

Activity Guide
Young Adult Book Award Nominees
2010-2011



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

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All We Know of Heaven

Jacquelyn Mitchard

Harper Collins, 2008

312 pages

SUMMARY: Best friends Maureen and Bridget are in a car accident on an icy road where Bridget dies and is mistakenly identified as Maureen. When Maureen recovers, she must deal with the effects of the accident, surviving, and the loss of her best friend.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Mistaken Identity by Don Van Ryn

Wrecked by E. R. Frank

Bringing up the Bones by Lara M. Zeises

After the Wreck, I Picked Myself up, Spread My Wings, and Flew Away by Joyce Carol Oates

WEBSITES:

<http://jackiemitchard.com/>

BOOKTALK:

Best friends Maureen and Bridget, often referred to as twins or look-alikes, drive to cheerleading practice when Maureen accidentally slides on the icy roads, crosses the dividing line and hits an 18-wheeler. Rushed to the hospital, Maureen dies while disfigured Bridget lies in a coma. One family grieves and prepares a funeral for Maureen while the other readies mentally, physically and financially for the months of therapy that lie ahead. While the families make their preparations, a dental surgeon checks various records and discovers that a terrible mistake has been made--the teens have been misidentified.

Prepared by: Karen Olson ☺

Artichoke's Heart

Suzanne Supplee
Dutton Books, 2008
276 pages

SUMMARY: When she is almost sixteen years old, Rosemary decides she is sick of being overweight, mocked at school and at Heavenly Hair--her mother's beauty salon--and feeling out of control, and as she slowly loses weight, she realizes that she is able to cope with her mother's cancer, having a boyfriend for the first time, and discovering that other people's lives are not as perfect as they seem from the outside.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY....

Looks by Madeleine George

One Fat Summer by Robert Lipsyte

Sweethearts by Sara Zarr

The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things by Carolyn Mackler

Keeping the Moon by Sarah Dessen

Pretty Face by Mary Logan

WEBSITES:

Suzanne Supplee - <http://www.suzannesupplee.com/>

The author's website contains information about her personal life, her books, and her appearances. Read questions posed by her fans or check out her blog.

Weight Loss for Teens—How to Lose Weight -

http://exercise.about.com/od/weightloss/a/teenweightloss_2.htm

This website provides teens with information about weight loss programs and exercise. Information is reviewed by a group of professionals in the medical field.

Improving Teen Self Confidence -

http://youthdevelopment.suite101.com/article.cfm/improving_teen_self_confidence

Brief article offers tips for teenagers, particularly girls, who want to boost their self confidence.

BOOKTALK:

To say that it was not the best time of Rosemary Goode's life would be an understatement. At home, her mother and her aunt nagged her about losing weight. At school, she was the brunt of the thin, beautiful girls' jokes. Even her Christmas presents, motivational books from her aunt and a treadmill from her mother, were disappointing. But Rosemary was resourceful, and she had a plan. The treadmill proved to be a great place to air dry clothes that she had washed in an effort to stretch them out. And each time she ate because she was hurt or angry or wanted to

prove she was in control, she vowed that she would not eat all the waffles or attack her stash of chocolate again.

Life, though, does not always go according to plan. Rosemary had hoped to return to school after Christmas vacation a few pounds lighter, but when she stepped on the scales on the fateful January morning, she saw something she had never seen before. She had actually managed to gain ten pounds, and now she weighed in at 200 pounds! To make matters worse, she's fighting with her aunt more than ever, and her mother has cancer. There are new worries at school, too. Why is Kay-Kay Reese, one of the prettiest, most popular girls in school, suddenly being nice to her? And could that handsome athlete that Rosemary has secretly been watching in study hall actually want to date her?

Join Rosemary as she embarks on a journey of life changing discoveries and nurturing relationships, both old and new. No one has a perfect life, and everyone has problems, but with the support of family and friends, anything is possible, even when the journey takes us to places we don't expect to go. Share Rosemary's trials and triumphs. Read *Artichoke's Heart* by Suzanne Supplee.

Prepared by: Melissa Mixon, Media Specialist, Chesterfield High School

Bewitching Season

Marissa Doyle

Henry Holt and Company

346 pages

SUMMARY: In 1837 London, daughters of wealth didn't concern themselves with careers but they did concern themselves with being presented or "coming out." This is a time when they are to find husbands. The Leland twins were no exception. They were of the age to be presented. Persephone Leland, Persy for short, was rather shy and devoted herself to her studies which included magic. Her sister, Penelope, Pen for short, was the total opposite, but her magic was not perfected as her sisters. Both sisters lived with their parents and younger brother. They also lived with their governess, Miss Allardyce. She taught both academics and magic. When they arrived in London, they knew something was not quite right. They found their governess gone and found out there was a plot to control the soon-to-be queen. As the sisters raced through Mayfair ballrooms and royal palaces, the sisters overcame bad millinery, shady royal spinsters, and a mysterious Irish wizard. Along the way, through all the mayhem, Persy learned that everything she is seeking is in front of her eyes.

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK TRY.....

Betraying Season by Marissa Doyle

Princess of the Midnight Ball by Jessica Day George

Fire by Kristin Cashore

Beautiful Creatures by Kami Garcia

Amaranth Enchantment by Julie Berry

WEBSITES:

Marissa Doyle – Historical Fiction Writer - www.marissadoyle.com

Henry Holt Books - <http://us.macmillian.com>

BOOKTALK:

Mr. Carrighar sat back in his chair. "I met them today" he said abruptly, dropping his gaze.

"Met whom?" Miss Allardyce took another sip of wine, trying to drag her attention away from memories of Michael's – er – Mr. Carrighar's infectious laugh.

"Your pupils. Persephone and Penelope."

"What!" Miss Allardyce nearly dropped her wineglass. "Where? Are they all right?"

"They're quite well, and very charming girls. My master was quite taken with them."

Mr. Carrighar was still staring at the table.

“What were you...?” A horrible suspicion began to creep over her. “No. You can’t drag them into this, I won’t let your use them -----“

Mr. Carrighar held up one hand. “No one said anything about using them, Miss Allardyce. They need not have anything at all to do with this -----“

“----- if I accede to your blackmail and give what you want,” she finished. The delicate wine she was sipping with such pleasure – the wine Mr. Carrighar had brought for her – seemed to sour in her stomach. She made a gesture and the glass disappeared.

“That is a crude way to put it” Mr. Carrighar’s voice was steady, but his hands betrayed him by curling into fists.

“Nonetheless, it’s true” Miss Allardyce rose and took a few jerky, hesitating steps, then whirled back to face Mr. Carrighar. “How could you?” she shot at him. “They’re innocent children.”

He rose too, “They’re trained witches like you.”

Prepared by: Cheryl Roycroft

Climbing the Stairs
Padma Venkatraman.
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2008
247 pages

SUMMARY: In India, in 1941, when her father becomes brain-damaged in a non-violent protest march, fifteen-year-old Vidya and her family are forced to move in with her father's extended family and become accustomed to a totally different way of life.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Koyal Dark, Mango Sweet by Kashmiri Sheth
Keeping Corner by Kashmiri Sheth
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini
Sold by Patricia McCormick
Beneath My Mother's Feet by Amjed Qamar

WEBSITES:

Climbing the Stairs a Novel by Padma Venkatraman - <http://www.climbingthestairsbook.com/>
Padma T.V. - www.ciofindia.com/padma
Padma's Books - www.padmasbooks.blogspot.com.
The Caste System and the Stages of Life in Hinduism - <http://www.friesian.com/caste.htm>

BOOKTALK:

The year is 1941, the place, India. Vidya is 15 years old, and unlike other girls her age who are consumed with the idea of impeding nuptials, she dreams only of attending college. Being the outspoken, willful, and adventurous girl she is, she unknowingly pulls her father into a protest march that turns violent where he is brutally attacked and rendered brain damaged. Now Vidya and her close-knit family are forced to move into her paternal uncle's traditional household where the women are expected to be subservient to men and are married off as soon as possible. This shatters Vidya's dreams of attending college. Vidya's heart is heavy with her sense of responsibility for her father's disability, her changing role as a young woman in a traditional family, and the pressures she now feels to accept an arranged marriage. While taking care of her aunt's baby as one of her chores, Vidya breaks the rules and sneaks up the stairs into the library that is off limits to women. Not only does she find refuge there, she meets a young man named Raman. She is surprised to discover she is attracted to this young man who treats her as an equal and encourages her to pursue her intellectual interest. Read *Climbing the Stairs* by Padma Venkatraman, and go with Vidya into an unknown and uncertain future.

Prepared by: Carol Ross ☺

Confessions of a Triple Shot Betty

Jody Gehrman

The Penguin Group, 2008

255 pages

SUMMARY: A modern day *Much Ado About Nothing* with a twist. A summer story filled with friendship, romance, scandal, make-ups and, of course, coffee.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Triple Shot Bettys in Love by Jody Gehrman (the official Betty sequel)

Much Ado About Nothing by Shakespeare (it's kind of the original)

Cindy Ella by Robin Palmer

The Juliet Club by Suzanne Harper

Audrey, Wait! By Robin Benway

WEBSITES:

The official Betty website:

<http://us.penguin.com/static/html/yr/features/tripleshotbetty.html>

The world of Floating World Tattoos, but no Alistair Drake...

<http://www.floatingworldtattoo.ca/www/>

BOOKTALK:

“Great. So much for my summer. I should have known. School’s not even out yet, and Operation Girlfriend is already in tatters. Amber, Hero, and I were going to be glorious; armed with big sunglasses and supersized ice mochas, we were supposed to take the crazy, tourist-trap, sun-and-wine-soaked town by storm. ... But what are we doing instead? Enduring awkward pauses and thinly veiled snarkiness. Fabu, Just what I had in mind.”

Geena is a skater Betty, working with her best friend Amber at the tiny coffee shack known as Triple Shot Betty’s. Hero, Geena’s extremely sheltered boarding school cousin, is coming home to spend the summer in wine country Sonoma with her dad. Geena is psyched about the three of them being best friends and painting each others toenails, but it doesn’t really work out that way. From the minute Hero steps into Triple Shot Betty’s life, Amber hates her, and Geena doesn’t really know why. And, of course, that’s not all.

Amber is infatuated with John Jamison, the super popular and cocky class president and half brother of PJ, the Prince, Jamison. John, however, doesn’t care about Amber. He wants Hero, the new girl in town. But Hero has eyes only for Claudio, the hunky Italian boy visiting to work in the vineyards whom only she can communicate with. And then there’s Ben, PJ’s best friend. Ben and Geena have been arguing nemeses sense the fifth grade, always trying to one up each other.

And, alas, even more goes wrong. John is up to no good, Amber does something she'll regret, Hero's reputation gets destroyed, and Geena gets pulled into everything. The girls, along with some other broken hearts, plot to take down the evil, and sadly horribly attractive, John. So, how's it all going to end for the Bettys?

Prepared by: Harriet Boatwright ☺

The Dead and the Gone

Susan Beth Pfeffer

Harcourt, 2008

321 pages

SUMMARY: After a meteor hits the moon and sets off a series of horrific climate changes, seventeen-year-old Alex Morales must take care of his sisters alone in the chaos of New York City.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Life as We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer

The Silenced by James DeVita

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Exodus by Julie Bertagna

(Coming April 2010 – the sequel: *This World We Live In*)

WEBSITES:

Discussion Guide:

http://www.harcourtbooks.com/images/pdf/guides/life_as_we_knew_it_dg.pdf

Q&A with the author:

<http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6566872.html>

All about the moon:

<http://www.moonconnection.com/>

BOOKTALK:

Alex Morales is a good kid. He's seventeen, living in New York City, and works at a pizza parlor when he's not attending school at St. Vincent de Paul Academy. He also looks out for his two younger sisters and studies hard so he can go to college.

One especially overcast day, Alex and his sisters arrive to an empty apartment to find the power is out, along with the cable TV and radio. With his mother working at the hospital, his father in Puerto Rico attending a funeral, and older brother Carlos serving with the U. S. Army, it is up to Alex to assess the situation and reassure his sisters. Little does Alex know that his world is about to change forever.

As in the author's previous book, *Life As We Knew It*, an asteroid has hit the moon and knocked it off its orbit, wreaking havoc on the world. But in New York City, only those with money or connections will be able to escape the chaos. And Alex has neither money nor connections. He soon realizes that he will be the sole provider and caretaker for his siblings. As days roll by, and essentials for living are harder to come by, Alex will be forced to "bodyshop" –

stealing warm clothing and other items he can trade for food from those unfortunate beings left lying in the streets. Throughout the nightmare, the Morales' strong faith, and the faith and help of other survivors keep them going. But for how long?

The Dead and the Gone is a terrifying tale, especially in the setting of New York City, the scene of other horrible tragedies. It is so realistic that you may find yourself re-thinking your own emergency survival plans.

Prepared by: Karen Tisdale

Defying the Diva

D. Anne Love

Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2008

257 p.

SUMMARY: During Haley's freshman year of high school, a campaign of gossip and bullying causes her to be socially ostracized, but after spending the summer living with her aunt, working at a resort, making new friends, and dating a hunky lifeguard, she learns how to stand up for herself and begins to trust again.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Burger Wuss, M. T. Anderson

Hoping to lose his loser image, Anthony plans revenge on a bully which results in a war between two competing fast food restaurants, Burger Queen and O'Dermott's.

Kissing the Rain, Kevin Brooks

Fifteen-year-old Moo Nelson, shy, overweight, and bullied by his classmates, finds his life spinning out of control after he witnesses a car chase and a fight that results in a murder.

The Skin I'm In, Sharon Flake

Thirteen-year-old Maleeka, uncomfortable because her skin is extremely dark, meets a new teacher and makes some discoveries about how to love who she is and what she looks like.

Fade to Black, Alex Flinn

An HIV-positive high school student hospitalized after being attacked, the bigot accused of the crime, and the only witness, a classmate with Down Syndrome, reveal how the assault has changed their lives as they tell of its aftermath.

Looks, Madeleine George

Two high school girls, one an anorexic poet and the other an obese loner, form an unlikely friendship.

WEBSITES:

D. Anne Love Website: <http://www.dannelove.com/>

This site offers information on the author and her books, as well as interviews, reviews, pictures, author's blog, and a wide array of other information including book discussion guides.

Teens Against Bullying Website: <http://www.pacerteensagainstabullying.org/>

PACER's Teens Against Bullying Web site is a relevant, edgy, and unique educational resource for bullying prevention designed to engage, empower and educate all teens. Information is presented in an innovative, engaging and interactive style. There are solutions—creative resources that all teens—can use to educate other teens and young

people and to raise awareness in their community or to help other teens in bullying situations.

Do Something.org: <http://www.dosomething.org/whatsyourthing/Violence+And+Bullying>

Dosomething.org believes you have the power to make a difference. It is our aim to inspire, support and celebrate a generation of doers: people who see the need to do something, believe in their ability to get it done, and then take action. Every year bullying and teen on teen violence affects millions of students.

BOOKTALK:

Haley Patterson's freshman year was off to a great start. She has two best friends and her dream job of working on the school newspaper. But when an article she writes for the newspaper's gossip column offends school diva and resident mean girl, Camilla Quinn, her year goes from good to bad. Camilla launches a campaign of hurtful gossip and rumors against Haley. Embarrassing and frightening anonymous notes are being placed in her locker and on her desk. She is even sent email encouraging her to commit suicide and put an end to her misery. Friends abandon her, fearful of becoming gossip victims themselves, leaving Haley alone and miserable. Keeping a low profile, Haley chooses not to tell anyone including her parents about the humiliation she is enduring at school. For Haley, when summer arrives, it cannot come soon enough. She is sent out of town, while her parents are traveling in Europe, to stay with an aunt in a small resort community for the summer. Haley gets a job at the local country club but has trouble making new friendships. She finds that she is still dealing with a lack of self-esteem and needs to gain the confidence and courage to trust others despite her worries about returning to school in the fall. Will Haley be able to stand up to the Diva? Will her classmates continue to treat her as an outcast? When another becomes the target of the diva, will Haley let history repeat itself?

Prepared by: Dee Robinson, Librarian, Richland County Public Library

The Devil's Paintbox

Victoria McKernan
Knopf, p2009, c2009
359 pages

SUMMARY: In 1866, fifteen-year-old Aidan and his thirteen-year-old sister Maddy, penniless orphans, leave drought-stricken Kansas on a wagon train hoping for a better life in Seattle, but find there are still many hardships to be faced. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Shackleton's Stowaway- Victoria McKernan
The Smile- Donna Jo Napoli
Ten Cents a Dance- Christine Fletcher
Escape Along the Oregon Trail- F. Eugene Barber
The Prairie- James Fenimore Cooper

WEBSITES:

Victoria McKernan:

<http://www.randomhouse.com/author/results.pperl?authorid=54607>

Oregon Trail:

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/Allabout.html>

BOOKTALK:

If you enjoyed playing the computer game Oregon Trail, *The Devil's Paintbox* by Victoria McKernan is for you. It takes the grainy greenish picture of the old game and paints a vivid picture of what life on the Oregon Trail might have been like. The book chronicles a young man's journey into adulthood in the Wild West, starting at age 15, poor and destitute, eating a grasshopper a day if lucky to stay alive- into turning into a man working off a debt to himself and others. Aiden relentlessly tries to protect and at the same time allow for his sister to grow up. Aiden, during the journey, befriends some unlikely candidates and in the end is forced to go against his white society in aid of his Native American friends in the struggle against smallpox- the devil's paint. Aiden and his younger sister Maddy endure hardships unknown to readers of today, all the while maintaining an ever-present desire to move onward and upward. The book is not so much uplifting as it is insightful, and even inspiring. *The Devil's Paintbox* is a gripping historical fiction that does not gloss over events of old, rather tells of life as an everyday struggle to survive, and survive knowing that you did what you had to do.

Prepared by: Jen Seay

The Devouring
Simon Holt
Little, Brown, 2009
231 pages

SUMMARY: The existence of Vours, supernatural creatures who feast on fear and attack on the eve of the winter solstice, becomes a terrifying reality for fifteen-year-old Reggie when she begins to suspect that her timid younger brother might be one of their victims.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

It by Stephen King

Pet Sematary by Stephen King

Soulstice by Simon Holt

WEBSITES:

The Devouring <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7vIDVkJVB4&fmt=18>

The Devouring.com <http://www.thedevouring.com/about-the-book/>

YA Books and More <http://naomibates.blogspot.com/2008/10/devouring-by-simon-holt.html>

BOOKTALK:

Reggie was just an average 15 year old girl, until her mother left her and her timid 8 year old brother with a workaholic dad. Now, she has to do all the cooking and cleaning while taking care of her brother. Reggie enjoys scary things whether it's movies, books, or pranks. But one day, at the bookstore where she works part time, her whole world changes. She finds a book called "The Vours." To Reggie it's just another scary book, but as she reads it to her brother one night, she realizes that the story could be true. The next day, she notices her once scared, nice brother is now a mean, scary, little jerk. And when Reggie and her best friend, Aaron, try to save her brother from the Vour inside of him, they learn dark secrets about the Vours. They will have to face their greatest fears to save the soul of her brother that was stolen by the Vour. His body is there, but not his soul; will Reggie ever get her brother back?

Prepared by: Taylor Schultz ☺

The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks

E. Lockhart
Hyperion, 2008
345 pages

SUMMARY: Sophomore Frankie starts dating senior Matthew Livingston, but when he refuses to talk about the all-male secret society that he and his friends belong to, Frankie infiltrates the society in order to enliven their mediocre pranks. (Summary from Follett.)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Boyfriend List by E. Lockhart

Fly on the Wall: How One Girl Saw Everything by E. Lockhart

The Boy Book by E. Lockhart

Dramarama by E. Lockhart

The Treasure Map of Boys by E. Lockhart

How to Be Bad by E. Lockhart, Sarah Mlynowski, and Lauren Myracle

King of the Lost and Found by John Lekich

Spud by John van de Ruit

WEBSITES:

E. Lockhart's Blog - <http://www.theboyfriendlist.com/>

E. Lockhart (official site) - <http://e-lockhart.com/main/>

Interview with E. Lockhart by Debbi Michko Florence - http://www.debbimichkoflorence.com/author_interviews/2008/ELockhart.html

Panopticon (Wikipedia entry) - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panopticon>

BOOKTALK:

Frankie Landau-Banks is a sophomore at the elite Alabaster school. She has a popular senior boyfriend, people seem to like her, she gets good grades, etc. She should be happy with her life, right? Well, not so much. Frankie is tired of accepting the roles society has chosen for her. When her boyfriend says she's adorable, she wonders why he doesn't say that she's brilliant.

Anyway, Frankie knows that her boyfriend and several other of the school's most popular guys are members of the Loyal Order of the Basset Hounds, a secret all-male society in which her father was a member during his days at Alabaster. Frankie is tired of being left out of the club's dealings, so she decides to infiltrate it and pose as their leader. It works, and these guys have no idea that she's the one pulling their strings.

Of course, as is the way of things, chaos inevitably ensues, and Frankie and the Bassets must face up to what has been going on. Will Frankie be exposed in her quest for power? Will she go back to being a docile little girl content with her place in the world? What will happen to the Loyal Order of the Basset Hounds? Read *The Disreputable History of Frankie-Landau Banks* to discover the damage an ambitious, brilliant, angry high school sophomore can wreak on the unsuspecting world around her.

Prepared by: Kelly L. Knight, Media Specialist, Woodmont High School

How to Build a House

Dana Reinhardt

Wendy Lamb Books, 2008

227 pages

SUMMARY: Seventeen-year-old Harper Evans hopes to escape the effects of her father's divorce on her family and friendships by volunteering her summer to build a house in a small Tennessee town devastated by a tornado. (Summary from Follett.)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Flygirl by Sherri Smith

I Am Apache by Tanya Landman

Just Another Hero by Sharon M. Draper

Reaching Out by Francisco Jiménez

If I Had a Hammer by David Rubel

How It Happens at the Building Site by Jenna Anderson

Habitat for Humanity How to Build a House Revised & Updated (Habitat for Humanity) by Larry Haun, Vincent Laurence, and Tim Snyder

WEBSITES:

[Volunteer in your area | Do Something](#)

1000's of the best teen volunteer opportunities in the United States. ... Your extra little effort to help someone or some organization out can make a world ...

www.dosomething.org/volunteer

[20 Ways or Teenagers to Help Other People by Volunteering](#)

This program specifically for teens at Phoenix Public Libraries trains teen volunteers to assist library staff and the public during the Summer Reading ...

www.bygpub.com/books/tg2rw/volunteer.htm

[America's Teenage](#)

File Format: PDF/Adobe Acrobat - [View as HTML](#)

Organizations where teen volunteers first learned about their volunteer activities.

Includes membership organizations and professional societies. ...

www.independentsector.org/programs/research/teenvolun1.pdf

[Volunteer Opportunities for Teens - Teens and Volunteering](#)

Gain experience and help others by volunteering. A list of volunteer opportunities for teens in North America.

teenadvice.about.com/cs/volunteering/

[Local Volunteer Opportunities for Teens](#)

A listing of where youth can find opportunities to volunteer their time and efforts.
parentingteens.about.com/.../youthorganizations/.../teen_volunteer.htm

[High School and Teen Volunteer Abroad Organizations](#)

Organizations specializing in teen and high school volunteering as selected by TransitionsAbroad.com.
www.transitionsabroad.com/.../teen/teen_volunteer_organizations.shtml

BOOKTALK:

Volunteering, community service, and mission trips are important in many teenager's lives. Some high schools or high school organizations require some form of community service. This information may also tip the scale toward acceptance on college applications.

Harper Evans of Los Angeles, California joins a volunteer program to build a house over the summer. She and a number of other high school students from all over the country will spend twelve weeks with "Homes from the Heart" building a home for the Wright family in Bailey, Tennessee, to replace the one destroyed in a tornado. The family consists of Mom, a nurse; Dad, the high school football coach and English teacher; Teddy, a recent high school graduate; and 9 year old twin sisters. With this organization, a family member is required to work on the building as well - that would be Teddy, since his parents are working in the community.

Harper is completely unfamiliar with the steps required to build a house. She and the others learn to work as teams, doing a variety of jobs from digging the footers for the foundation to putting on the roof. She even becomes concerned when she learns about some of the shortcuts that were taken to cut costs. For instance, instead of digging a basement, the organization purchased a prefabricated tornado room to keep the family safe in case of another tornado.

By summer's end, Harper and her new friends have learned a lot about building, not just houses, but friendships, dreams and plans for the future.

Prepared by: Eleene Levander, School Librarian, Retired

The Hunger Games

Suzanne Collins

Scholastic Press, 2008

374 pages

SUMMARY: Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen accidentally becomes a contender in the annual Hunger Games, a grave competition hosted by the Capitol where young boys and girls are pitted against one another in a televised fight to the death. (Summary from Follett)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury

The Giver by Lois Lowery

The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

Catching Fire (sequel to *The Hunger Games*) by Suzanne Collins

The Victors (third in the series – due Sept 2010) by Suzanne Collins

Graceling by Kristin Cashore

WEBSITES:

www.suzannecollinsbooks.com/the_hunger_games_69765.htm - learn a little more about Ms. Collins and her other works

<http://www.scholastic.com/thehungergames/> - games, video, a blog and more connected to this exciting story

BOOKTALK:

Maintaining control is never easy, but the government of Panem has discovered a way of subduing dissidents. Each year, two people from each of the twelve districts are chosen to participate in *The Hunger Games* – a fight to the death for all but one contestant. This year, Katniss steps up to take her younger sister's place. Once the selection is made, Katniss and Peeta (the male participant from District 12) are caught in a whirlwind of preparation. There are lessons in defense, survival, and television appeal.

The game requires each participant to outlast, outwit and out-manuever the other contestants – while the entire country watches on their television screens each day. Brutal tasks, unbearable situations, and manipulated settings test each contestant to his or her breaking point. The only way out? Personal death or the murder of the rest of the group.

What possible plan can Katniss and Peeta develop that guarantees their survival and their safe return home? Read *The Hunger Games* to see what happens to this pair of warriors.

Prepared by: Beth Pace, Spartanburg School District One

If I Stay
Gayle Forman
Dutton Books, 2009
201 pages

SUMMARY: While in a coma following an automobile accident that killed her parents and younger brother, seventeen-year-old Mia, a gifted cellist, weighs whether to live with her grief or join her family in death.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

All We Know of Heaven by Jacquelyn Mitchard
Wrecked by E. R. Frank
Would You by Marthe Jocelyn
Memoirs of a Teenage Amnesiac by Gabrielle Zevin

WEBSITES:

Discussion Guide
http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/penguin/if_i_stay_dg.pdf
Video trailers, author interview
<http://www.ifistay.com>
Author's website
<http://www.galeforman.com>
For Teens Facing Loss
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fy879>

(A movie is in development for 2011)

BOOKTALK:

Seventeen-year-old Mia has a lot going for her – her musician boyfriend Adam, a possible scholarship to Juilliard, and her quirky but close knit family. Her biggest worry is leaving friends and family behind after graduation to pursue her passion for the cello.

On an unexpected snow day in February, Mia's family decides to take a short day trip to visit relatives in a nearby town. Once in the car, they have their usual battle over choice of radio stations, ultimately deciding to take turns. Mom's choice, NPR news, is first. After the news, it's Mia's turn, and she chooses the classical station. As she hears Beethoven's *Cello Sonata no. 3*, a piece she is currently working on, Mia closes her eyes and imagines herself playing along on her cello. Suddenly, the horrifying impact of a four ton speeding pickup truck shatters the calming melody. The noises are deafening, and the car explodes like it was hit by a bomb. Suddenly, everything is quiet except for one sound: Beethoven's *Cello Sonata no. 3* continues to play on the radio. Mia can hear it, so she must still be alive. Looking around for her younger

brother, she spies a hand sticking out of a nearby ditch. Reaching the outstretched arm, she realizes she is looking at her own bleeding, badly damaged body.

As Mia's life hangs in the balance, her life prior to the accident is told through a series of flashbacks. Mia knows her life is changed forever, and doesn't know if she is strong enough to face a life of painful losses. Should she stay... or should she go? Read *If I Stay* by Gayle Forman to see what Mia decides.

Prepared by: Karen Tisdale

Marcelo in the Real World

Francisco X. Stork
Levine Books, 2009
312 pages

SUMMARY: Marcelo Sandoval, a seventeen year old boy on the high functioning end of the autistic spectrum, faces new challenges, including romance and injustice, when he goes to work for his father in the mailroom of a corporate law firm.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Charles and Emma: The Darwins' Leap of Faith by Deborah Meiligman
The Lost Conspiracy by Frances Hardinge
When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead

WEBSITES:

The official site of Francisco Stork – www.franciscostork.com/about_marcelo.php

Teen Reads book review – www.teenreads.com/reviews/9780545054744.asp

Publisher, Arthur A. Levine – www.arthuralevinebooks.com

BOOKTALK:

Meet Marcelo, a 17 year old boy with autism-like behavior. Follow Marcelo as he struggles to answer the questions, “What is truth?” “How do you tell right from wrong?” “What if a good person does a bad thing; does that make him bad?” Marcelo has the answers to these questions and more when he spends the summer in the “real world” of his father’s law firm. Here he meets Jasmine, his beautiful and surprising coworker, and Wendell, the son of another partner in the firm. Here he learns about competition and jealousy, anger and desire, and romance and injustice. These experiences truly connect Marcelo to the “real world.”

Prepared by: Sarah Trani, Media Specialist, Fairfield Central High School

My Most Excellent Year:
A Novel of Love, Mary Poppins & Fenway Park

Kluger, Steve
Dial Books, 2008
403 pages

SUMMARY: Best friends and unofficial brothers since they were six, ninth-graders T.C. and Augie have got the world figured out. But that all changes when both friends fall in love for the first time. Enter Ale. She's pretty, sassy, and on her way to Harvard. T.C. falls hard, but Ale is playing hard to get. Meanwhile, Augie realizes that he's got a crush on a boy. It's not so clear to him, but to his family and friends, it's totally obvious! Told in alternating perspectives, this is the hilarious and touching story of their most excellent year, where these three friends discover love, themselves, and how a little magic and Mary Poppins can go a long way. (Summary from Ingram iPage)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

What's In a Name by Ellen Wittlinger
Vast Fields of Ordinary by Nick Burd
Dishes by Rich Wallace
Sleeping Freshman Never Lie by David Lubar
The Year of Secret Assignments by Jaclyn Moriarty
An Abundance of Katherines by John Green
Inside the Mind of Gideon Rayburn by Sarah Miller
Miracle Wimp by Erik Kraft

WEBSITES:

Author's website: www.stevekluger.com

Red Sox official site: redsox.mlb.com

Mary Poppins (Broadway site): www.broadway.com/shows/mary-poppins

BOOKTALK:

“Even though I didn't notice it while it was happening, I got reminded in ninth grade of a few things I guess I should have know all along: 1. A first kiss after five months means more than a first kiss after five minutes. 2. Always remember what it was like to be six. 3. Never, ever stop believing in magic, no matter how old you get. Because if you keep looking long enough and don't give up, sooner or later you're going to find Mary Poppins.”

T.C. Keller is a native Bostonian who loves the Red Sox. His whole family is named after members of former Red Sox greats. Baseball is his life. T.C.'s mother died when he was

young. He and his father are two of a kind who believe doing school projects to the fullest, even if it means making a 70 square inch model of the Washington Mall.

T. C.'s best friend is Augie, an "ABC," American Born Chinese. His father owns a bookstore while his mom reviews plays. Augie and T.C. have been friends, "brothers," since they were six years old. Augie loves musicals and Liza Minelli. Everyone has figured out that Augie is gay but Augie.

Alejandra, Ale, is the daughter of the former ambassador of Mexico. Her family has recently come to Boston because her father accepted a teaching position at Harvard. She tends to speak her mind, which gets her in trouble with her father. She secretly wants to sing and perform on stage.

Freshman year is a time of change for the three of them. During a writing assignment, they remember letters, memos, chats, and texts that helped them find themselves. New friendships, loves, and causes make them realize what is important.

Prepared by: Julie Vaught

Princess Ben

Catherine Gilbert Murdock
Graphia/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008
344 pages

SUMMARY: Princess Benevolence discovers an enchanted room while locked in the castle's highest tower by the conniving Queen Sophia and begins learning the magical arts, which may help her save her kingdom from a mortal threat. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Dairy Queen by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

Ice by Sarah Beth Durst

The Midnight Charter by David Whitley

Destiny's Path by Frewin Jones

Solace of the Road by Siobhan Dowd

WEBSITES:

Fairy Tales: www.ivyjoy.com/fables/classicfairytale.com/en

Catherine Gilbert Murdock: www.catherinemurdock.com/

BOOKTALK:

Princess Ben's life is tragically changed during a series of unfortunate incidences; her uncle and her mother are killed, and her father disappears. Ben, now the kingdom's heir, is relegated to the castle where resides her aunt Sophia, whose goal in life, outside of teaching Ben the ins and outs of being heir to the throne, is making her life miserable. Just when Ben has had all that she can take, she discovers a hidden wizard's room in the top spire of the castle where she is being kept and begins teaching herself, using the enchanted spell books she finds there. Upon hearing of a possible engagement, the threat of war, and still dealing with a missing father, Ben decides to use her magic to put her world back together. Flying on broomsticks and fighting dragons is nothing to this spunky, courageous young woman whose story grows more and more enchanting with each page.

Prepared by: Jen Seay

Princess of the Midnight Ball

Jessica Day George

Bloomsbury, 2009

280 pages

SUMMARY: In a retelling of the classic fairy tale *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, Princess Rose and her twelve younger sisters are condemned to dance for the wicked King Under Stone in his underground palace every night. They do this to fulfill the bargain their mother made with the evil king, and only death will free them. Armed with an invisibility cloak, enchanted knitting needles, and most importantly true love, Galen, a former soldier who now works in the palace gardens, sets out to free the girls, even if it costs him his life.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast- Robin McKinley

Ella Enchanted- Gail Carson Levine

Wildwood Dancing- Juliet Marillier

Princess Ben- Catherine Gilbert Murdock

Bewitching Season- Marissa Doyle

Book of a Thousand Days- Shannon Hale; James Noel Smith

The Swan Maiden- Heather Tomlinson

WEBSITES:

Germany: World Factbook

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gm.html>

Learn How to Knit: Knitting for Beginners

http://knitting.about.com/od/learntoknit/a/begin_knit.htm

Types of Flowers

http://www.flowers-cs.com/type_of_flowers.html

Eighteenth Century Garden History

<http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~rviau/ids/Artworks/gardenhistory.html>

BOOKTALK:

The kingdom is in an uproar. Every night the princesses go to their chambers and every morning their slippers are worn out. No one knows that Princess Rose and her twelve younger sisters are condemned to dance for the wicked King Under Stone in his underground palace every night to fulfill the bargain their mother made with the evil king... and only death will free them. Rumors of witchcraft spread throughout the kingdom and the girls know the end is near. Yet armed with

an invisibility cloak, enchanted knitting needles, and most importantly true, Galen, the palace gardener sets out to free the girls, even if it costs him his life. Will he find a way to save them, or will he be the next victim of King Under Stone's evil plan? Time is running out...

Prepared by: Kathy Carroll

Something Wicked

Alan Gratz

Dial Books, 2008

265 pages

SUMMARY: An adaptation of Shakespeare's "Macbeth," in which Horatio Wilkes seeks to solve the murder of Duncan MacKae at the Scottish Highland Games in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, after his friend Malcolm, the son of Duncan MacKae, becomes the lead suspect. (Summary from Follett)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Something Rotten by Alan Gratz

Macbeth by William Shakespeare

The Morgue and Me by John C. Ford

The Hanging Woods: A Novel by Scott Loring Sanders

A Mystery for Thoreau by Kin Platt

Enter Three Witches by Caroline B. Cooney

WEBSITES:

Alan Gratz's official web site - <http://www.alangratz.com/>

Goodreads entry on Alan M. Gratz -

http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/68794.Alan_M_Gratz

Alan Gratz's blog - <http://gratzindustries.blogspot.com/>

BOOKTALK:

Horatio Wilkes is an amateur sleuth, and when he discovers Duncan MacRae, the founder of the Scottish Highland Games, dead in his tent, he begins to investigate. At first, evidence points to Duncan's son, Malcolm, as the murderer, but Horatio soon discovers that his friend Mac and Mac's girlfriend Beth may be the true culprits. What drove them to this madness? And can Horatio prove they're to blame before he or anyone else is hurt?

If you've read *Macbeth*, you may already know the answers to these questions, but you may still be surprised at how things play out in this modern retelling. For those of you who haven't read *Macbeth*, *Something Wicked* may be just the hook you need to really get into Shakespeare's Scottish play.

Prepared by: Kelly Knight, Media Specialist, Woodmont High School

Sunrise Over Fallujah

Walter Dean Myers
Scholastic Press, 2008
282 pages

SUMMARY: Robin “Birdy” Perry, from Harlem, is sent to Iraq in 2003 as a member of the Civil Affairs Battalion, and his time there profoundly changes him.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers
The Contender by Robert Lipsyte
Soldier Boy by Dean Hughes
The Quiet Game by Greg Iles
Chanda’s Wars by Allan Stratton
All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque
Soldier X by Don Wulffson
The Big Nothing by Adrian Fogelin

WEBSITES:

Army Civil Affairs Specialist- <http://www.goarmy.com/JobDetail.do?id=193>
History of Blues Music- <http://www.history-of-rock.com/blues.htm>
History of Harlem- <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/iraas/harlem/>
Timeline of War in Iraq- <http://usiraq.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=000670>

BOOKTALK:

“I felt like crap after 9-11 and I wanted to do something, to stand up for this country.”

Against his parents’ wishes, Robin “Birdy” Johnson enlists in the Army after the terrorist attacks in New York City. By 2003, Birdy has finished Basic Training and is deployed to Iraq.

He gets assigned to a Civil Affairs detachment. This group is working towards building a successful democracy in Iraq, and most of their job consists of interacting with Iraqi civilians. As Birdy travels through the war zone with his squad, he develops close friendships with them and learns their life stories.

Birdy experiences the horrors of war first-hand as his squad is ambushed and attacked by Iraqi soldiers. However, they also see innocent Iraqi citizens killed, and Birdy begins to question his participation in war. He is scared that he will not survive, and his squad members are the only people that Birdy can rely on.

Read *Sunrise Over Fallujah* to learn what true heroes are, and to find out if Birdy and his squad live through their year-long deployment!

Prepared by: Joy Brady

Two Girls Of Gettysburg

Lisa Klein

Bloomsbury, p2008, c2008

393 pages

SUMMARY: When the Civil War breaks out, two cousins, Lizzie and Rosanna, find themselves on opposite sides of the conflict until the war reunites them in the town of Gettysburg. (Summary from Follett Titlewave)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Ophelia by Lisa Klein

Across Five Aprils by Irene Hunt

Bull Run by Paul Fleishman

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane

Rifles for Watie by Harold Keith

Charley Skedaddle by Patricia Beatty

WEBSITES:

Teacher's guide: <http://www.tracievaughnzimmer.com/twogirlsTG.pdf>

Lisa Klein: www.authorlisaklein.com/

BOOKTALK:

Typical Civil War family stories pit brother versus brother, and while not discounting the horror that that must have been, in Lisa Klein's newest book, two cousins- close as sisters- make decisions that pit them against each other in *Two Girls of Gettysburg*. Rosanna is from a rich family in Virginia, and Lizzie is from a shopkeeper's family in Gettysburg. To get away from struggle and family issues, Rosanna moves to Gettysburg to live with Lizzie. Hardworking Lizzie and impetuous Rosanna could not be more different, but become fast friends and learn from each other throughout the book. When her father and brother go off to war, Lizzie takes over day-to-day workings of the shop, while Rosanna flees south to become a nurse in the Confederate Army. The book chronicles their time together, their time on their own, and the time they shared through letters. The book is an inspired look through a different perspective in this terrible time in our country's history. While a work of historical fiction, the book has many points that are based on true stories and leaves readers with a "blood is thicker than water" feeling.

Prepared by: Jen Seay