'd both idolized and resented are nuanced and satisfyingly resolved. Readers who enjoy nail-biting wilderness stories will be riveted. A tragic, gripping, and inspiring story.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Spells Trouble	Cast, Kristin	1-250-76563-3	Twins Hunter and Mercy Goode are descended from their town's founder, a Salem witch who escaped execution. Turning 16, the sisters are next in a long line of women responsible for protecting Goodeville's five gates that separate our world from those of Greek, Norse, Egyptian, Hindu, and Japanese mythology. Hunter and Mercy get a crash course on the importance d danger securing the gates when their birthday ritual goes awry and something is unleashed. With their mother the first victim of the escaped fiend's killing spree, the sisters must rely on the help of a few core friends and a feline familiar to track down the murderer while fighting off mythological foes. The concept is enticing, but uneven pacing, awkward characterization and dialogue, and a confusing rotation of perspectives get in the way. Fans of the authors of the popular House of Night series will surely seek out this series opener, which might also appeal to readers who have torn through other witchy YA fantasy options.	The start of a new fantasy series about witchy twins from the mother-daughter Cast authors. Hunter and Mercy Goode, twin sisters and descendants of Salem witch Sarah Goode, are turning 16 and being initiated into their full witch powers. Like all their ancestors, they are the guardians of the gates to different Underworlds—all located in Goodeville—including Egyptian, Norse, Hindu, and Japanese. Tragedy strikes when their mother dies while saving their lives when one of the gates briefly opens to unleash a monster during their dedication ceremony, the first in a string of mysterious murders, seemingly connected to the weakening of the gates, that spells global catastrophe if Hunter and Mercy can't keep them closed. The book, which features graphic sex and violence, does well when showing the sisters' relationships with one another and with their best friends, Jax and Emily, as well as when examining their internal struggles: Mercy's dynamics with an abusive boyfriend and lesbian Hunter's self-harming and trauma over childhood bullying. As a fantasy, however, it is less successful: The worldbuilding is weak, and the choice to situate the White Goode sisters as the sole, most powerful protectors of the entire mortal realm feels questionable in the context of the overall treatment of diversity. Emily is cued as Black while Jax seems to have a White mother and Iroquois father. Only for hardcore fans of the authors.	Horror	Middle	1
Spying on Spies: How Elizebeth Smith Friedman Broke the Nazis' Secret Codes	Moss, Marissa	1-419-76731-3	Elizebeth Friedman was successful at breaking some of the most complicated codes used by enemy powers during both world wars. She's practically unknown today, due to a combination of misogyny and the top-secret nature of her work. When contemporary media outlets released dismissive articles about the little lady tackling such important jobs, they put Friedmanin actual danger. Friedman (she was the youngest of 10, and her mother purposely misspelled her name) was raised to be a dutiful wife and mother, but she always wanted to be intellectually challenged. She overcame numerous obstacles and rose to the top of her profession, married another cryptologist, and had a family, all while posing as a typical stay-at-home mom. This unique biography fills in ample background information to underline the crucial importance and daunting time constraints of her work, while also explaining how codes and ciphers work. Graphic-novel inserts introduce every chapter, and the generous back matter includes famous historical codes and their keys along with challenging puzzles. This intriguing offering covers fresh information and spans curricular areas.	The absorbing story of one of America's most talented and least appreciated cryptographers and code breakers. Fresh out of college, Friedman was hired by an eccentric millionaire who was eager to prove that Shakespeare's plays were written by someone else. While poring over them in search of secret messages, she taught herself skills that allowed her to break codes and ciphers for the military during both world wars—and, at some personal risk, to help the Justice Department fight organized crime in between. Much of her work is still classified, and she died in 1980, but Moss layers a nuanced account over the relatively thin bed of documentation, including relevant background about contemporary events. Illustrated tableaux highlight significant incidents and explain various codes. The book offers a sensitive picture of Friedman's married life with a husband who was likewise a brilliant cryptographer working on secret projects that couldn't be talked about, even at home, and tallies one thrilling feat of counterespionage after another, culminating in the breakup of an extensive Nazi spy ring in South America. (Friedman and her small team solved multiple Enigma machine codes, just like the thousands of workers at Bletchley Park.) Unsurprisingly, she also faced obstacles ranging from FBI interference to dangerously revealing (and sexist) news profiles. Readers will be suitably impressed and riveted. A bracing celebration of one gifted woman's insufficiently heralded achievements in war and peace.	Biography	Middle	1
They Battled in Blizzards	Hopkinson, Deborah	1-338-88236-8	A soldier's-eye view of the snowy Battle of the Bulge—"the largest single battle ever fought by the U.S. Army." Sticking entirely to the Allied side (but consulting a great range of reports and oral histories), Hopkinson presents a kaleidoscopic view of the immense conflict, which stretched out over six weeks beginning in December of 1944 and involved (on both sides) over 1,000,000 soldiers. Voluminous backmatter joins sheaves of battlefield photos and drawings and a few schematic maps and general comments to provide glimpses of the big picture, but rather than attempting to tell the full story, her goal is to "share the true stories of just a few soldiers who were there." This emphasis on localized, personal stories brings two main themes into sharp focus: the fog of confusion and uncertainty as unready GIs suddenly found themselves facing (and sometimes surrounded by) massive numbers of German troops and tanks, and the courage, cohesion, and optimistic spirit that fueled the eventual Allied victory. The veteran, much-lauded author of nonfiction and historical fiction draws various kinds of servicepeople (including women, immigrants, and Black people) into her large cast of eyewitnesses and participants; some she follows all the way to the ends of their (often long) lives, reinforcing the personal angle and providing a valuable complement to traditional military and political histories. A thoroughly researched, unusually close-to-the-ground glimpse into one of World War II's most notoriously brutal battles. (timeline, resources and links, bibliography, source notes, photo and illustration credits, index)	Grades 5-8. Despite already having many accounts of WWII under her belt, award-winning Hopkinson delivers another fresh take on its history to middle-grade readers. Noting that the D-Day invasion gets a bulk of WWII analysis, Hopkinson devotes this piece of narrative nonfiction to the lesser-known but crucial Battle of the Bulge. An introduction and "Your Battle Briefings" provide a thorough overview, including the location, size, and length of the battle and how it earned its strange name. Rather than a meticulous guide, this volume, the second in the World War II Close Up series, focuses on first-person stories from the front lines. Many of the featured soldiers are "battle babies," barely over 18 years old and new to the atrocities of war. Overwhelmingly, they recall being surprised and outnumbered by the Germans, the fear and violence of war, and complications from cold, hunger, and illness. Special interspersed sections on nurses and African American soldiers, as well as period photos, soldiers' paintings, and maps, add more context. Extensive back matter concludes the absorbing and insightful accounts.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1

Unfathomable: 20 Wild (but True) Stories About the Ocean	Boone, Mary	0-593-90475-3	This inviting collection of 20 real-life, truly amazing ocean experiences will appeal to curious middle-grade readers, whether they're wildlife lovers, budding oceanographers, or against-all-odds survival-story enthusiasts. Every chapter concentrates on one phenomenon (underwater volcanoes, shipwrecks, lost cities, mid-ocean shark cafés) and begins with a specific event amply supported by additional examples, scientific explanations and reports on ongoing research, environmental and conservation concerns, and other kid-friendly tidbits, both trivial and awe-inspiring. Overarching themes include profound respect for the mysteries of the deep and the thrill of making new discoveries (coverage is current through 2024). There's also great emphasis on the crucial need to protect our oceans and their wildlife. Each chapter runs around eight pages; reportedly, the final product will feature several illustrations (art not seen). The back matter includes a glossary and an extended list of additional resources. Equally useful as a research tool or as a leisure-reading recommendation, this appealing offering has broad cross-curricular applications and will add depth to public and school library STEM collections.	Gr 4-8-Twenty remarkable true stories drawn from the deepest, strangest corners of the ocean. Readers encounter an immortal jellyfish capable of reverting from old age back to youth, a man who survived being swallowed and expelled by a whale, and entire cities that now lie underwater. Each chapter functions as a self-contained narrative, offering rich detail and pacing that mirrors short-story writing rather than small paragraphs or snippets of information. The result is a text-heavy, immersive experience that rewards readers who stay with each story from beginning to end. The writing is captivating and clear, pulling readers in through the sheer astonishment of each event. Occasional text boxes add context or scientific facts without disrupting the flow. The book includes a table of contents, a glossary, and a thorough list of sources, but no index, underscoring that it is meant to be read straight through rather than used for quick reference. Artwork was not final at the time of review, though pages feature a water motif along the margins and many illustrations are predesigned as full pages. VERDICT A compelling, narrative-driven collection of astonishing ocean stories.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Waist-Deep in Dung: A Stomach-Churning Look at the Grossest Jobs Throughout History	Virnig, Christine	1-250-76235-9	Career-minded audiences may be happier with their modern options after this gleefully gross survey of occupations past, ranging from leech collector and barber-surgeon to poop-gathering "gongfermors" and such urine-based lines of work as cloth fulling and leather tanning. Along with detailing job descriptions with indecent relish, Virnig often pauses for lurid anecdotes about enemas, exhumed corpses that were buried prematurely, how maggots are still useful to forensic entomologists, and more. Though the author, and Briggs in his frequent cartoon sketches, plays the topic for gags and giggles, the tone repeatedly takes unexpectedly serious turns with references to how much of the revolting work was done by enslaved people, plus sobering reports on the modern persistence of "manual scavengers" in India, who collect human waste without protective gear, and of how even in this country there are many municipalities with dangerously inadequate sewer facilities. In effect, there are two books here: one that will leave readers hoping for a "nice, cozy, feces-free desk job," the other likely to stir concern for ongoing public health issues.	What's the worst possible job you can imagine? The team that brought you Dung for Dinner (2020) follows up with a similarly gross look at unpleasant but often necessary occupations. Throughout history, some have been tasked with dealing with blood, sickness, death, vomit, pee, and poop, not just as parents or family members but as lifelong jobs. In this roundup, Virnig addresses readers directly; her playful prose centers on the gritty and gross details. Each of the 16 chapters covers a different specialty, including ancient Egyptian mummy makers, leech collectors, barber-surgeons, forensic entomologists, modern-day medical caretakers, and people who excavate, dissect, and watch over bodies to confirm that death has occurred. She describes an ancient Roman banquet as a “puke party” that someone has to clean up, which gives her the opportunity to talk about slavery in that society. Her chatty narrative is especially sympathetic to the people who collect poop: gongfermors in the Middle Ages, saltpeter men who extracted a vital ingredient for gunpowder from outhouses in the 17th century, toshers who roamed Victorian London sewers, Chinese laborers who harvested guano in Peru in the 19th century, and Dalit scavengers in present-day India. Briggs’ humorous sepia cartoon illustrations, often of people doing their jobs, add to the appeal. Full of the eww factor, the selection and presentation here are sure to engage readers. Appealingly and disgustingly informative.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon	Fedarko, Kevin	1-501-18305-2	An immersive account of the challenges of a grueling 750-mile hike through the Grand Canyon. In the autumn of 2015, Fedarko, author of The Emerald Mile, and his frequent associate, photojournalist Pete McBride, headed out, with very little preparation, on the first leg of their journey on foot through the canyon—“a thing that fewer than two dozen people had ever done.” Fedarko, who had served as an unpaid apprentice on boat trips through the canyon for several seasons, knew the place from that point of view, but experiencing the dry and dangerous landscape and traveling without marked trails, on foot, was a different matter entirely, and the adventurous duo began the trip with “a conflation of willful ignorance, shoddy discipline, and outrageous hubris”—as well as about twice as much weight as they should have been carrying in their backpacks. Luckily, a series of expert local hikers volunteered to accompany them on several of the legs of their expedition, but even so, they went through more than a few near-death experiences from illness, dehydration, infection, slides on ice, falling rocks, lack of food, and other calamities. Fedarko expansively describes the journey—“a misguided odyssey through the heart of perhaps the harshest and least forgiving, but also the most breathtakingly gorgeous, landscape feature on earth”—with a combination of dry humor and horror, and he pays tribute to the spare beauty, grandeur, and silence of a place that few have seen, resulting in a memorable reading experience. Integrated into the memoir are maps, photos, accounts of earlier and contemporary hikers, explorations of the geology and biology of the region, interviews with Native Americans whose lands are adjacent to the canyon, and examinations of the many pressures from tourism and economic development faced by the park. Vivid armchair travel through a haunting and forbidding landscape.	In his first book (2013’s The Emerald Mile), journalist Fedarko chronicled the fastest recorded boat ride through the Grand Canyon. Here, in his second book, he moves the action from boats to boots, centering Fedarko’s own lifelong relationship with the canyon, from reading about it as a child through his time as a clumsy canoe guide. The thrust of the narrative follows the proposed canyon-spanning hike of Fedarko and photographer Pete McBride, his partner in many previous, mostly failed journalistic endeavors, along with a supporting cast of more seasoned canyon hikers. Readers will appreciate the buddy-comedy element throughout as Fedarko shares his and McBride’s steps, missteps, and arguments along the way, all supplemented nicely by McBride’s photographs. A Walk in the Park, though, particularly inspires when Fedarko shifts away from the tourist aspect of the canyon, detailing the ancestral history of the land and some of the Indigenous voices who continue to fight against overdevelopment today amid ever-booming visitor numbers.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Who Owns the Moon?: And Other Conundrums of Exploring and Using Space	Levinson, Cynthia	1-682-63537-6	Starred Review As NASA prepares to return humans to the moon with the Artemis program, Levinson and Swanson consider philosophical debates with extreme consequences well beyond the scientific logistics of traveling through space. In a comprehensive, direct, and engaging manner, the authors begin with the Space Race but diverge from most space books by concentrating on the Outer Space Treaty (OST), which forms the basis of international space law. However, established in 1967, the OST does not consider modern dilemmas of working and living on the moon. Systematic chapters that build on one another take readers through the science of Earth's atmospheric layers, the International Space Station, satellites, debris (aka "space junk"), space tourism, and more while also encouraging them to think about possible problematic outcomes. For instance, the OST is binding among countries, but what about private companies? No one can own the moon, but what about its natural resources? The integration of recent global events, like the high-altitude Chinese balloon over U.S. airspace, makes this book a timely and informative effort. A cumulative chapter dedicated to governance in space uses "sticky scenarios" with fictional astronauts from competing countries to guide readers to their own opinions. The authors conclude on a positive note with a roundup of space-related careers besides astronaut, such as opportunities in fashion, food chemistry, economics, and law.	What happens if a country leaves debris in Earth's orbit? Can countries claim pieces of outer space? Levinson (Free to Learn) and Swanson (Up Periscope!) answer these questions and more in this approachable work about the ethical and political challenges surrounding cosmic exploration. Beginning with the early days of the space race, the creators discuss the United Nations' passing of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty—formally known as the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies—which introduced	Non-Fiction	Middle	1
Your Freedom, Your Power: A Kid's Guide to the First Amendment	Matulli, Allison	0-7624-7838-1	Believing the First Amendment to be “something all people, even kids, may need, want, or have to use at some point in their lives,” as stated in an introduction, Matulli and Castro-Malaspina break down the functions of the First Amendment in this handy guide to American politics. Beginning with entries that provide a brief history of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the U.S. federal court system, the creators separate each part of the amendment into individual chapters. Sections consider the limitations of each right and its impact on society, and provide examples of young people using their rights to fight for change, including the 1899 newsboys strike and anti–gun violence protests spearheaded by the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in 2018. In “Freedom of Speech,” text clarifies legal boundaries (“The government has the right to punish speech that may cause violence or lots of harm”) while assuring readers that the amendment protects them “against being punished by the government for expressing yourself.” Through their conversational approach, the authors demystify the document to present a primer for young people. Throughout, Kendall’s fluidly lined illustrations, rendered in blue and orange tones, depict variously diverse figures exercising their rights. Ages 10–13. (July)	Starred Review This offering's subtitle includes the words "A Kid's Guide," and here those words are especially apt. Readers are addressed directly, kids' rights and relatable issues are kept at the forefront of every discussion, and heady topics, such as the federal court system, are introduced in an informal, conversational manner. After some preliminary material on the Constitution, chapters consider the freedoms guaranteed under the Bill of Rights from the perspective of tweens and teens, taking time to explain concepts thoroughly. The First Amendment begins with freedom of religion. Why? Why was religion so important to those upper-crust white men? Manageable paragraphs, accessible text, lists, charts, and insets help explain, citing court cases that directly affect students: evolution in science courses, religion-related clothing, the effect of school bathroom policies on transgender kids. Every chapter offers fresh perspectives and interactive activities, including tips on how to petition for change. Students, parents, and teachers will appreciate the generous back matter and direct approach, and this works equally well as leisure reading for young activists, a homework helper, or a classroom supplement. Most important, this book empowers kids, telling them how to use their voices and defend their rights.	Non-Fiction	Middle	1

Heroes	Gratz, Alan	978-1-339-04737-9	Set during the attack on Pearl Harbor that drew the U.S. into WWII, this tensely wrought, propulsive historical novel by Gratz (Two Degrees) centers the compelling friendship between 13-year-old aspiring writer Frank McCoy and illustrator Stanley Summers, who are brainstorming their own comic book characters. The pair live in the seemingly idyllic Ford Island Naval Air Station in Pearl Harbor, where their fathers are stationed. Frank harbors secret anxiety surrounding his perceived lack of courage, especially evident when he avoids helping Stanley confront bullies, which prompts Stanley to ask, "How do you think you can write about heroes if you can't be one yourself?" These paralyzing fears come into stark relief when, while the pair are on a battleship tour, Japanese planes begin bombing unsuspecting military targets. After diving from a sinking ship, the friends struggle to reach home amid violence, chaos, and death. Though the novel's tone is sometimes uneven and text can read as didactic, Gratz sensitively handles characters' suspicion of Stanley surrounding his Japanese American heritage, and offers a gripping, well-researched account of courage and friendship in this powerful depiction of American racism and imprisonment. Back matter includes a comic book created by Frank and Stanley and an author's note. Ages 8–12. (Feb.)	Starred Review Pearl Harbor, December 6, 1941. It's another day in paradise for white 13-year-old Frank McCoy and his best friend, Japanese American Stanley Summers, united by their love of the comics they create together. For Frank, though, the perfection is compromised by a closely guarded secret: he's been afraid of everything since what he calls The Incident (he was mauled by a dog and has the scars to prove it). The next day, December 7, a seaman invites the boys to tour the decommissioned battleship Utah. They eagerly accept and are aboard when paradise becomes hell as a wave of Japanese planes attacks, destroying the entire American fleet in the harbor. In a thrilling, white-knuckle set piece, Gratz (Captain America: The Ghost Army, 2023) recreates the attack and Frank's and Stanley's harrowing experience of it. Just surviving tests the boys' mettle, as Frank swallows his fears and rescues a drowning seaman, becoming, at least for a while, a hero. Gratz does his usual splendid job of creating the visceral drama of battle alongside fully realized characters. He handles the theme of heroism well, while not straying into the didactic, and is especially good at depicting the enduring friendship of the two boys as, together, they experience the date that will live in infamy.	Adventure	Middle	1
Wings of Fire The Hybrid Prince book 16	Sutherland, Tui T.	978-1-5461-2954-7	"As the youngest sibling of his MudWing hatching, Umber doesn't have the responsibilities of his bigwings, Reed, nor the hero destiny prophesied for his brother, Clay. He's always been content with his role as the cheerful, goofy, little brother. But when his sister, Sora, causes a tragedy at Jade Mountain Academy Umber finds himself on the run and thrown into a whole new role--that of protector"--Dust jacket.		Fantasy	Middle	1