

All's Faire in Middle School

Victoria Jamieson

Dial Books for Young Readers, 2017

247 pages

SUMMARY:

Eleven year old Impy has grown up with parents who work at the Renaissance Faire. Having been homeschooled up to this point, Impy is ready to prove she is brave enough to be a knight in training. Impy has the perfect quest to prove how heroic she is...she wants to attend a public middle school! Little does Impy know, middle school is not the quest she thought it would be. She is faced with embarrassing moments, mean girls, and difficult decisions. Author, Victoria Jamieson, presents another heartwarming graphic novel that perfectly captures the emotions of middle school life.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Drama*, Raina Telgemeier
- *Brave*, Svetlana Chmakova
- *Awkward*, Svetlana Chmakova

WEBSITES:

Publisher's Weekly,

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/74579-q-a-with-victoria-jamieson.html>, This is a Q & A with the author, Victoria Jamieson.

Victoria Jamieson, <http://www.victoriajamieson.com/>, Author's website with personal information and information on her books.

BOOKTALK:

Imogene, better known as Impy, has been summoned by the queen to be granted permission to train as a squire. But first, the queen wants to know how she will prove her courage. Imogene is prepared with the challenging quest to attend middle school. No, this isn't a fairy tale with knights and dragons. Instead, it is set in modern times in the midst of a Renaissance Faire where Impy's parents work. Nothing like being able to enjoy watching knights joust or eating a turkey leg while being homeschooled. Now that she is finally 11, Impy is ready for her true adventure to begin. Will her unusual lifestyle clash with the group of girls who seem really nice? Will Impy be able to conquer the middle school drama? Read *All's Faire in Middle School* by Victoria Jamieson today!

Prepared by:

Ann Tillman, Buford Middle School, ann.tillman@lcsdmail.net

Beyond the Bright Sea

Lauren Wolk

Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2017

304 pages

SUMMARY:

Beyond the Bright Sea is about a girl named Crow who washed up on a small island near Cuttyhunk in the Elizabeth Islands. She was found by a foreigner named Osh. They lived together on their small island together for many years, with their friend, Miss Maggie, as Crow's tutor, until she was 12 and started to wonder who had sent her adrift in that little boat with the blue sail that had drifted up on that small island 12 years ago. This curiosity sparked a dangerous adventure involving criminals, lepers, gold, and Crow's mysterious past.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY:

- *See You in the Cosmos*, Jack Cheng
- *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Scott O'Dell
- *Tumble and Blue*, Cassie Beasley

WEBSITES:

Lauren E. Wolk, <http://www.laurenwolk.com>, Author's website.

BookPage America's Book Review,

https://bookpage.com/interviews/21280-lauren-wolk-childrens#.XAsoyi_MxQI,

Interview with author about "Beyond the Bright Sea."

BOOKTALK:

What would you do in Crow's position? On one hand, you could stay safe in your decent life, and never know who your biological parents are. Or you could take a risk and maybe find a whole new family. And when she hears a thump in a building on an abandoned island, will she ignore it, or potentially save a life? Can she save everyone and stay safe? Or will she lose it all in search of a family, only to find her real family was with her all along?

Prepared by:

Samantha Finkenberg, Cario Middle School, finsam5260@ccsdschools.com

The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora

Pablo Cartaya

Viking Books for Young Readers, 2017

256 pages

SUMMARY:

Arturo lives in Miami surrounded by his extended Cuban-American family. They reside in the same apartment complex, and everyone pitches in to help at his grandmother's restaurant *La Cocina de la Isla*. One summer the status quo gets shaken up when Carmen, a poetry enthusiast and family friend from Spain, moves into the apartment complex for the summer. To make matters worse, a real estate developer is trying to buy the land that abuela's restaurant is located on. Heavier themes of gentrification and activism are perfectly balanced with humor, first romance, and family history.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

- *Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish*, Pablo Cartaya
- *Amina's Voice*, Hena Khan
- *The First Rule of Punk*, Celia Perez
- *Hello, Universe* by Erin Entrada Kelly
- *Stef Soto, Taco Queen* by Jennifer Torres

WEBSITES:

Pablo Cartaya, <http://www.pablocartaya.com/the-epic-fail>, Author's website which contains information about the book and author.

Biography.com, <https://www.biography.com/people/jos%C3%A9-mart%C3%AD-20703847>, Biography of the poet Jose Marti.

BOOKTALK:

Arturo is a 13-year-old spending the summer in his Miami neighborhood. All of a sudden, he has to deal with many new conflicts all at the same time! Will he get the girl? Figure out his grandfather's old letters? Help save the neighborhood from the villainous Wilfrido Pipo? Help save the family business?

Or will he epically fail at everything?

Link to book trailers:

<https://youtu.be/5t-Lujv36Wc>

Prepared by:

Alana Lewis, Deer Park Middle, alana_lewis@charleston.k12.sc.us

The First Rule of Punk

Celia C. Pérez

Viking, 2017

310 pages

SUMMARY:

Middle school is probably the only time when being unique is not a celebration. For 12-year-old, Maria Luisa who prefers to be called Malú that really doesn't matter. She prefers to stand out from the crowd. Malú knows that it's time to redefine those old, stuffy ideas about girls. When she starts a new school in Chicago miles away from her home and musician father, Malú's individuality quickly becomes an issue at school and at home with her Mexican-American mother who she nicknames "*SuperMexican*". Although her mission may hit a few low points; it isn't something a little boldness, confidence, and humor can't fix. In the end, Malu discovers that there is a way to invite others into her world without changing who she is – totally punk.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Dream on, Amber*, Emma Shevah
- *Marcus Vega doesn't speak Spanish*, Pablo Cartaya
- *Stef Soto, Taco Queen*, Jennifer Torres

WEBSITES:

Celia C. Pérez, <http://celiacperez.com>, Author's website features information about books and her writing process.

Celia Perez's New Novel 'The First Rule of Punk' Comes with Advice for Adolescents, <https://www.npr.org/2017/09/01/547964121/celia-perezs-new-novel-the-first-rule-of-punk-comes-with-advice-for-adolescents>, Listen to an interview with author, Celia C. Pérez, about her middle grade novel.

How to Make a Zine: A Kid-Friendly DIY Guide, <https://www.readbrihtly.com/how-to-make-zine/>, Celia C. Pérez shares how to create a zine, a homemade publication.

BOOKTALK:

What are little girls made of? Sugar, spice and everything nice. Well, seventh grader, Malú, knows that nursery rhymes don't tell the whole story and she's looking for a newer modern version. Malú isn't a cookie cutter princess, but a one of a kind punkster that loves rock music and creating zines. It isn't until Malú and her Mexican-American mother leave their home in Florida for the windy city of Chicago that she begins to question herself a little more. Through the tests and trials of middle school, Malú soon discovers that her voice and courage are bigger than any box anyone could try to put her in. She knows who she is, because that's the first rule of punk.

Prepared by:

Anya Bonnette, Robert E. Howard Middle School, anya.bonnette@ocsd5.net

Fred Korematsu Speaks Up

Laura Atkins and Stan Yogi

Heyday, 2017

114 pages

SUMMARY:

Fred Korematsu is a young Japanese American, born in California in 1919. This true story is told from Fred's point of view and covers his life following the bombing of Pearl Harbor when, because of their race, many Americans were forced into camps. Fred chooses to fight to protect his civil rights but is placed in jail.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

- *Refugee* by Alan Gratz
- *The Unexpected Life of Oliver Cromwell Pitts* by Avi
- *Ready from Within: Septima Clark & the Civil Rights Movement* by Septima Poinsette Clark

WEBSITES:

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1UDNAgeppl>, Video about the life of Fred Korematsu.

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvvF-kDITT0>, Book trailer about the book.

Laura Atkins, Children's Book Author and Editor, <http://www.lauraatkins.com/>, Author website.

Book Talk:

Fred Korematsu's life is normal. He is a Japanese American, born in California. His family owns land and runs a plant nursery. He has a steady girlfriend and bright hopes for his future. Then his world is turned upside down when the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor. Before long, Fred and his family lose everything. Their land, their freedom and their dignity. A law is passed requiring people of Japanese ancestry, to register and to move into internment camps. Fred stands up for his civil rights and refuses to follow this law.

This book is a great read if you have any interest in historical fiction or if you would like to know more about what took place during the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. It is a quick read written partially in prose and loaded with facts and pictures about this time in history.

Prepared by:

Miriam Hurt, Cario Middle School, miriam_hurt@charleston.k12.sc.us

Genevieve's War

Patricia Reilly Giff
Holiday House, 2017
234 pages

SUMMARY:

Thirteen-year-old Genevieve impulsively decides not to return to New York at the end of the summer of 1939 spent in Alsace with her stern grandmother, but when the Nazis reclaim the area and even move into the farmhouse, life becomes dangerous and loyalties are tested.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *The War That Saved My Life*, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
- *The Bicycle Spy*, Yona Zeldis McDonough
- *Resistance*, Jennifer Nielsen
- *Black Radishes*, Susan Lynn Meyer

WEBSITES:

Genevieve's War Educator Guide from Holiday House,

http://holidayhouse.com/docs/GenevievesWar_Guide_REVISED_PatScales.pdf Study guide questions, writing activities, read-alike suggestions, and more.

Patricia Reilly Giff at Penguin Random House,

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/authors/10018/patricia-reilly-giff> Limited information, but there is no other author website.

“Alsace-Lorraine,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Alsace-Lorraine> Explanation of the history of the territory, focusing on World War II.

BOOKTALK:

Genevieve and her older brother have spent the summer with their grandmother, Mémé, on her farm in Alsace-Lorraine. There's little doubt that the Nazis intend to invade France and reclaim the area, so when Genevieve impulsively decides not to go back to New York, she soon finds life in the village far more challenging than the work she did on the farm during the summer. As the war drags on, Genevieve discovers that many of her neighbors have secrets, and she must decide who can be trusted and who is the enemy. When a Nazi officer moves into the farmhouse, Genevieve and Mémé are in constant danger, but that doesn't prevent Genevieve from helping to hide her friend who is part of the resistance movement. Will hiding her friend cost Genevieve her life?

Prepared by:

BT Bouton, Camp Road Middle School, betty_bouton@charleston.k12.sc.us

Greetings from Witness Protection!

Jake Burt

Feiwei and Friends, 2017

358 pages

SUMMARY:

Nicki is a typical girl in foster care when the U.S. marshals offer her a unique proposition. Her looks and street-smarts make her the perfect candidate to help a family hiding in witness protection. The bad guys are looking for a family with one kid, so she might be the key to shielding the Trevors from the nation's most notorious criminals. When she accepts the offer Nicki embarks on a journey to create a new cover identity. While she focuses on maintaining her marshal-mandated B-minus average, controlling her kleptomania, and keeping her new family's biggest secret, she finds that her past might be her biggest danger.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Heist Society* by Ally Carter
- *Mrs. Smith's Spy School for Girls* by Beth McMullen
- *The Orphan Band of Springdale* by Anne Nesbet
- *Laura Ingalls is Ruining My Life* by Shelley Tougas

WEBSITES:

Jake Burt, Middle Grade Fiction, <http://www.jburtbooks.com>, Author's website includes biography and link to free Skype sessions for teachers and librarians.

How Stuff Works, <https://people.howstuffworks.com/witness-protection>, Information about the history of witness protection and the current US Marshals program.

BOOKTALK:

If given the choice, would you give up everything and take on a new identity? When a US marshal approaches Nicki about using her streetwise skills to help a family in witness protection, she chooses to accept the offer. Her goal is to keep her new family safe, but she isn't prepared for the onslaught of a new school, sibling rivalry, hitmen, and, most surprisingly, her past. If you are looking for a good laugh along with edge-of-your-seat action, this book is for you.

Prepared by:

Tiffany Forrest, tiffanylforrest@gmail.com

Halfway Normal

Barbara Dee
Aladdin, 2017
247 pages

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Norah was out of school for two years while she received treatment for childhood leukemia. Now that she's in remission, it's time for things to get back to normal. And for Norah, that means returning to school, MIDDLE school!

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *After ever after* Jordan Sonnenblick
- *Goodbye Stranger*, Rebecca Stead
- *Always, Abigail*, Nancy J. Cavanaugh

WEBSITES:

Barbara Dee, Children's Author, <http://barbaradeebooks.com/>, Author's website, featuring a list of books written by the author, a biography and contact information.

Britannica School Middle-

<https://school-eb-com.scsl.idm.oclc.org/levels/middle/article/Greek-mythology/608505>,
Britannica School entry about Greek Mythology, available through SC DISCUS.

Barnes and Noble, <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/blog/kids/interview-barbara-dee/>, Questions and answers with author, Barbara Dee.

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qU2F3HyJM4>, *Halfway Normal*, a book trailer

BOOKTALK:

You might think that surviving childhood cancer was the hardest thing Norah ever faced. You would be wrong! Sure, the chemo was difficult, but nothing compared to how hard it is to go back to being "normal." And part of normal is going back to school, middle school! Will Norah be able to pick back up where she left off? Or will she always be "the girl who had cancer?" Read *Halfway Normal* by Barbara Dee, and find out!

Prepared by:

Carolyn Gause, Hammond School, cgause@hammondschool.org

Hear the Wolves

Victoria Scott
Scholastic Press, 2017
240 pages

SUMMARY:

Sloan is a hunter. So she shouldn't be afraid of anything. But ever since her mom left the family and she lost hearing in one ear in a blizzard, it's been hard to talk to people, and near-impossible to go anywhere or do anything without her dad or big sister within eyesight — it makes her too scared to be on her own. When they leave her home alone for what should only be two nights, she's already panicked. Then the snow starts falling and doesn't stop. One of her neighbors is hurt in an accident. And the few people still left in Rusic need to make it to the river and the boat that's tied there — their only way to get to a doctor from their isolated Alaska town. But the woods are icy cold, and the wolves are hungry. Sloan and her group are running out of food, out of energy, and out of time. That's when the wolves start hunting them. . . .

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Wolf Storm*, Dee Garretson
- *Terror at Bottle Creek*, Watt Key
- *Endangered*, Eliot Schrefer
- *Summer of the Wolves*, Polly Carlson-Voiles

WEBSITES:

Victoria Scott, <http://www.victoriascott.com/>, Author's website which contains information about the book, the author and other books written by her.

Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/AuthorVictoriaScott/>, Author's Facebook page to follow the author's exploits.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=wolf.main>, Wolf Information.

The Interior Alaskan Wolf, http://www.cosmosmith.com/interior_alaskan_wolves.asp, website.

BOOKTALK:

If you like a book with adventure, danger, conflict, and excitement then this is the book for you. Follow Sloan and her friends as they try to reach safety through the Alaskan wilderness while being stalked by a pack of hungry wolves.

Prepared by: Rhoda Coleman, Kingstree Middle Magnet School of the Arts,
rcoleman@wcsd.k12.sc.us

In Some Other Life

Jessica Brody

Farrar Straus Giroux, 2017

449 pages

SUMMARY:

High school Junior Kennedy Rhodes has spent three years wondering if she made the right decision when she chose to attend public school rather than the elite private school where she was accepted. As a result of a freak accident, she wakes up in a life where she attends the private school. She finally gets to find out if she made the right decision.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *One of Us Is Lying*, Karen M. McManus
- *The Hearts We Sold*, Emily Lloyd Jones
- *Words in Deep Blue*, Cath Crowley
- *Love & Gelato*, Jenna Evans Welch
- *It Ends With Us*, Colleen Hoover

WEBSITES:

Jessica Brody, Official Author Website, [Jessica Brody Books](#), Author's website - contains information about the book and author.

FierceReads blog,

<http://www.fiercereads.com/blog/an-interview-with-jessica-brody-author-of-in-some-other-life/>, Interview with author Jessica Brody

88 Cups of Tea Podcast, <https://88cupsoftea.com/podcast/jessicabrody/>, podcast with the author
YouTube, <https://youtu.be/4JjanShoIeY>, Book trailer.

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever wondered what life would be like if you had made a different choice? Kennedy Rhodes gets to find out. After hitting her head, Kennedy wakes up to discover she is a student at Windsor Academy, the elite private school she declined an acceptance to three years before. She quickly realizes that everything about her life, and what she thought about herself and who she wanted to be is different. Read this creative, funny, and riveting story to find out if different always means better.

Prepared by:

Dana Anderson, Cario Middle, Dana_anderson@charleston.k12.sc.us

Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus

Dusti Bowling

Sterling Children's Books, 2017

272 pages

SUMMARY:

For 13-year-old Aven Green, Kansas has been the only home she has ever known. Her family has to move to Arizona for a job opportunity and she has to leave all of her friends, who accepted her completely, behind. This is not particularly unusual until you consider that she was born with no arms! Starting life over at a new middle school is hard enough, but having a very obvious physical difference makes it even more challenging. She befriends Connor, a boy who has Tourette's and who is also ostracized at school.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- Halfway Normal, Barbara Dee
- Greetings from Witness Protection, Jake Burt
- The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle, Leslie Connor
- Wonder, R.J. Palacio

WEBSITES:

Dusti Bowling, <https://www.dustibowling.com/>, Author's website.

Beth McMullen Books, <http://bethmcmullenbooks.com/2017/09/dustibowling/>, Interview with the Author, Dusti Bowling.

BOOKTALK:

“Whoa! What happened to your arms?”

This is a question Aven Green has to answer all the time. From a wrestling match with an alligator to wildfires in Tanzania, she has a fantastic story for anyone curious or insensitive enough to ask. This quick-read story tackles two disabilities which are often overlooked head-on. Aven's attitude and witty sense of humor entertains, engages, and educates. If you don't have a physical, mental, or intellectual challenge, it is often difficult to see the world through another person's eyes. This book helps us step into the lives of Aven and her friend Connor and catch a glimpse of the world as they see it. Do you really see the classmates around you? Is there someone you should look past their differences and get to know? You may be surprised by who you find and, who knows? You may become a better person for it!

Prepared by:

Kristi Benson, Lake Carolina Elementary Upper Campus, kbenson@richland2.org

Last Day on Mars: Chronicle of the Dark Star, Book 1

Kevin Emerson

Walden Pond Press, 2017

336 pages

SUMMARY:

It is the year 2213. The sun burnt the earth to a crisp years ago and its continued decline has forced Liam, his family, his friends, and all of humanity to leave Mars for good. They have 24 hours to get on the last starliner, Scorpius, for a 150-year voyage to the rest of the fleet and their new home. Things do not go as planned on their last day for Liam and Phoebe, whose parents are the chief scientists perfecting the terraforming necessary to make their new home habitable for humans. Due to bad timing, alien sabotage, and an overzealous curiosity, Liam and Phoebe end up left behind and struggle to catch up to the Scorpius in an alien spacecraft, preferably without any aliens tagging along.

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Other Worlds*, short story collection edited by Jon Scieszka
- *Dangerous* by Shannon Hale
- *The Forgetting* by Sharon Cameron
- *The Softwire: Virus on Orbis I* by P.J. Haarsma
- *Linked* by Imogen Howson

WEBSITES:

Kevin Emerson, <http://www.kevinemerson.net/>, Author's website.

NASA, <https://mars.nasa.gov/>, Mars page on NASA's website.

Such A Novel Idea, <https://suchanoveliidea.com/2017/02/blog-tour-giveaway-last-day-mars/>,
Interview with Author.

National Geographic,

<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2018/02/there-s-only-one-way-for-humanity-to-survive--go-to-mars-/> Article about Mars.

BOOKTALK:

Action! Adventure! Mystery! Aliens! You will find all of these and more in Kevin Emerson's *Last Day on Mars: Chronicle of the Dark Star*. Thirteen-year-old Liam and his friends, Phoebe and Shawn, were born on Mars and now have only 24 hours to board the starliner Scorpius to leave their home planet and solar system forever before the sun goes supernova. However, things do not go as planned, as Liam and his friends discover sabotage, aliens, and a time-travel watch. Liam and Phoebe miss boarding the starliner in time and must try to catch up with the Scorpius in an alien spacecraft without getting killed in the process. Will the Scorpius make it to Aaru? Will Liam and Phoebe make it to the Scorpius? Read Kevin Emerson's *Last Day on Mars: Chronicle of the Dark Star* to find out!

Prepared by:

Angela Thoele, Chapin Middle, athoele@lexrich5.org

Miles Morales: Spiderman

Jason Reynolds

Penguin Random House, 2017

272 pages

SUMMARY:

Miles Morales already has problems. He doesn't fit in at his almost all-white prep school, and he doesn't fit in his neighborhood anymore either. But when he is bitten by a radioactive spider at his uncle's apartment, both his problems and his options expand. Now he is constantly plagued by his Spidey senses at school, telling him something isn't right.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

- *The Stars Beneath Our Feet* by David Barclay Moore
- *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone (mature readers only)
- *As Brave as You* by Jason Reynolds
- *Mexican White Boy* by Matt de LaPena

WEBSITES:

Jason Reynolds, www.jasonwritesbooks.com, Author's website.

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkAMdVMuZBY>, Interview with Jason Reynolds

BOOKTALK:

Miles Morales' neighborhood isn't exactly friendly. His parents are determined he escape the drug-infested, gang ridden place he was born in by sending him to a rich, white prep school. Miles already feels he doesn't fit in either world, but then he is bitten by a spider and develops strange abilities he keeps hidden from everyone but his best friend Ganke. His spidey sense is constantly buzzing at school. Is it the smart and sexy Alicia or the teacher who always seems to have it in for him? Once Miles' eyes are opened to the truth, will he keep his head down like he's promised his parents? Or will he have the courage to do something about it?

Whether you are a regular superhero follower or just someone who likes a good mystery, you will enjoy following Miles as he navigates racism, a love-interest and pressure from both parents and peers, all while trying to uncover an evil plot (and not get kicked out of school).

Prepared by:

Rebecca Roper, Carver Middle School, RBRoper@spart7.org

Nemesis
Brendan Reichs
Penguin Books, 2018
480 pages

SUMMARY:

No one believes her, but 16-year-old Min is brutally murdered every two years, on her birthday. However, every single time, she wakes up again completely unharmed! Every time she is killed, she wonders if it will be the last time.

Meanwhile, the rest world is worried about an asteroid which is on a collision course with Earth.

Why is all this happening and what can she do to stop it? Is she really crazy and it is all in her mind? Min has no idea, but she is determined to find out.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- Genesis (sequel to Nemesis), Brendan Reichs
- Scythe, Neal Schusterman
- The Virals series, Kathy Reichs (and Brendan Reichs)
- Last Day on Mars, Kevin Emerson

WEBSITES:

Brendan Reichs, <https://brendanreichs.com/>, Author's website.

Nathan Bransford,

<https://blog.nathanbransford.com/2017/04/interview-brendan-reichs-on-hitting-ny>,

Interview with the Author, Brendan Reichs.

BOOKTALK:

Min is murdered in cold blood on every even-year birthday. But, mysteriously, she wakes up in a clearing just outside her hometown every time, unharmed and with no trace of the crime. It is no wonder no one believes her and think she is crazy. She suspects all is not as it seems, and she doesn't know just how right she is.

Noah, Min's classmate, is experiencing similar episodes, yet no one knows because he keeps silent about them. What is happening to them? Why do they keep waking up after dying?

When is the last time they will die? And who is behind all of it?

This dystopian adventure will keep you on the edge of your seat until the very end. The twists and turns it takes are unexpected, sickening, and thrilling, all at the same time. It goes beyond ethics and morality and into another dimension altogether. Prepare for your mind to be blown and questioning "What if?"

Prepared by:

Kristi Benson, Lake Carolina Elementary Upper Campus, kbenson@richland2.org

Restart
Gordon Korman
Scholastic Press, 2017
243 pages

SUMMARY:

When eighth-grader Chase Ambrose opens his eyes after falling from the roof of his house and spending days in a coma, he remembers nothing, not even his own mother. But his classmates know Chase and two of his football teammates as the worst school bullies, and it's up to Chase to decide if he will be the same kid he was or use his "restart" to become a better person.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Scar Island*, Dan Gemeinhart
- *Gutless*, Carl Deuker
- *The Only Game*, Mike Lupica
- *Head Hunter*, Eric Howling
- *The Swap*, Megan Shull

WEBSITES:

Gordon Korman, <http://gordonkorman.com/>, Book summary with video preview, author bio, and blog.

Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2qsdrv7vi0>, Talk With an Author: "Restart" Writer Gordon Korman on Bullying (Scholastic)

Twobookwormsblog,

<https://twobookwormsblog.wordpress.com/2018/01/07/discussion-questions-restart/>, Discussion questions about *Restart*.

BOOKTALK:

Chase wakes up surrounded by total strangers, including his own mother and brother, after falling off the roof of his house. He doesn't remember anything – not the fact that he is the star football player or that he is a notorious bully. Slowly Chase learns what he has done and who he has hurt, a journey of revelation that leaves him wondering who he is now – the boy who was so bad that he was sentenced to community service or the boy whose new friends are the "nerds" in the video club and the old veteran in the senior center. Can these new friends truly trust the new Chase Ambrose, and can Chase trust himself?

Prepared by:

BT Bouton, Camp Road Middle School, betty_bouton@charleston.k12.sc.us

Saving Marty
Paul Griffin
Puffin Books, 2018
224 pages

SUMMARY:

Eleven year old Lorenzo lives on a failing farm with his mom and grandfather, and he spends his summer playing guitar with his best friend Pal and bonding with a piglet he names Marty. But when Pal leaves for music camp, Lorenzo learns a hard truth about his late war-hero father and at the same time, he must find a way to save Marty from being sold.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *A Handful of Stars*, Cynthia Lord
- *When Friendship Followed Me Home*, Paul Griffin
- *Rain Reign*, Ann Martin
- *Pie*, Sarah Weeks
- *Because of Winn-Dixie*, Kate DiCamillo

WEBSITES:

Paul Griffin, <https://www.paulgriffinstories.com/>, Author's website which contains information about the book, the author, and additional books by the author.

Brightly, <https://www.readbrightly.com/brightlys-book-club-for-kids-saving-marty/>, This website provides discussion questions and extension activities for the novel.

The YA Book Traveler, <http://theyabooktraveler.com/savingmarty/htm>, An interview with the author on his inspiration for the book.

BOOKTALK:

“Marty is the perfect dog – smart, friendly, loyal, and quick to learn tricks. The only problem is...Marty is a pig! And a big one at that, weighing in at a husky 350 pound. Eleven year old Lorenzo needs to figure out how to convince his mom to let him keep Marty, whom he raised since he was the runt of the litter. Things aren't easy for Lorenzo's family, and the money Marty could bring at auction would really help them out. But how can a boy give up his pet pig?

Prepared by:

Carly Huerta, Pleasant Knoll Middle School, huertac@fortmillschools.org

The Secret Sheriff of Sixth Grade

Jordan Sonnenblick
Scholastic Press, 2017
193 pages

SUMMARY:

Maverick Falconer is looking for a brand-new start in a brand-new school for sixth grade. The only problem is, his brand-new school comes with some rotten-old classmates who have been tormenting him for years. Regardless, Maverick decides this year will be different. Even though he is by far the smallest kid in sixth grade (small enough to be stuffed into a locker), he is going to be a superhero in the vein of Spiderman, Captain America, and Maverick's favorite, his dad, who died tragically in a fire trying to save others. But Maverick can't seem to catch a break. As if school life isn't bad enough (he's sent to the principal's office within the first hour of the first day), his home life is even worse. His mother can't seem to hold down a job but sure can hold down some alcohol. Through all of his difficulties, Maverick tries to hold true to his promise to stand up for those who can't do it for themselves. While everything doesn't get tied up in a neat little bow, Maverick does gain some new friends, the respect of the scary assistant principal, and realizes that doing the right thing might not always make things right but it can make things better.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Last Man Out*, Mike Lupica
- *Restart*, Gordon Korman
- *Wonder*, RJ Palacio
- *Because of Mr. Terupt*, Rob Buyea

WEBSITES:

Jordan Sonnenblick, <https://www.jordansonnenblick.com> ,

This is the official website of the book's author. Learn more about Jordan Sonnenblick and his other books.

Addiction Center: How to Help an Alcoholic Parent,

<https://www.addictioncenter.com/alcohol/help-alcoholic-parent/>

This resource offers information and resources for children who think their parent may have problems with alcohol addiction. It also directs children to organizations and places that can help them cope.

BOOKTALK:

Maverick Falconer doesn't have any superpowers-unless you count being short. But he's not even short enough for that to qualify as a superpower. What Maverick Falconer does have is a bunch of enemies that he brought with him from elementary school to his first day of middle school; and, he also has a knack, it seems, for landing himself in the assistant principal's office, not once, but twice during the very first half day of school. Sixth grade was going to be a new start in a new school because he is tired of being bullied AND he's tired of seeing people bullied. It's hard to have a new start, though, when everything at home and school keeps going wrong. Can Maverick stick to his plan of standing up for those who can't stand for themselves? How

long can he pretend his aunt is his mother because he's sure she's too drunk to come to his rescue? How many more times can he end up in the assistant principal's office?

Prepared by:

Michelle King, Kennedy Middle School, mking@acpsd.net

Sidetracked

Diana Harmon Asher

Amulet Books, 2017

188 pages

SUMMARY:

Seventh grade Joseph Friedman just wants to avoid the school bully, Charlie Kastner. But when you're friendless, weak and have ADD, that can be pretty difficult. So when his resource room, the place where he can feel safe, Mrs. T practically forces him to join track and field, where he makes friends, and finally finds his place.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK TRY:

- *Connect the Stars*, Marisa de los Santos and David Teague
- *Fish in a Tree*, Lynda Mullaly Hunt
- *Playing Tyler*, T.L. Costa

WEBSITES:

Diane Harmon Asher, <https://www.dianaharmonasher.com/about-me/>, Author's website.

Book Page,

https://bookpage.com/behind-the-book/21757-two-new-friends-outrun-expectations-childrens#.XASubS_MxQI, Interview with author about "Sidetracked."

BOOKTALK:

Joseph feels like he will never fit in. But all he really needs is a group of friends who accept him for who he is, ADD and all. So when he joins his school's new track team, will he find just that, or will he find even more reasons for Charlie to tease him? When he meets Heather, the new athletic girl, will she join Charlie's side, or finally be the person who sticks up for Joseph? With the help of their new coach, will Joseph, and his whole new track team, learn to stick up for themselves, and learn the valuable lesson that you don't always have to win, just always do your best, or will they succumb to the teasing and give up?

Prepared by:

Samantha Finkenberg, Cario Middle School, finsam5260@ccsdschools.com

The Truth According to Mason Buttle

Leslie Connor

Katherine Tegen Books, 2018

336 Pages

SUMMARY:

Mason Buttle is the biggest, sweatiest kid in his grade, and everyone knows he can barely read or write. Mason's learning disabilities are compounded by grief. Fifteen months ago, Mason's best friend, Benny Kilmartin, turned up dead in the Buttle family's orchard. An investigation drags on, and Mason, honest as the day is long, can't understand why Lieutenant Baird won't believe the story Mason has told about that day.

Both Mason and his new friend, tiny Calvin Chumsky, are relentlessly bullied by the other boys in their neighborhood, so they create an underground club space for themselves. When Calvin goes missing, Mason finds himself in trouble again. He's desperate to figure out what happened to Calvin, and eventually, Benny.

But will anyone believe him?

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY:

- *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang
- *The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson
- *The Journey of Little Charlie* by Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson

WEBSITES:

Leslie Connor, <http://www.leslieconnor.com/>, Author's website.

Apple Holler, <https://www.appleholler.com/orchard-farm/all-about-apples/apple-fun-facts/>, Fun facts about apples.

7 Mindsets, <https://7mindsets.com/dealing-with-middle-school-bullying/>, Dealing with Middle School Bullying,

BOOKTALK:

How would you feel if someone very special to you died and everyone (except your family) thought that you were responsible? Mason loses his best friend Benny in a tragic accident that happens in the run-down apple orchard owned by Mason's family. Now Mason, the target of a group neighborhood bullies, must learn how to navigate school and home life without his best friend, while trying to convince the lead investigator that he has told him all he knows about the accident.

When Mason befriends Calvin, a new kid in school, things appear to be returning to normal. The boys' friendship and shared interests also make Calvin the target of the same neighborhood bullies that have been harassing Mason. One afternoon, while being chased by these bullies, Calvin disappears, and Mason fears that people will think he is responsible. While he helps the police and Calvin's parents try to find Calvin, he discovers that Calvin may have fallen victim to

the same person or persons responsible for Benny's death. Will Calvin be found and will those responsible be brought to justice? Read *The Truth As Told by Mason Buttle* by Leslie Connor to find out.

Prepared by:

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Wild Bird

Wendelin Van Draanen

Alfred A. Knopf, 2017

311 pages

SUMMARY:

Loneliness, a bad crowd, and a downward spiral led 14-year-old Wren to this: while on a midnight bender, she's dragged to the airport and shipped off. Wren's parents, concerned for both Wren's health and safety and their own, have sent her to a wilderness therapy camp. Angry and resistant, Wren has no intention of learning how to find water or build a fire, until it becomes apparent that, out here, those skills are essential. Despite herself, Wren is slowly won over by the harsh beauty of the Utah desert and by her fellow campers. The story alternates between Wren's experiences in the desert and her flashbacks to the decisions—and friends—that led her there.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

- *Hey Kiddo* by Jarrett Krossockza
- *Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- *Best Foot Forward* by Joan Bauer

WEBSITES:

Wendelin Van Draanen, <http://www.wendelinvand.com/new---wild-bird.html>, Author's website which contains information about the book and author.

YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Revi1nl4dg>, Interview with Wendelin Van Draanen

BOOKTALK:

3:47 a.m. That's when they come for Wren Clemmens. She's hustled out of her house and into a waiting car, then a plane, and then taken on a forced march into the desert. This is what happens to kids who've gone so far off the rails, their parents don't know what to do with them anymore. This is wilderness therapy camp. Eight weeks of survivalist camping in the desert. Eight weeks to turn your life around. Yeah, right.

The Wren who arrives in the Utah desert is angry and bitter, and blaming everyone but herself. But angry can't put up a tent. And bitter won't start a fire. Wren's going to have to admit she needs help if she's going to survive.

LINK TO BOOK TRAILERS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITGa4mlSoAk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ81jNDdT3M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0do8fPhugo>

Prepared by: Kay Falls, York Intermediate School, kfalls@york.k12.sc.us