

Activity Guide

Young Adult Book Award Nominees 2011-2012



This guide was prepared by members of the Young Adult Book Award

Committee:

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Angry Management

Chris Crutcher
Harper Teen, 2009
246

SUMMARY:

Crutcher's fans will relish the reunion with some familiar characters in this collection of three stories set in the Pacific Northwest and thematically united around anger. "Kyle Manard and the Craggy Face of the Moon" takes Angus Bethune (*Athletic Shorts*, 1991) and Sarah Byrnes (*Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes*, 1993) on a road trip to Reno to confront the mother who abandoned her years before. In "Montana Wild," student journalist Montana West (*The Sledding Hill*, 2005) defends her article on medicinal marijuana in a very public shouting match with the right-wing school-board president, who also happens to be her father. "Meet Me at the Gates, Marcus James" unexpectedly binds gay Marcus James, sole black student at his high school, with complexly devout Christian Matt Miller (*Deadline*, 2007) and sympathetic teacher John Simet (*Whale Talk*, 2001), when racist football players hang a pink noose on Marcus's locker. (Taken from *School Library Journal*)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

All Sleek and Skimming: Stories, Heggum, Lisa.

Long Gone Daddy, Hemphill, Helen.

Venomous, Krovatin, Christopher.

WEBSITES:

www.chriscrutcher.com – author's website

<http://teenadvice.about.com/od/violencebullying/a/angermanagement.htm> - teen anger management tips

<http://www.yourstudentnews.com/> - templates and guides for students creating their own newspapers

BOOKTALK:

Characters on the periphery of the action in some of Chris Crutcher's most successful novels take center stage in the collection of stories titled *Angry Management*. The frame story is about Japanese Mr. Nak, who has a knack for reaching students others find unreachable. He is hired by Global Community Health to begin a group to help students from the Clark Forks school district to help students who are not in the "direst of straits" but something about them is crying out for help, something that comes across to the rest of the world as anger but goes so much deeper. Angus Bethune and Sarah Byrnes (whose name is a painful pun) are the central characters in the first short story in the novel. Angus is overweight and Sarah is disfigured but it doesn't keep either from seeing something worthwhile in the other. Their bond helps Sarah find the courage to find the mother who deserted her and left her with a deadbeat dad soon after an "accident" disfigured Sarah. That bond with Angus also helps Sarah confront and deal with the painful truth about why her mother left and the even more painful reason as to why she has stayed away. The next novella follows Montana West's struggle to publish a story in her school's newspaper, one she knows will cause more than a stir in her school but could rip her family apart. With her newspaper advisor and some new, unexpected friends behind her – including the star of the football team who is about as different from her as oil is from water – Montana takes on the school board to get the right to publish the story. The final novella details Marcus James' struggle with life in general, struggles unique to him as the only black, gay young man in his high school. Finding a pink noose in his locker, Marcus refuses to let the incident pass and demands the principal take action against those everyone knows are responsible. The problem is that those responsible for this act of prejudice are also responsible for the school's football team's success which the principal is unwilling to jeopardize. This failure to act to quell the tide of hate and prejudice soon puts Marcus' very life in jeopardy.

Prepared by:

Jennifer McDaniel

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Before I Fall

Lauren Oliver

Harper Collins, 2009

480 pages

SUMMARY:

What if you only had 1 day to live? What would you do? Who would you kiss? And how far would you go to save your own life?

Samantha Kingston has it all: the world's most crush-worthy boyfriend, three amazing best friends, and first pick of everything at Thomas Jefferson High—from the best table in the cafeteria to the choicest parking spot. Friday, February 12 should be just another day in her charmed life.

Instead, it turns out to be her last. Then she gets a second chance; seven chances, in fact. Reliving her last day during one miraculous week, she will untangle the mystery surrounding her death—and discover the true value of everything she is in danger of losing. (Summary by Harper Collins.)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Truth About Forever- Sarah Dessen

Lipstick Apology- Jennifer Jabaley

If I Stay – Gayle Forman

Hold Still – Nina LaCour

Radiant Shadows – Melissa Marr

WEBSITE:

www.laurenoliverbooks.blogspot.com

This website is from the author, and tells how she wrote this book, what other books she is working on, what plans she has for the future, her philosophy on writing, etc.

www.helium.com

This website deals with issues concerning popularity of mean teen girls, and has articles about why they are mean, what they do, how other students can deal with them and how teachers can deal with them.

www.parentingteens.about.com

This website has 19 articles about how parents can tell if their daughters are mean, how to help them change, how parents tend to make their daughters mean, etc. Also related links to many different articles about how teachers and schools can deal with mean girls.

BOOKTALK:

Samantha is not a very nice girl. She bullies the other students at her school and is mean to everyone. She doesn't give her little sister a minute of her time. She drinks and drives, and that is how she dies. When she wakes up the next morning in her bed, and sees that it's the same day, she thinks maybe it was all a bad dream.

But as she goes through the day she realizes that's she is being given the chance to improve so that people will be sorry when she is gone rather than being happy. She spends one day with her sister, giving her advice and love. She finds a girl in school who is planning to kill herself, and she decides to save her. She develops a relationship with a boy she never noticed before but who loves her more than her boyfriend does.

She begins to understand that the things she valued actually have no meaning, and the things she ignored are the most important things in the world. She loves her mother and tells her. She acts nicely to all the students at her school. She spends some time trying to see if she can avoid dying, but when she realizes that she can't, she doesn't mope or feel sorry for herself. She just puts all her attention on trying to right all the wrongs she has caused. She becomes brave and loving, two things she never was before this week. She finds that she is happier than she's ever been because she is at peace with herself. She has been redeemed. We realize that we are in the same position as Samantha—we don't know when our last day is, but we want to be redeemed also.

Prepared by: Deborah Robinson

Brutal

Michael Harmon
Alfred A. Knopf, 2009
256 pages

SUMMARY:

When her martyr-doctor mother has gone to save lives in some South American country, Poe Holly suddenly finds herself on the suburban doorstep of the father she never knew, who also happens to be a counselor at her new high school. She misses Los Angeles. She misses the guys in her punk band. Weirdly, she even misses the shouting matches she used to have with her mother. What's worse, there are bullies at her new school who pick on her defenseless next-door neighbor. (Summary by Knopf, with bits added by me, Deborah R.)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Diary of a Witness – Catherine Ryan Hyde

Hate List – Jennifer Brown

Reality Check – Peter Abrahams

Finding Sky – Joss Stirling

Shiver – Maggie Stiefvater

WEBSITE:

Michael Harmon

www.booksbyHarmon.com

This website is by the author, and tells how he writes, what he is working on, in a blog format.

www.kidpower.com

This website has articles, programs, blogs, interviews, and helps kids, parents and teachers deal with bullies.

www.beatbullying.org

This website tells how to deal with cyberbullying, with articles, blogs, programs, and interviews.

www.thebeehive.org

This website discusses how boys and girls differ in the ways they bully. It has links to articles, parent helps, and teacher helps.

BOOKTALK:

There are several issues explored in this novel. The biggest one is the bullying that our heroine, Poe, finds in her new school. There is one boy and his 3 cronies who torment her next-door neighbor, a sad boy whose parents were both killed when their meth lab exploded. She tells her father and the other administrators in her school, but they more or less say it can't be helped. (The bully is on the football team, and no one wants him suspended.) Poe, with the help of her new friends, decides there must be a way to stop not only the bullying but the tolerance of the bullying. She doesn't resort to shooting them, as so many people seem to do in books and real life.

The other issue is how parents can sometimes help everyone but their children, and this of course is wrong. Poe thinks something must be wrong with her that her mother doesn't love her or want to be helpful to her, but discovers that it is her mother who is at fault. She learns to love her father, and although it isn't easy to get along at first, soon they do understand each other. She teaches him that it is important to stand up to wrong and evil when you see it. In lots of ways, she is braver than he is (or the principal).

This book handles both of these issues realistically, humorously, and seriously. We applaud the characters as they learn and grow.

Prepared by: Deborah Robinson

The Chosen One
Carol Lynch Williams
St. Martin's Press, 2009
213

SUMMARY:

Kyra lives with the Chosen Ones, a religious group who seek the grace of God by separating themselves from all others. The Chosen Ones expect everyone to follow the Prophet, but when Kyra starts questioning his word, her entire way of life is threatened.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *The Fate of the Artist* by Eddie Campbell
- *The Meaning of Consuelo* by Judith Ortiz Cofer Farrar, Straus, and Giroux
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- *Hate List* by Jennifer Brown

WEBSITES:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waco_Siege - What is a religious compound? This gives a little background into one of the most famous ones.
- <http://cleanbooksforldsfamilies.blogspot.com/2010/02/chosen-one-by-carol-lynch-williams.html> - good synopsis of the book with some helpful information.
- <http://www.nme.com/movies/trailers/id/xRBXY5FZH-c/search/movie> - a video trailer of the book, good at explaining what it's about without giving too much away.

BOOKTALK:

“Thirteen-year-old Kyra has grown up in an isolated community without questioning the fact that her father has three wives and she has twenty brothers and sisters, with two more on the way. That is, without questioning them much – if you don't count her secret visits to the Ironton County Mobile Library on Wheels to read forbidden books, or her meetings with Joshua, the boy she hope to choose for herself instead of having a man chosen for her. But when the Prophet decrees that she must marry her sixty-year-old uncle – who already has six wives – Kyra must make a desperate choice in the face of violence and her own fears of losing her family forever.”

Kyra loves her family, all three of them. She loves her home and she loves her God. The only thing she doesn't necessarily love is all the rules against reading and being her own person. Kyra is in love with Joshua, a Chosen boy she is going to marry. When she and Joshua are discovered together one night he is forced to leave, and she and her family are punished. Kyra can't stand the idea of having to be the seventh wife to her old uncle, but who would go against the word of the Prophet? Although she can't bear the thought of throwing away her life, when the Prophet goes against her family, Kyra takes her fate, and the fate of the rest of the Chosen in her hands. But will they get away with it?

The Chosen One shows the darker side of religious compounds and how they can corrupt. Kyra goes through a heart wrenching trial that makes you think about what you have and what you would do for your freedom.

Prepared by: Harriet Boatwright ☺

Diary of a Witness

Catherine Ryan Hyde

Knopf, p2009, c2009

201 pages

SUMMARY:

Ernie, an overweight high school student and long-time target of bullies, relies on his best friend Will to watch his back until Will, overwhelmed by problems at home and guilt over his brother's death, seeks a final solution. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

Pay It Forward: A Novel- Catherine Ryan Hyde

Endgame- Nancy Garden

Nailed- Patrick Jones

Jack Tumor- Anthony McGowan

WEBSITES:

Catherine Ryan Hyde's website <http://www.catherineryanhyde.com/>
Information on her other books and her life as an author

TeensHealth http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html
Advice on dealing with bullying

Stop Bullying Now! <http://www.stopbullyingnow.com/>
Strategies on how to reduce bullying in schools

BOOKTALK:

Every teenage boy has a best buddy in high school who usually comes from a similar background and shares common interests. It would seem to those who don't know them well, that Ernie and his best buddy, Will, don't have anything in common. However, there is one important thing they do share. It is the bullying they both receive at the hands of the high school jocks. Ernie usually keeps his emotions in check just by eating more and getting fatter. His mother, unaware of what is happening at school, happily cooks all the food he wants. Will, pretty much alone in his own home, constantly vents his feelings to Ernie. As the bullying intensifies throughout the year, Will becomes more withdrawn and his anger grows. Ernie witnesses this change in Will and becomes conflicted about what he could do to help his friend. He keeps asking himself "What would a really good friend do?" He has an uncle he confides in but realizes that in the end, it is his own decision to make. This could be the most important decision of Ernie's life. Should he support Will in his plans or should he "rat" on him? Whatever the outcome, it will be a life-changing experience for both boys.

Prepared by:

Patricia Hoff

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Dirty Little Secrets

Cynthia Jaynes Omololu

Walker, p2010, c2010

212 pages

SUMMARY:

When her unstable mother dies unexpectedly, sixteen-year-old Lucy must take control and find a way to keep the long-held secret of her mother's compulsive hoarding from being revealed to friends, neighbors, and especially the media. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

Wicked Dead: Prey- Stefan Petrucha

Ball Don't Lie -Matt de la Pena

The Gardener- S.A. Bodeen

Hate List- Jennifer Brown

Liar- Justine Larbalestier

WEBSITES:

C. J. Omololu's website <http://www.cjomololu.com/>

Information on her life as an author

Squalor Survivors <http://www.squalorsurvivors.com/squalor/hoarding.shtml>

Information on hoarding and how to overcome it

International OCD Foundation <http://www.ocfoundation.org/>

Information on obsessive-compulsive disorder and where to get treatment

BOOKTALK:

Lucy has only two more years in high school before she can leave home and her past. She is tired of keeping secrets and wishes she could live the normal life of a teen. Her current girlfriend is Kaylie and Josh is her current crush. Can she have all of this and still keep her secrets? They're starting to ask questions. It always happens when she lets people get too close. Her mother has a hoarding disorder and is an alcoholic. She can't let anyone come to her home. Lucy isn't even used to the smell of garbage and decay. When her mother has an accident Lucy is forced to make a decision. Should she call the paramedics and have them discover her secrets, or should she keep this new secret to herself? In Lucy's mind: "That's the trouble with secrets. The lies you had to tell to keep them hidden almost made you feel worse than telling the truth. *Almost!*"

Prepared by:

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Ghosts of War: The True Story of a 19-Year-Old GI

Ryan Smithson
HarperCollins, 2009
320 pgs

SUMMARY:

In a harrowing memoir about combat, friendship, fear, and a soldier's commitment to his country, Smithson brings teen readers inside a world that few understand, as he describes his experience as a 19 year old Army engineer in Iraq.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

Denied, Detained, Deported: Stories from the Dark Side of American Immigration-- Ann Bausum
Sunrise over Fallujah Walter Dean Myers.

[Read, Remember, Recommend for Teens: A Reading Journal for Young Adult Book Lovers](#) [Rachelle Rogers Knight](#)

I am a Soldier, Too; The Jessica Lynch Story—Rick Bragg
From Baghdad, With Love—Lieutenant Colonel Jay Kopelman

WEBSITES:

Iraq War: www.scdiscus.org; World History in Context;
Provides primary and secondary sources of war and history of the country of Iraq.

www.cnn.com; Provides up-to-the-minute reports of conflict in Iraq and how it relates to US.

www.warisacrime.com. Provides war photos of the Iraqi War. May contain graphic material.

www.spinwatch.org Contains information on the war from an independent source with a spin.

Author: http://www.harpercollins.com/authors/34332/Ryan_Smithson/index.aspx

BOOKTALK:

Here is the Iraq War up close and personal. Ryan Smithson was deployed to Iraq as an Army Engineer at age 19. His story is nothing like what you see on CNN or read about. This is an extraordinary and harrowing memoir as readers march along one GI's tour of duty. Smithson makes his story personal for the reader, makes it tangible. He told his story and didn't try to hide things from the reader. While reading about scraping brain matter from a Humvee may make some people queasy, it's something that didn't even make other readers blanch as they realize Ryan did the scraping. To bring the story more to life, the book's center has a collage of black and white photos of an American soldiers' life in Iraq. Close your eyes and picture this. "All I see is brown dirt. All I see is Iraq. A massive circle surrounds us and slowly rotates. We are inside Satan's clothes dryer."

Prepared by Sarah Trani, Fairfield Central High School
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Girl in the Arena: a Novel Containing Intense Prolonged Sequences of Disaster and Peril

Lise Haines
Bloomsbury, 2009
324 pages

SUMMARY:

In a society where an underground movement to restore the gladiator arts has become the next big reality craze, Lyn has grown up in the public eye as the daughter of seven gladiators. Lyn is dissatisfied with this path that was chosen for her, and the story centers around her struggle to become her own person in the face of adversity.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins

Leviathan by Scott Westerfeld

The City of Bones series by Cassandra Clare

the *City of Ember* Series by Jeanne DuPrau

The Giver Series by Lois Lowry.

WEBSITES:

One website that is a must see for those who have read and enjoyed *Girl in the Arena* is www.lisehaines.com. The author's website comes complete with some very interesting features. Haines provides a blog, a teachers tab, and links to information that readers of her books would definitely be interested in.

A good website for individuals interested in learning more about gladiator life is http://www.salariya.com/web_books/gladiator/index.html. This website gives a humorous, but informative look at the lives of gladiators.

For a more formal look at gladiator life, <http://depthome.brooklyn.cuny.edu/classics/gladiatr/index.htm> provides a more scholarly look at the life and times of gladiators in ancient Rome.

BOOKTALK:

Lyn is a typical teenager trying to make her own path through life. She has some of the usual problems with parents, boys, and perception. Lyn, however, is anything but normal. She is a researcher and writer about the history of neo-gladiator sports, an accomplishment that only a select few know. She is the daughter of seven gladiators during a time when gladiators are the celebrities about which everyone has an opinion. Some parts of society look down on the barbaric nature of the neo-gladiator lifestyle, while others hold the codes of this group up as the ideal. Either way, Lyn is not satisfied with her life. She questions the rules. When tragedy strikes and Lyn must begin making some tough decisions, she is forced to question even more: her beliefs about her role in her family, her responsibility to herself, and her views of gladiators. Lyn and those around her tug at the emotions of the reader. Her battle to stop the unchecked power of those controlling the gladiator society and to live a life not overshadowed by the rules and standards set by others makes her a hero. Her fumbles and mishaps along the way make her human.

Prepared by:

Leigh Abee

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Gray Baby

Scott Loring Sanders
Houghton Mifflin (2009)
321 pages

SUMMARY:

Sixteen-year-old Clifton Carlson, emotionally scarred from having seen his father beaten to death by white police officers ten years earlier, grows up without friends or the support of his mother, who has become an alcoholic, but his life is changed when, desperate for friends, he puts messages in bottles and sends them down New River where they are intercepted by Swamper, an elderly man who lives in a shack on the riverbank. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Hanging Woods by Scott Loring Sanders

Just Another Hero by Sharon M. Draper

Dark Song by Gail Giles

Bruiser by Neal Shusterman

When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper

WEBSITES:

<http://www.scottloringsanders.com/> This is the author's webpage. Features include biography, FAQ, blogs, other projects and upcoming books!

<http://www.experienceproject.com/stories/Am-Biracial-And-Proud/1139985/> This is a site filled with stories of being biracial and experiences the writers have had.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Deal-With-an-Alcoholic-Parent> This site gives advice to dealing with parents suffering from alcoholism.

<http://www.abovetheinfluence.com> Spreading awareness regarding the consequences of underage drinking.

BOOKTALK:

Clifton Carlson has not had it easy. Growing up with a mother that becomes an alcoholic after witnessing the brutal beating of her husband, fatherless after witnessing the beating himself as a child, being half white and half black in a good ol' boy community where his differences cause people to judge him needlessly, and having no one to talk to about any of it has made for a rough adolescence. He remembers a mother and father that loved him, and loved each other regardless of the feelings of their respective families. In a moment of weakness in a desperate attempt to talk to someone, he puts a message in a bottle. The bottle is found by an old man named Swamper that lives on the river, and the two strike up an unlikely friendship. The pair experience various events that cause each other to learn to trust and to talk. They help each other heal from their own respective wounds, and in a semi-predictable-yet still realistic and entertaining- turn of events, they help each other realize what family really means.

Prepared by:

Jen Seay, YABA Chair, Carolina Forest High School, jseay@horrycountyschools.net

Hate List

Jennifer Brown

Little, Brown and Co. , 2009

402 pgs.

SUMMARY:

Five months ago, Valerie Leftman's boyfriend, Nick, opened fire on their school cafeteria. Shot trying to stop him, Valerie inadvertently saved the life of a classmate, but was implicated in the shootings because of the list she helped create. A list of people and things she and Nick hated. The list he used to pick his targets. Now, after a summer of seclusion, Val is forced to confront her guilt as she returns to school to complete her senior year. Haunted by the memory of the boyfriend she still loves and navigating rocky relationships with her family, former friends and the girl whose life she saved, Val must come to grips with the tragedy that took place and her role in it, in order to make amends and move on with her life. (summary from Ingram)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

FICTION:

After by Francine Prose

Nineteen Minutes by Jodi Picoult

Quad by C. G. Watson

Shooter by Walter Dean Myers

Give a Boy a Gun by Todd Strasser

The Last Domino by Adam Meyer

Endgame by Nancy Guadian

NONFICTION:

Columbine: A True Crime Story by Jeff Klass

School Shootings by Susan Hunnicutt

I Choose to Be Happy by Missy Jenkins with William Crayle

WEBSITES:

www.jenniferbrownia.com (Author's Site)

www.nssc1.org (National School Safety Center)

Information to help with school violence of all kinds
insession.blogs.cnn.com/2010/06/15/coping-with-school-shootings/ (CNN)

Article and interviews on how to cope after a school shooting

www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/jr000248c.pdf (National Criminal Justice Reference Services)

Safe School Initiative Report

www.aap.org/featured/resourcepage.htm (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Links for kids, parents, and teachers to help prevent abuse before it goes too far

BOOKTALK:

The "hate list" was just something to ease frustrations about teachers and fellow students. When anyone made them mad or made fun of them, their name was added to the list. It wasn't supposed to come true. Then Nick brought a gun to school. He shot most of the people on the list and then himself when his girlfriend Valerie tries to protect one of the students. She is shot, but does not die. After a summer of physical healing, she must come back and face those who survived. She must walk the halls with the memorials and see Christy, the number one person on the list and girl that she saved. All around people are asking the same question. Did Valerie know what Nick was planning to do? With therapy and new friendships, can she help everyone heal and recover?

PREPARED BY: Julie Vaught

Hold Still
Nina LaCour
Dutton Books, 2009
229 pages

SUMMARY:

Caitlin is devastated when Ingrid, her best friend, commits suicide. When she finds Ingrid's journal, however, Caitlin begins to understand not only what led Ingrid to take her own life, but also that life is worth living, even through pain and despair.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Aimee: A Novel, Mary Beth Miller

Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes, Chris Crutcher

Black Box: A Novel, Julie Schumacher

Damage, A.M. Jenkins

Under the Wolf, Under the Dog, Adam Rapp

The Burn Journals, Brent Runyon

WEBSITES:

Family First Aid, <http://www.familyfirstaid.org/depression> , Teen depression statistics and warning signs

Write Sites for Teens, <http://www.cuyahogafallslibrary.org/teen/writelinks>, For teens who like to write.

Includes an opportunity to keep an online journal.

Nina LaCour, <http://ninalacour.com>, Official website for the author.

BOOKTALK:

“Dear Caitlin, This is what I want so don't be sad. You might be looking for reasons but there are no reasons.” Caitlin and Ingrid were inseparable high school freshmen until Ingrid killed herself. Now, Caitlin is a sophomore and feels all alone and confused. Even photography, a passion they both shared, doesn't bring any joy to Caitlin anymore. As she tries to figure out what happened, Caitlin finds Ingrid's journal. She knows that Ingrid left it for her as a suicide note. Caitlin slowly reads the journal and begins to understand Ingrid's battle with depression. However, the journal also shows her that life needs to be enjoyed. Caitlin begins to reach out to others in an effort to forge new friendships. *Hold Still*, by Nina LaCour, is an important book about the effects of depression and the miracle of hope.

Prepared by:

Joy Brady, Abbeville High School, JBrady@acsd.k12.sc.us

Into the Wild Nerd Yonder: My Life on the Dork Side

Julie Halpern

Feiwei and Friends, 2009

245

SUMMARY:

A story about growing up, growing out, and moving. Showing how we change through high school, sometimes through the better, and learn how to deal with the way other people change. You'll cry, you'll scream, you'll cheer with the best of them, and, of course, laugh out loud.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *I am a Genius of Unspeakable Evil and I Want to be Your Class President* by Josh Lieb
- *Get Well Soon* by Julie Halpern
- *How to say Goodbye in Robot* by Natalie Standiford

WEBSITES:

- <http://www.juliehalpern.com/nerd.html> - official *Into the Wild Nerd Yonder* website
- <http://www.juliehalpern.com/> - Julie Halpern's official website
- <https://trial.turbine.com> - dungeons and dragons online website
- <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/> - official Dungeons and Dragons website
- <http://www.oliverands.com/blog/2008/08/lazy-days-skirt-free-pattern.html> - make a quick and easy skirt using this free pattern, just like Jessie!

BOOKTALK:

“Her two best friends have transformed themselves into punks, and one of them is going after her longtime crush. Her beloved older brother will soon leave for college (and in the meantime, has shaved his Mohawk and started dating...the homecoming queen!). Things are changing fast. Jessie need new friends. And her quest is the hilarious tour through high school clique-dom, with a surprising stop along the way – the Dungeons and Dragons crowd, who out-nerd everyone! Will hanging out with them make her a nerd too? And could she really be crushing on a guy with too-short pants and too-white gym shoes?”

Jessie, a rising high school sophomore, pretty much knows who she is. She's the smart mathlete with cool friends, a punk rock brother, a mad crush on her brother's friend, and an amazing homemade skirt for every day of the week. All that changes her friends become poseurs, her brother becomes less punk cool and more clean cut, and her best friend does the unthinkable. Jessie needs new friends, but how does she ditch those she's had since the first grade and find new ones? Does she really want to go from basic anonymity to certain nerd-dom?

Fighting the jungle we like to call high school Jessie has to decide between what she thinks is cool and what she thinks is fun. With some sage advice from her witty and extremely loveable Everett she learns to roll with the punches, accept change, and realizes that popular isn't all it's cracked up to be. But the answer she really has to ask herself is, once you go into the wild nerd yonder, can you ever get back?

Prepared by: Harriet Boatwright ☺

King of the Screwups

K. L. Going
Harcourt, 2009
310 pages

SUMMARY:

Liam Geller is Mr. Popularity. Everyone loves him, but he's always screwing up in the ways that tick off his father the most. This is a funny story about fathers, fashion, and faux pas. Liam Geller is one of the most popular boys in school but can't seem to do anything right in the eyes of his father; so he goes to live with his homosexual, rocker uncle who helps him to understand that there is much more to him than his father will ever see.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Saint Iggy - K. L. Going
Pop - Gordon Korman
Dean Duffy - Randy Powell

WEBSITES:

K. L. Going
www.klgoing.com

How to get along with your father
http://www.ehow.com/how_4584440_along-dad.html

Glam rock bands of the 70's
www.squidoo.com/glamrock

BOOKTALK:

Liam is too popular for his own good. When his antics finally push his father over the edge, Liam is sent to live with his uncle, Aunt Pete, who is his father's estranged brother. Liam's mother is a retired supermodel, so Liam has an uncommon fashion expertise. Aunt Pete is gay, lives in a trailer park, in the middle of nowhere, and plays in a glam-rock 70's band. Aunt Pete's boyfriend is Orlando, Liam's new English teacher. Deciding now would be a good time to redo his image, Liam tries everything in his power to be the nerdy, unpopular kid in his new school. However, as the title says, he even screws up screwing up! If you like funny, hilarious, edgy reading, read this book.

Prepared by:

Karen Olson, Northwestern High School
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Leviathan

Scott Westerfeld

Simon Pulse; First Edition (October 6, 2009)

448 pages

SUMMARY:

In an alternate 1914 Europe, fifteen-year-old Austrian Prince Alek, on the run from the Clanker Powers who are attempting to take over the globe using mechanical machinery, forms an uneasy alliance with Deryn who, disguised as a boy to join the British Air Service, is learning to fly genetically-engineered beasts. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Uglies by Scott Westerfeld

Pretties by Scott Westerfeld

Specials by Scott Westerfeld

Extras by Scott Westerfeld

Crossing Stones by Helen Frost

A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway

Lord of the Nutcracker Men by Iain Lawrence

Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque

Sacred Shadows by Maxine Schur

WEBSITES:

www.scottwesterfeld.com This is the author's webpage. Features fake movie trailers of Leviathan, interactive forums, previews to new books, graphics to Leviathan and much more!

<http://www.worldwar1.nl/> This is a site filled with links regarding almost every aspect of World War 1.

Topics include causes, fatalities, weapons used, outcome, and information regarding rebuilding after the war.

<http://www.worldwar1.com/> This website features an interactive history of the Great War.

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/> This website features a collection of source documents detailing origins, treaties, major speeches, personalities, battles, weapons, audio archive, and photographs.

<http://www.darwinism-watch.com> This site features arguments regarding Darwinism, its origins and what the outlook is for the future.

BOOKTALK:

You've never seen World War 1 like this! The story begins the same: on June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated, which plunges the world into a great war. However, Westerfeld manages to capture our imaginations once again using this global conflict to show the difference between the machine based Clankers and the biology based Darwinists in this incredibly interesting take on the war. After the assassination of his parents, Prince Aleksandar's people turn on him. He flees with the help of a few loyal men, and hopes no one will discover who he is. All the while Deryn Sharp prays that serving in the Darwinists air fleet, something she has dreamed of her whole life, no one will discover she is, in fact, a girl. She serves on the *Leviathan*, a whale like ship that contains a whole ecosystem. The two characters cross paths when the Leviathan is brought down, and they are forced to realize what enemy and ally really mean. The book is chock full of illustrations to help readers keep pace with the mastermind of the whole idea, and is an interesting take on the age old adage about war starting with being different. What if another way is just as right, but different? What are we fighting for? Journey into history and entertainment in this exciting new book by one of today's top authors.

Prepared by:

Jen Seay, YABA Chair, Carolina Forest High School, jseay@horrycountyschools.net

Muchacho: A Novel

LouAnne Johnson
Knopf Books, 2009
208 pages

SUMMARY:

Living in a neighborhood of drug dealers and gangs in New Mexico, high school junior Eddie Corazon, a juvenile delinquent-in-training, falls in love with a girl who inspires him to rethink his life and his choices.
(Follet)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY:

- *We Were Here* by Matt de la Pena
- *Homestretch* by Paul Volponi
- *Unsigned Hype: A Novel* by Booker T. Mattison

WEBSITES:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_American

Information about Mexican Americans

<http://www.poets.org/>

Information about famous poets and a large selection of poetry

<http://mycollegeguide.org/>

Information on selecting colleges and advice on admittance and financial aid

<http://usadance.org/>

Promoting the quality & quantity of ballroom dance in the USA

BOOKTALK:

Eddie Corazon lives in a world where being a bad boy is the cool thing to do. He hangs out with his cousins in a bad neighborhood, and the boys are just on the edge of being juvenile delinquents. He skips school and gets poor grades as a matter of choice, but he is a secret reader and poet. He has promised his Mami that he won't drop out of school, but he's pretty sure he will fail. Then he meets Lupe, and his world changes. She brings out the best in Eddie, and sees things in him that he doesn't. Eddie doesn't seem to have a very bright future the way he is going, but then he begins to think like Lupe and starts to believe in second chances. But can he escape his past or will old enemies and past mistakes kill his dreams?

Prepared by:

Kathy Carroll

Ridge View High School

kacarroll@richland2.org

Once a Witch
Carolyn MacCullough
Clarion Books, 2009
292 pages

SUMMARY:

Born into a family of witches, seventeen-year-old Tamsin is raised believing that she alone has no magical "Talent," but when her beautiful and powerful sister is taken by an age-old rival of the family in an attempt to change the balance of power, Tamsin discovers her true identity.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Always a Witch Carolyn MacCullough

Bewitching Season Marissa Doyle

Betraying Season Marissa Doyle

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone J. K. Rowling

WEBSITES:

<http://www.carolynmaccullough.com/main.html> - The authors home page.

<http://www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com/clarion/> The publisher's home page.

<http://onceawitch.com/news/index.html> The books home page.

BOOKTALK:

In *Once a Witch* by Carolyn MacCullough, Tasmin was supposed to be the most powerful witch in her family. At seventeen she shows no signs of this ever coming true. She feels as if she has disappointed her family by being normal. She attends a boarding school in the city in order to get away from her family and a prophecy she will never live up to. In doing so she makes some normal friends and begins to accept that she will never be her sister or does she? When a mysterious stranger mistakes her for Rowena, her powerful witch sister, Tasmin jumps at the chance to help the handsome stranger and prove to her family that she is useful in their world after all. With help from her friend Gabriel she sets out on an adventure that will answer questions about her past and her future. During this adventure Tasmin realizes not everyone is what they seem and that she has a power within her greater than her family could have dreamed.

Prepared by:

Kathleen Duncan, James F. Byrnes High School

Purple Heart
Patricia McCormick
Balzer + Bray (2009)
198 pages

SUMMARY:

While recuperating in a Baghdad hospital from a traumatic brain injury sustained during the Iraq War, eighteen-year-old soldier Matt Duffy struggles to recall what happened to him and how it relates to his ten-year-old friend, Ali. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Sunrise Over Fallujah by Walter Dean Myers

Ghosts of War: A True Story of a 19 yr old GI by Ryan Smithson

On Call in Hell: A Doctor's Iraq War Story by Cdr. Richard Jadick and Thomas Hayden

Rule Number Two: Lessons I Learned in a Combat Hospital by Heidi Squier Kraft

Mass Casualties: A Young Medic's True Story by Michael Anthony

Summer 1990 by Firyal Alshalabi

Sold by Patricia McCormick

Cut by Patricia McCormick

My Brother's Keeper by Patricia McCormick

WEBSITES:

www.pattymccormick.com/ This is the author's webpage. Features books, biography, For Teachers section, interviews, excerpts and reviews.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War Information about the war in Iraq.

www.huffingtonpost.com/news/warwire This website features effects of the Iraq war.

www.iraq-war.ru/ News from Iraq occupation and resistance.

teenadvice.about.com/.../warzone/blC1iraqwarcoveragehp.htm This site features arguments and advice to and from teens regarding the war.

www.teenink.com/.../all/.../The-Iraq-War-Causes-and-Effects Teens share thoughts on Iraq War.

BOOKTALK:

Publishers Weekly calls McCormick's *Purple Heart* a "Suspenseful psychological thriller" and "Timely and provocative, a nuanced exploration of war, heroism and morality". Private Matt Duffy wakes up in an army hospital in Iraq honored with a Purple Heart and no memory. After sessions with a psychologist and piecing together any memory he can from what he hears from others, he is "healed" and sent back into combat. Navigating day-to-day operations of war, relationships between his comrades and himself, trying to remember an Iraqi child he was close to, along with the navigation of the craggy remains of his memory has him struggling with combat. There he realizes that there is no black and white with guilt, in memory or in real life as the events surrounding his injury surface.

Prepared by:

Jen Seay, YABA Chair, Carolina Forest High School, jseay@horrycountyschools.net

Rock 'N' Roll Soldier: A Memoir

Dean Ellis Kohler
HarperTeen, 2009
288p.

SUMMARY:

"During a time when none of us knew for sure if we would live or die, I came to know the true power of music." Dean Kohler is about to make it big—he's finally scored a national record deal! But his dreams are abruptly put on hold by the arrival of his draft notice. Now he's in Qui Nhon, Vietnam, serving as a military policeman. He keeps telling himself he's a musician, not a killer, and that he's lucky he's not fighting on the front lines. When Captain orders him to form a rock band, it's up to Dean to find instruments and players, pronto. Ingenuity and perseverance pay off and soon the band is traveling through treacherous jungle terrain to perform for troops in desperate need of an escape—even if it's only for three sets. And for Dean—who lives with death, violence, and the fear that anyone could be a potential spy (even his Vietnamese girlfriend)—the band becomes the one thing that gets him through the day. During one of the most controversial wars in recent American history, this incredible true story is about music and camaraderie in the midst of chaos.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Fallen Angels, Walter Dean Myers

A coming of age tale for young adults set in the trenches of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s; **Fallen Angels** is the story of Perry, a Harlem teenager who volunteers for the service when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry and his platoon come face-to-face with the Vietcong and the real horror of warfare. But violence and death aren't the only hardships. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments, and why the U.S. is there at all.

Ghosts of War : the true story of a 19-year-old GI, Ryan Smithson

In a harrowing memoir about combat, friendship, fear, and a soldier's commitment to his country, Smithson brings teen readers inside a world that few understand, as he describes his experience as a 19-year-old Army engineer in Iraq.

Purple Heart, Patricia McCormick

While recuperating in a Baghdad hospital from a traumatic brain injury sustained during the Iraq War, eighteen-year-old soldier Matt Duffy struggles to recall what happened to him and how it relates to his ten-year-old friend, Ali.

Sunrise Over Fallujah, Walter Dean Myers

Robin "Birdy" Perry, a new army recruit from Harlem, isn't quite sure why he joined the army, but he's sure where he's headed: Iraq. Birdy and the others in the Civilian Affairs Battalion are supposed to help secure and stabilize the country and successfully interact with the Iraqi people. Officially, the code name for their maneuvers is Operation Iraqi Freedom. But the young men and women in the CA unit have a simpler name for it: WAR

The Thing a Brother Knows, Dana Reinhardt

Levi's brother, a marine, returns from war safe. However, Boaz is not the brother Levi has known. Boaz was a high school star who had it all and gave it up to serve in a war Levi can't understand. Everything has been on hold since Boaz left. With the help of his two best friends Levi has fumbled his way through high school, weary of his role as little brother to the hero. But when Boaz walks through the front door after his tour of duty is over, Levi knows there's something wrong. Boaz is home, safe. But Levi knows that his brother is not the same. Maybe things will never return to normal. Then Boaz leaves again, and this time Levi follows him, determined to understand who his brother was, who he has become, and how to bring him home again.

WEBSITES

Rock 'N' Roll Soldier: a memoir: <http://www.rocknrollsoldieramemoir.com/>

Website contains Vietnam Photo Gallery, YouTube videos footage from Vietnam warzone, Electrical Banana, Rock 'N' Roll Soldier booktalk, etc., links to audio straight from the war zone in 1967, and discussion guides

Dean Ellis Kohler: <http://www.deanelliskohler.com/>

Website is primarily composed of photo history of author

Vietnam Veterans Memorial USA: <http://thewall-usa.com/index.asp>

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall USA website is dedicated to honoring those who died in the Vietnam War. Since it first went on line in 1996 it has evolved into something more. It is now also a place of healing for those affected by one of the most divisive wars in our nation's history.

Vietnam Veterans Oral History and Folklore Project: <http://faculty.buffalostate.edu/fishlm/folksongs/index.htm>

The Vietnam Veterans Oral History and Folklore Project is engaged in an ongoing undertaking to collect, preserve and make better known the folklore, especially the folksongs, of Americans in war.

Qui Nhon, Vietnam, 1967: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2SBabiI9KU&feature=player_embedded

YouTube video of a quick ride through downtown Qui Nhon, Vietnam with teen soldier Dean Kohler of the 127th MP Company, US Army

Rock 'N' Roll Soldier a memoir Book Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THaDlvj4Uo>

YouTube video book trailer for Rock 'N' Roll Soldier: A Memoir, by Dean Ellis Kohler with Susan VanHecke; Foreword by Graham Nash

Electrical Banana(The Band): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFHUPmL2nMA&feature=related>

YouTube video of Electrical Banana, touring and recording rock band created by teen soldier Dean Kohler of the 127th MPs, US Army, at Qui Nhon, Vietnam in 1967

BOOKTALK

In 1966, Dean Kohler was a typical car-girl-and-music-loving teen from Portsmouth, VA. He dreams of making it big with his rock and roll band. Dean is thrilled when Tower Records offers him a national record deal. There's just one problem – Uncle SAM sends him a draft notice. He isn't a soldier, just a High School graduate, a teenager being sent off to Vietnam. With no choice, Dean turns down the record deal, packs his bags and goes to basic training, leaving behind his guitar, his girlfriend, his family, and his innocence. Within a year he is sent to Qui Nhon, Vietnam with the 127th Military Police Company building a camp from scratch in the blistering heat, stinging mosquitoes, and the rain—the never-ending unrelenting rain. Within the first three days of his tour, Dean witnesses some of the horrors of war including seeing another soldier get his head blown off. Struggling with questioning the reasons he is there, he finds solace in his love for music. Soon he is ordered by his platoon commander to form a band to lift the spirits of fellow soldiers and give them a little something of home. The band, Electrical Banana, rapidly becomes in-demand and has them traveling to nearby troop companies to perform, even when it means traveling unarmed through VC territory; playing live gigs between their own live battles. Scenes of panic and bloodshed alternate with the wild cheering of weary soldiers. The healing power of music is a recurring theme in this memoir. In the middle of a warzone, the power of music allows the soldiers to escape, if just for the length of a song, one song at a time. How do Dean's experiences compare to those soldiers dealing with our current war situation? Do they understand the reasons behind going and fighting? Do you? Gain insight from this real life journey of Dean Kohler in *Rock 'n' Roll Soldier: a Memoir* as he and his bandmate squaddies make the band, bang out rock and roll classics and even record an album while serving their country.

Prepared by:

Dee Robinson, Librarian, Richland County Public Library, <http://www.myrcpl.com>

Shiver

Maggie Stiefvater

Scholastic, 2009

392 pgs.

SUMMARY:

For years, Grace has watched the wolves in the woods behind her house. One yellow-eyed wolf--her wolf--is a chilling presence she can't seem to live without. Meanwhile, Sam has lived two lives: In winter, the frozen woods, the protection of the pack, and the silent company of a fearless girl. In summer, a few precious months of being human . . . until the cold makes him shift back again. Now, Grace meets a yellow-eyed boy whose familiarity takes her breath away. It's her wolf. It has to be. But as winter nears, Sam must fight to stay human--or risk losing himself, and Grace, forever. (summary from Ingram)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY. . .

Blood & Chocolate by Annette Curtis Clause

Strange Angels, Jealousy, & Betrayals by Lili St. Crow

Intertwined by Gena Showalter

The Summoning, The Awakening, The Reckoning by Kelley Armstrong

Dead is a State of Mind by Marlene Perez

Moonlight, Full Moon, Dark of the Moon, Shadow of the Moon by Rachel Hawthorne

Claire de Lune by Christine Johnson

WEBSITES:

www.maggiestiefvater.com (Author's Website)

www.mythicalrealm.com/legends/werewolf.html (Mythical Realm website)

Discussed the myths about werewolves and other shape shifters from around the world)

www.wsu.edu/~delahoyad/wolf.comment.html (Washington State University)

Student project on werewolves for Washington State University

BOOKTALK:

The wolves were always around as soon as the weather got cold. Grace would watch them from her window. She had an encounter with them as a child, but for some reason she was drawn to the one with the yellow eyes.

Sam has loved Grace for years, even though they have never officially met. He has a secret; he's only human part of the year. Each year, the time that he is human gets shorter. He is only human when the weather is hot, but now that doesn't work.

As they meet and learn about each other, they try to find a way to be together. Having seen what happens to others when they change fully, not remembering being human, they are willing to try anything to help Sam. Can some friends help them, even when they are being targeted by parents and other wolves?

Prepared by: Julie Vaught

Unsigned Hype: A Novel

Booker T. Mattison

Revell, 2009

206 pages

SUMMARY:

Fifteen-year-old Tory Tyson dreams of producing hip hop records, and as he rapidly begins to experience success doing just that, he finds that he must make choices between the way he has been raised by his single, God-fearing mother and the folks he meets in the music world. (Follet)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY:

- *Muchacho: A Novel* by LouAnne Johnson
- *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story* by Ben Carson
- *The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream* by Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jemkins, and Rameck Hunt
- *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers

WEBSITES:

http://schools-wikipedia.org/wp/h/Hip_hop_music.htm

Information about the history and influence of Hip Hop music

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Bronx>

Information about the Bronx, NY

<http://christianteens.about.com/od/getinvolved/a/youthgrouphub.htm>

Ways Youth Groups Can Reach Out to Christian Teens

BOOKTALK:

Tory Tyson may only be in high school, but he knows what he wants out of life--a successful music career. And he's not going to learn about all that at school. So when school lets out next month he's not going back. He's finally ready to stop spinning old records at parties and start laying down his own beats--and the Unsigned Hype music contest is the perfect place to launch his career. But will he be able to handle the fame and fortune he seeks? Can he stay away from the haters and stay focused? Finally, when Tory must choose between his family and the streets, will his decision cost him the ultimate price?

Prepared by:

Kathy Carroll

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