

Breathing Room

Marsha Hayles

Henry Holt and Co., 2012

256 pages

SUMMARY:

Evvy Hoffmeister is thirteen years old when her family brings her to Loon Lake Sanatorium to get cured of tuberculosis (TB). Evvy is frightened by her new surroundings; the rules to follow are harsh and the nurses equally rigid. But Evvy soon falls into step with the other girls in her ward. There's Sarah, quiet but thoughtful; Pearl, who adores Hollywood glamour; and Dina, whose harshness conceals a deep strength. Together, the girls brave the difficult daily routines. Set in 1940 at a time of political unrest throughout the U.S. and Europe, this thought-provoking novel sheds light on a much-feared worldwide illness. Hundreds of thousands of people died each year of TB, and many ill children were sent away to sanatoriums to hopefully recover.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World's Most Dangerous Weapon, Steve Sheinkin

Starry River of the Sky, Grace Lin

WEBSITES:

- The book's website, http://marshahayles.com/Breathing_Room.html
- More about tuberculosis (TB), http://marshahayles.com/For_Curious_Readers.html
- About Marsha Hayles, <http://marshahayles.com/Bio.html>

BOOKTALK:

Breathing Room is the story of 13-year-old Evvy Hoffmeister, who has recently been diagnosed with tuberculosis, or TB. Evvy is sent to Loon Lake Sanatorium by her family in hopes she will recover and return home quickly. But will she? When surrounded by sickness and death, how could anyone recover from such a deadly disease? With the help of her new friends, and the thought of seeing her family again, Evvy might just make it.

Prepared by:

Abigail Montgomery, Meadow Glen Middle School, abigail.montgomery@outlook.com

Crow
Barbara Wright
Random House, 2012
297 pages

SUMMARY:

The summer of 1898 is filled with ups and downs for 11-year-old Moses. He's growing apart from his best friend, his superstitious Boo-Nanny butts heads constantly with his pragmatic, educated father, and his mother is reeling from the discovery of a family secret. Yet there are good times, too. He's teaching his grandmother how to read. For the first time she's sharing stories about her life as a slave. And his father and his friends are finally getting the respect and positions of power they've earned in the Wilmington, North Carolina, community. But not everyone is happy with the political changes at play and some will do anything, including a violent plot against the government, to maintain the status quo.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Alligator Bayou, Donna Jo Napoli
Caleb's Wars, David L. Dudley
Jump Into the Sky, Shelley Pearsall
White Lilacs, Carolyn Meyer
Francie, Karen English
The Land, Mildred Taylor

WEBSITES:

- The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow: Wilmington Riot (1898), http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_riot.html , presents an excellent summary of the events surrounding the Wilmington Riots. Included on the page is an audio account of African American survivors of the incident, as well as a link to an excerpt of Alex Manly's editorial.
- "Early African American Perspectives on the Wilmington Race Riots of 1898" from the University of North Carolina's Documenting the American South website, http://docsouth.unc.edu/highlights/riots_1898.html, includes primary source material and recollections of people who experienced the riot first-hand.
- 1898 Wilmington Race Riot, <http://www.history.ncdcr.gov/1898-wrrc/>, is the website from the commission that the North Carolina General Assembly put together to look into the events surrounding the riots.
- America's Coup d'Etat: The 1898 Wilmington Race Riot, <http://www.ushistoryscene.com/uncategorized/1898wilmingtonraceriots/>, from U.S. History Scene, presents several video clips, period political cartoons, and links to African American primary source perspectives, along with other information about the events described in the book.
- Barbara Wright, <http://www.barbarawrightbooks.com/>, is the author's website and includes biographical and contact information for the author, as well as in-depth pages for each of her books.

BOOK TALK:

Have you ever been to Wilmington, North Carolina? It's a nice town on the coast of North Carolina, very close to the border between North and South Carolina, and for Moses Thomas, who lives there in 1898, life in summertime Wilmington is pretty predictable. He gets up in the morning, helps his grandma, Boo Nanny, with the wash she takes in from rich folks. Then, he might go visit his father down at the "Wilmington Daily Record" newspaper offices where he is a reporter. And, probably, he'll

hang out with his best friend. Overall, Wilmington is a good place for a young African American boy to grow up. The city government is integrated, and there are opportunities for African American families like Moses's to advance within the community – opportunities that are denied them in other parts of the country.

But things begin changing after the shadow of a crow narrowly misses crossing over Moses, something Boo Nanny says is a bad omen. Some of those changes are good, like his grandmother finally looking like maybe she'll let Moses teach her to read, something she'd never been able to learn to do back when she was a slave. But other changes aren't as good. Moses's best friend has started hanging out with another boy from a well-off family who thinks he's too good for Moses. And Moses comes smack up against racist attitudes when he is told he cannot enter a contest to win a bike, just because he is black. Then election time comes around, and white supremacist groups make it their mission to see that the African American community's power is destroyed. Pretty soon, Moses's life is going from predictable to dangerous, and his family faces a threat they'd never imagined happening in their town. In fact, amid arrests, riots, mobs, and lynchings, Moses's and his family's lives will be changed forever. To find out more about the frightening events that really took place in a place not so far from where we live today, and to find out what happens to Moses and his family, read *Crow*, by Barbara Wright.

Prepared by:

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Curveball: The Year I Lost My Grip

Jordan Sonnenblick
Scholastic Press, 2012
304 pages

SUMMARY:

After an injury ends former star pitcher Peter Friedman's athletic dreams, he concentrates on photography which leads him to a girlfriend, new fame as a high school sports photographer, and a deeper relationship with the beloved grandfather who, when he realizes he is becoming senile, gives Pete all of his professional camera gear.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Dead End in Norvelt, Jack Gantos
Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie, Jordan Sonnenblick
After Ever After, Jordan Sonnenblick
Notes from the Midnight Driver, Jordan Sonnenblick
Tears of a Tiger, Sharon Draper
The Final Four, Paul Volponi
After Eli, Rebecca Rupp
Pop, Gordon Korman

WEBSITES:

- Jordan Sonnenblick Official Website, <http://www.jordansonnenblick.com/>
- Curveball Book Trailer, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br_56CcBJkA&feature=youtu.be, by Mermerlibrarian

BOOKTALK:

Meet Peter Friedman, high school freshman. Talented photographer. Former baseball star. When a freak injury ends his pitching career, Peter has some major things to figure out. Is there life after sports? Why has his grandfather suddenly given him thousands of dollars worth of camera equipment? And is it his imagination, or is the super-hot star of the girls' swim team flirting with him, right in front of the amazing new girl in his photography class?

Prepared by:

Lorena Swetnam, Blythewood Middle School, lswetnam@richland2.org

Deadweather and Sunrise

Geoff Rodkey

Putnam Juvenile, 2012

288 pages

SUMMARY:

Egg lives with his family on Deadweather Island with retired pirates. A mysterious trip to Sunrise Island leads to an unfortunate accident and Egg winds up living with the wealthy Pembroke family, and their beautiful daughter, Millicent. His new life is much improved, but short lived. Soon Egg is running for his life and joining forces with a one-handed cabin boy named Guts. Together with Millicent, they must fight to stay alive, save Egg's home on Deadweather, and search for a mysterious map that may lead to treasure.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Pirates, John Matthews

Bloody Jack, L. A. Meyer

Pirateology: The Pirate Hunter's Companion (Ologies), Captain William Lubber

Treasure Island, Robert Louis Stevenson

Seven Wonders Book 1: The Colossus Rises, Peter Lerangis

WEBSITES:

- Geoff Rodkey, <http://geoffrodkey.com/> provides information on the author, his blog, and the books he has written
- Pirate Storm, <http://us.piratestorm.com/history-of-pirates>, provides information on pirate history and practices, famous pirates, pirate history in North Carolina, and information about the story *Treasure Island*
- The Pirate King, <http://www.thepirateking.com/index.htm>, contains resources for all things pirate, including biographies of pirates, sailing vessels, pirate movies, guide to knots, and more!

BOOKTALK:

Egg is an ordinary boy living with his uninterested father, abusive older brother, and obnoxious older sister on Deadweather Island. When his dad plans a sudden and mysterious trip to Sunrise Island for his family, they find themselves guests of the wealthy Pembroke family, and Egg becomes interested in their beautiful and feisty daughter, Millicent.

During his family's stay, a hot air balloon accident seemingly makes Egg an orphan and permanent guest of the Pembrokes. Though he is sad about his family, his life with the Pembrokes is much better than his life on Deadweather, but circumstances are not what they seem, and it isn't long before Egg is running for his life from an assassin, defending his family's home, and searching for a map that leads to a mysterious treasure with the help of a crazy, one-handed cabin boy named Guts.

Prepared by:

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Eye of the Storm

Kate Messner

Walker Childrens, 2012

304 pages

SUMMARY:

Jaden's summer visit with her meteorologist father, who has just returned from spending four years in Russia conducting weather experiments not permitted in the United States, fills her with apprehension and fear as she discovers that living at her father's planned community Placid Meadows is anything but placid.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY

Among the Hidden, Margaret Peterson Haddix

Saint Louis Armstrong Beach, Brenda Woods

Ninth Ward, Jewell Parker Rhodes

The Giver, Lois Lowry

City of Ember, Jeanne DuPrau

Double Identity, Margaret Peterson Haddix

WEBSITES:

- School Library Journal, <http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/2012/04/14/review-of-the-day-eye-of-the-storm-by-kate-messner/>, reviews the book and provides links to similar titles, as well as a video in which the author discusses her book.
- Kate Messner, <http://www.katemessner.com/eye-of-the-storm/>, is the author's website for more information about the author and other books she has written.
- Mrs. Reader Pants, <http://www.readerpants.net/2012/01/review-eye-of-storm-messner.html>, uncovers tons of extra information that relates to the novel *Eye of the Storm*.

BOOKTALK:

In the not-too-distant future, huge tornadoes and monster storms are a part of everyday life. Sent to spend the summer in the heart of storm country with her father in the special StormSafe community his company has developed, Jaden Meggs is excited to reconnect with her dad after he spent years researching storm technology in Russia. She'll also be attending the exclusive summer science camp, Eye On Tomorrow, that her dad founded. There, Jaden meets Alex, a boy whose passion for science matches hers, and together they discover a horrible truth about her dad's research that is putting countless lives at risk. As a massive tornado approaches, threatening to destroy everything in its path, Jaden is torn between loyalty to her dad and revealing his secret. Can she find the courage to confront her dad and save everyone from the biggest storm yet?

Prepared by:

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The False Prince

Jennifer A. Nielson
Scholastic Press, 2012
342 pages

SUMMARY:

Carthya has been pushed to the brink of civil war with rumors that the king, queen, and crown prince have all been assassinated. While a second prince (Prince Jaron) is believed by most countrymen to have been murdered by pirates, a devious nobleman, Conner, concocts a plan to “revive” Prince Jaron, present him to the council as the heir to the throne, and then rule Carthya behind the scenes. The success of his treasonous plan hinges on finding just the right boy to play the part and be the puppet. The boy must favor the prince physically, but he must also be desperate enough to accept Conner basically stealing his future. Conner searches the dregs and outcasts of society looking for just the one. He buys or adopts four boys under the guise of a wealthy man looking out for the needs of the unfortunate orphans. Though three of the boys are ready to conform to survive and then hopefully live the life of a prince, Sage’s stubbornness earns him mistreatment and certain death. Only one of the boys can be the puppet prince and there can be no other witnesses to this duplicitous plan. Sage must decide if his stubbornness is worth his life or if he can transform himself into a convincing, but manipulated, prince.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY

The Amaranth Enchantment, Julie Berry
The Thief, Megan Whalen Turner
A Conspiracy of Kings, Megan Whalen Turner
The Demon King, Cinda Williams Chima
Changeling, Philippa Gregory

WEBSITES:

- Jennifer A. Nielson, <http://www.jennielsen.com/> is the official website of the author of *The False Prince*. The site contains information on her other books as well as upcoming news on *The False Prince* being adapted into a movie.
- The Stacks in Scholastic, <http://www.scholastic.com/falseprince/> is a book trailer for the book.
- Book Wizard by Scholastic, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/false-prince> links to discussion guides and teaching guides for the first two books in the Ascendance trilogy.

BOOKTALK:

If you weren’t sure when you’d have your next meal and survived by picking pockets and stealing, you probably wouldn’t care that your country’s king, queen, and crown prince had been assassinated and the younger prince is presumed dead. But, if you were guaranteed a better life, a rich life, simply by pretending to be someone you weren’t, wouldn’t you do it? Sage and three other orphan boys have been “rescued” by Conner, a nobleman with the idea that one of them could be groomed to be the heir to the throne. The boys quickly learn that Conner’s plan is devious and dangerous. All three boys must train to behave like a prince would, but also must keep the treasonous secret. One, and only one, boy will become the prince and the rest will be killed to hide the secret. Can Sage overcome his stubbornness? His only choice may be to lie or die.

Prepared by:

Michelle King, Kennedy Middle School, mking@aiken.k12.sc.us

Fourmile
Watt Key
Farrar Straus Giroux, 2012
228 pages

SUMMARY:

Living on an Alabama farm with his mother, 12-year-old Foster is still grieving from the death of his father last year. His mother's new boyfriend is abusive and dangerous. Foster feels their efforts to keep up the farm his father worked so hard to create are futile, and they are drowning in the workload. When a traveler named Gary shows up and offers to be a handyman for the farm in exchange for shelter, Foster and his mother agree to let him stay and help. This decision will affect them in ways they could never expect.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY

Alabama Moon, Watt Key
Belle Prater's Boy, Ruth White
Dirt Road Home, Watt Key
Harris and Me, Gary Paulsen
Heart of a Shepherd, Rosanne Parry
Hide and Seek, Katy Grant
Wildlife, Cynthia DeFelice

WEBSITES:

- Author's Official Website, <http://www.wattkey.com/>, contains information about Watt Key's books and biographical information about Watt Key.
- Publisher's Website, <http://us.macmillan.com/fourmile/WattKey>, provides a summary, excerpt, and book reviews about *Fourmile*.

BOOKTALK:

Foster loved his life on the farm his parents bought in Alabama. But now, a year after his father passed away, Foster and his mother are struggling to take care of the farm themselves. They had to sell all the cattle for money, the barn is leaking, the fence needs painting, and they don't have the money or knowledge to fix any of it. On top of all that, Foster's mom has a new boyfriend named Dax who is abusive and ill tempered. He drinks too much and is rude to Foster and his mom. He's even threatened to kill Foster's dog! Foster hates him, but his mother doesn't seem to care that he's such a bad guy. Everything is falling apart, until a mysterious stranger named Gary wanders into their lives.

It starts with Gary needing shelter from the rain for one night, but after he proves how helpful he can be around the farm, Gary and Foster's mom make a deal that he can rent out the barn in exchange for fixing the place up to sell. Gary provides more than just physical labor for the family, he provides kindness and support that Foster and his mother are not getting from anyone else. When Dax starts to feel threatened by their bond with Gary, he stops at nothing to eliminate Gary from their lives. The feud between the two men escalates through a series of intense events leading up to a powerful climax. Readers beware; you will learn to hate Dax as much as Foster hates him.

Prepared by:

Andrea Knight, Glenview Middle School, andreaknight@anderson5.net

The Ghost of Graylock

Dan Poblocki

Scholastic Press, 2012

258 pages

SUMMARY:

Does an abandoned asylum hold the key to a frightful haunting? Everyone's heard the stories about Graylock Hall. It was meant to be a place of healing - a hospital where children and teenagers with mental disorders would be cared for and perhaps even cured. But something went wrong. Several young patients died under mysterious circumstances. Eventually, the hospital was shut down, the building abandoned and left to rot deep in the woods.

As the new kid in town, Neil Cady wants to see Graylock for himself. Especially since rumor has it that the building is haunted. He's got fresh batteries in his flashlight, a camera to document the adventure, and a new best friend watching his back.

Neil might think he's prepared for what he'll find in the dark and decrepit asylum. But he's certainly not prepared for what follows him home. . . . And indeed, there is a ghost. One who torments Neil and his sister Bree with nightmares and horrible visitations, one who won't rest until they can figure out just what she wants. And as the haunting grows in intensity, so does the danger Neil and Bree are in... Scary, suspenseful, and surprising, Dan Poblocki's latest ghost story will keep you turning pages deep into the dead of night. (Goodreads)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

The Nightmares, Dan Poblocki

The Turning, Francine Prose

Gravediggers: Mountain of Bones, Christopher Krovatin

The Whispering House, Rebecca Wade

The Winslow Incident, Elizabeth Voss

WEBSITES:

- Goodreads, <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13316309-the-ghost-of-graylock>, includes good reviews and descriptions of *The Ghost of Graylock*.
- *The Ghost of Graylock* website, <http://ghostofgraylock.weebly.com/main-idea-of-all-the-parts.html>, gives the main ideas about the book and the story, descriptions of the characters, and a short biography of the author.
- Lesson Plan Ideas, <http://www.classroomtech.org/lessons/Ghosts%20Stories.PDF>, has a great lesson plan for any ghost story.

BOOKTALK:

Everyone has heard the tales of Graylock Hall, but Neil Cady is the new kid in town and wants to see Graylock for himself. Should he go there or just take the word of the local residents who have lived there a long time? Armed with his camera, flashlight, and his best buddy to back him up, he decides to see for himself. Will he find the secrets of the dark and decrepit asylum or will those secrets come home to haunt him? Who knows; you might be reading and turning pages deep into the dead of night!!!!!! If you want to find out all the scary, suspenseful and surprising things about Graylock Hall you will have to read *The Ghost of Graylock* by Dan Poblocki.

Prepared by:

Linda Estridge, New Heights Middle School, lestridge@chesterfieldschools.org

Guitar Notes

Mary Amato
Egmont USA, 2012
304 pages

SUMMARY:

Tripp Broody, the loner, is a guitar enthusiast who lives to play his guitar. Lyla Marks, straight A-student, is an award winning cellist who plays her cello because it makes others happy. When both find themselves sharing a practice room at school, Lyla (even days) and Tripp (odd days) begin to learn much more than music. Unlikely friendships are formed, collaboration produces music, and thrumming begins to happen.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Audrey, Wait!, Robin Benway
How to Rock Braces and Glasses, Meg Haston
Lemonade Mouth Puckers Up, Mark Peter Hughes
Five Flavors of Dumb, Antony John
Beat the Bands, Don Calame
Fat Kid Rules the World, K.L. Going
Amplified, Tara Kelly

WEBSITES:

- Guitar Notes , www.thrumsociety.com, provides curriculum resources including ,but not limited to, recorded music of the songs written in the book, videos on how to play the guitar, and songwriting resources.
- Mary Amato’s official website, www.maryamato.com, provides a list of her written works, resource index for curriculum collaboration, and a list of workshops that the author is available for booking.
- Exploratorium: Science of Music, <http://www.exploratorium.edu/music/index.html>, is a website of online exhibits dedicated to the science of music. Website users are able to explore various music related topics, view videos, and ask some of the most pressing questions like “Why does sad music sound sad?”

BOOKTALK:

“I play what’s inside me. That’s what I mean by thrumming. When the vibrations of the music make your soul vibrate, you feel the thrum. It’s like you’re perfectly in tune with the song, as if you are the music and the music is you.” When I thrum I know I’m being heard. The notes escape me and as I play the vibrations take away all that I feel. Music is not the notes on the page but instead the feelings that it helps relay. For Lyla, though, music was all about the notes written on the sheet and how those notes are performed. Lyla was all about following the structure of the sheet music instead of feeling the music inside her. I would have never imagined that she would find the freedom of music and I would find the structure of the note.

Prepared by:

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Laugh with the Moon

Shana Burg

Delacorte Press, 2012

245 pages

SUMMARY:

Massachusetts thirteen-year-old Clare, grieving after her mother's recent death, reluctantly travels with her father to spend nine weeks in a remote village in Malawi, where new friends and experiences help open her mind and heart.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY

Glory Be, Augusta Scattergood

Kepler's Dream, Juliet Bell

Chained, Lynne Kelly

One for the Murphys, Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Crow, Barbara Wright

A Song for Bijou, Josh Farrar

WEBSITES:

- Shana Burg's Author Website, <http://shanaburg.com/books/laugh-with-the-moon/>
- Interview with the Author, <http://motherdaughterbookclub.com/2012/10/interview-with-shana-burg-author-of-laugh-with-the-moon/> (Printed interview.)
- Author Video Interview, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoZtKQIL3Hk>
- Random House Book Trailer, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9ynsFJBPGo>
- Texas Bluebonnet Award Activity Guide, <http://texasbluebonnetaward2014.wordpress.com/laugh-moon-related-activities/>
- Ripple Africa, <http://www.rippleafrica.org/education-in-malawi-africa/primary-school-education-in-malawi-africa>, teachers about Malawi schools and education.

BOOKTALK:

After Clare's mother dies suddenly, her father drags Clare off to Africa where he will volunteer in a Malawi hospital for the area natives. At first Clare is angry and can't understand why her father isn't grieving her mother's death, but slowly, she begins to understand that "sometimes even mourners must laugh with the moon" and she realizes that everyone hurts and heals in their own way. Read *Laugh with the Moon* to learn about the people of Malawi, Clare's adventures as both a student and a teacher in a Malawi school, and how the people of a small village teach Clare about living, even when death waits just around the corner.

Prepared by:

Samantha McManus, Sullivan Middle School, smcmanus@rhmail.org

Lincoln's Grave Robbers

Steve Sheinkin

Scholastic Press, 2012

214 pages

SUMMARY:

When Chicago counterfeiters launch a plan to kidnap the body of Abraham Lincoln and hold it for ransom, it is up to the Secret Service to foil their scheme. This fast-paced narrative comes to a dramatic climax the night the kidnappers break into Lincoln's tomb.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY....

Bloody Times: The Funeral of Abraham Lincoln and the Manhunt for Jefferson Davis, James L. Swanson

Chasing Lincoln's Killer, James L. Swanson

Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever, Bill O'Reilly and Dwight Jon Zimmerman

The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary, Candace Fleming

WEBSITES:

- Steve Sheinkin, <http://stevesheinkin.com/>, is the official site of the author. It includes biographical information as well as a list of additional titles he has written.
- Lincoln's Tomb, <http://lincolntomb.org/>, is the site for the Lincoln Tomb and War Memorial. It includes a history of the construction of the tomb as well as links to war memorials.
- Book trailer http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_A1sQxD8uE

BOOKTALK:

The year is 1875. Half of all money being circulated is fake. Counterfeiting is hitting the American economy hard. Something must be done, but what?

Help arrives in the form of the newly created Secret Service, and when master counterfeit engraver Benjamin Boyd is thrown in jail for his illegal activities, the government breathes a sigh of relief. But, the relief is short-lived as Boyd's fellow cohorts aren't going down without a fight. Instead of helping Boyd escape from jail, they'll demand a ransom.

What is that ransom? The release of Benjamin Boyd from jail for the return of President Lincoln's body!

That's right – counterfeiters plan to snatch the body of Abraham Lincoln right from his tomb! Can they really do this? With a well-thought out, but wacky scheme in mind, they just might succeed. That is, if they can trust the men they hire to do the job.

This suspenseful, little known event in American history comes to a stunning climax election night in 1876. This brilliant work of non-fiction reads more like a fast-paced narrative that you will not want to put down.

Prepared by:

Carmen Mangus, Pelion Middle School, cmangus@lexington1.net

Losing It
Erin M. Fry
Two Lions, September 2012
261 pages

SUMMARY:

Bennett Robinson and his dad live a life filled with fast food and baseball, until one day, Bennett's dad has a massive heart attack. While his dad recovers, Bennett is forced to live with his controlling aunt Laura and her fitness crazed family. Bennett struggles internally with all of the changes and worries constantly about his dad, but he finds an unlikely source of comfort when he joins the cross country team.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Middle School: How I Survived Bullies, Broccoli, and Snake Hill, James Patterson

Dear Bully: Seventy Authors Tell Their Stories, Metcalf, Hall, and Jones

The Teen Eating Manifesto: The Ten Essential Steps to Losing Weight, Looking Great, and Getting Healthy, Lisa Stollman, MA, RD, CDE, CDN

Skinny, Donna Cooner

The Success Principles for Teens, Jack Canfield and Kent Healy

WEBSITES:

- Erin M. Fry, <http://erinmfry.com/>, provides information on the author and the books she has written.
- Stop Bullying, <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>, contains information on various types of bullying, including how to prevent and respond to bullying.
- Weight Center, http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/weight_center.html#cat20130, provides information on managing your weight; includes recipes, making a plan, eating well, and losing weight safely.
- Sports Center, http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/sports_center.html#cat20130, is a great resource for identifying the sport for you, how to get started training safely, how to avoid injuries, and how to keep your body fed during workouts

BOOKTALK:

After his mom dies of cancer, Bennett and his dad live a life filled with fast food and watching baseball, leaving them both extremely overweight. One day, Bennett's dad has a massive heart attack. While his dad recovers, Bennett is forced to live with his controlling Aunt Laura and her fitness crazed family. Bennett struggles internally with all of the changes and he worries constantly about his dad, but he finds an unlikely source of comfort when he joins the cross country team.

However, his friend, P.G., who is also overweight, does not understand why Bennett suddenly wants to be an athlete and refuses to talk to him. The insurance company won't keep paying his dad's bills unless his dad shows progress each day. And suddenly cross country is far more serious than Bennett ever expected. Can Bennett keep it all together without his dad and his best friend?

Prepared by:

Nikki Parton, Honea Path Middle School, kparton@anderson2.k12.sc.us

May B.

Caroline Starr Rose

Schwartz & Wade Books, 2012

231 pages

SUMMARY:

May's parents hire her out to help at a neighbor's homestead for just a few months. But May soon finds herself alone and virtually trapped in the isolated sod house, with very little food and fuel to survive a prairie winter. May tells her story in beautifully descriptive verse.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

The Quilt Walk, Sandra Dallas

Serafina's Promise, Ann E. Burg

The Wild Book, Margarita Engle

Prairie Whispers, Frances Arrington

Out of the Dust, Karen Hesse

WEBSITES:

- Author's website, <http://www.carolinestarrrose.com/>, provides an extensive teacher's guide with activities, discussion questions, maps, vocabulary, and much more (see "For Teachers" section of site for PDF of guide).
- YouTube book trailer, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FopNI_Y8iQM&feature=youtu.be,%20book%20trailer
- "Life in a Sod House" at Our Story, <http://amhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/sodhouse/index.html>, gives a description and photographs of what it is like to live in a sod house.
- "Solomon D. Butcher Photographs the Sod House Frontier" at Nebraska Studies.org, http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0600/frameset_reset.html?http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0600/stories/0602_0100.html, includes video featuring photographs of prairie life, including soddies.

BOOKTALK:

Young May is sure that her parents have hired her out to live with strangers fifteen miles from her own homestead so that there is one less mouth to feed in her family. Bitter and frightened, May soon learns that she is charged with helping Mr. Oblinger's new bride adjust to the harsh and lonely life in a sod house on the Kansas prairie. May's own unhappiness soon turns to real fear when she is mysteriously abandoned by the Oblingers and is forced to survive through months of increasingly harsh weather with ever-dwindling resources. With only her own thoughts and a book she can barely read, hungry and cold, May listens to the howling of a nearby wolf and the wailing of the blizzard winds that cover the soddy with snow. Does anyone even know she is alone? Does she have enough courage to face each new challenge? Will her father come back to get her before she starves or freezes to death?

Prepared by:

Betty T. (BT) Bouton, Fort Johnson Middle School, betty_bouton@charleston.k12.sc.us

One for the Murphys
Lynda Mullaly Hunt
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2012
224 pages

SUMMARY:

When Carley first becomes a foster child to the Murphys, she doesn't trust their kindness. She soon figures out that the family truly cares for her, and starts to feel like she belongs. Then her mother decides she wants her back, and she has to face the truth about how she really ended up in foster care.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY:

Almost Home, Joan Bauer

See You at Harry's, Jo Knowles

Don't you dare read this, Mrs. Dunphrey, Margaret Peterson Haddix

Okay for Now, Gary Schmidt

Waiting to Forget, Sheila Kelly Welch

Touch Blue, Cynthia Lord

WEBSITES:

- Lynda Hunt, <http://www.lyndamullalyhunt.com/>, is the author's official website.
- Interview With Nancy Paulsen, <http://jamerichards.blogspot.com/2010/05/interview-with-nancy-paulsen-author.html>, is an interview with the author.
- Book trailer http://www.teachertube.com/viewVideo.php?video_id=264216
- Kids Peace, <http://www.kidspeace.org/Foster.aspx>, provides information about foster care.
- Prison Fellowship, <http://www.prisonfellowship.org/programs/angel-tree/>, provides a way to give back.

BOOKTALK:

"But most of all, I'll remember how she loved me. I turn away, knowing that I might never get to see Julie Murphy again. But I will know her for the rest of my life." Carley Connors suddenly gets placed in foster care, where the Murphys take her in as their own, especially the mom Julie. Little by little, Carley becomes attached to their three little boys. And when her mother wants her back, Carley has to let go of the only thing that's ever been consistent in her life. Carley will have to learn the truth about why she was originally put in foster care, and she will be forced to look at life in a brand new way.

One for the Murphys is a moving story full of grief, sadness, and love. You will feel like you're with Carley the whole way through. This well-written book will open your eyes about foster care and the many children placed in it every day.

Prepared by:

Cameron Johnson, Lugoff Elgin Middle School, cameronandmilo@gmail.com

The Raft
S. A. Bodeen
Scholastic, Inc., 2012
231pages

SUMMARY:

Experienced traveler Robie, having decided to take a cargo plane from Honolulu to her home on Midway Atoll after a visit with her aunt, struggles to survive with the co-pilot, Max, after the plane crashes in the Pacific Ocean and they are left on a raft in shark-infested waters with only one bag of Skittles to eat.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . . :

Hatchet, Gary Paulsen

Night of the Howling Dogs, Graham Salisbury

Far North, Will Hobbs

Island of the Blue Dolphins, Scott O'Dell

The Killing Sea, Richard Lewis

Seize the Storm, Michael Cadnum

Life as We Knew It, Susan Beth Pfeffer

WEBSITES:

- Scoop.it, <http://sco.lt/96mtG5>, YouTube Book Trailer
- SchoolTube, <http://www.schooltube.com/video/85f0615f25694b36a63a/The%20Raft> *The Raft* student booktalk.
- Macmillan Publishers, S.A. Bodeen, <http://us.macmillan.com/author/sabodeen>, publisher webpage with links to author's page and social media sites.

BOOKTALK:

Robie is an experienced traveler. She's taken the flight from Honolulu to the Midway Atoll, a group of Pacific islands where her parents live, many times. When she has to get to Midway in a hurry after a visit with her aunt in Hawaii, she gets on the next cargo flight at the last minute. She knows the pilot, but on this flight, there's a new co-pilot named Max. All systems are go until a storm hits during the flight. The only passenger, Robie doesn't panic until the engine suddenly cuts out and Max shouts at her to put on a life jacket. They are over untold miles of Pacific Ocean, with no land in sight. She sees Max struggle with a raft. And then . . . she's in the water. Fighting for her life. Max pulls her onto the raft, and that's when the real terror begins. They have no water. Their only food is a bag of Skittles. There are sharks. There is an island. But there's no sign of help on the way.

Booktalk from www.scoop.it (scooped by TimothyThomas)

Prepared by:

Randy Q. Polk, Rawlinson Road Middle School, rpolk@rhmail.org

See You at Harry's

Jo Knowles

Candlewick Press, 2012

310 pages

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Fern feels invisible in her family, with grumpy eighteen-year-old sister Sarah, struggling fourteen-year-old Holden, and adorable Charlie, and when tragedy strikes, the fragile bond holding the family together is stretched to the breaking point.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

After Iris, Natasha Farrant

Death and Bereavement, Jody Kornfeld

Little Audrey, Ruth White

What Momma Left Me, Renée Watson

Mockingbird: (Mok'ing-burd), Kathryn Erskine

The Boy on Cinnamon Street, Phoebe Stone

Getting Near to Baby, Audrey Coulombis

Mick Harte Was Here, Barbara Park

WEBSITES:

- The Sibling Connection, <http://www.counselingstlouis.net/index.html>, was created as a resource for anyone who has lost a sister or brother. Their mission is to provide resources to grieving siblings through counseling, the SiblingConnection website, education, research, writing, and to raise public awareness about the profound impact of sibling loss.
- The Compassionate Friends: Supporting a Family After a Child Dies, <https://www.compassionatefriends.org/home.aspx>, strives to provide personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.
- Jo Knowles, <http://www.joknowles.com/Home.html>, is the author's home page with biographical information, information about her books, resources for writers, and the author's blog posts.
- *See You at Harry's* on Pinterest, <http://www.pinterest.com/joknowles/see-you-at-harrys/>, the author has built a Pinterest page for fans of the book.
- *See You at Harry's* book trailer, <http://youtu.be/S-NX38Ay3iA>

BOOKTALK:

"All will be well." That's what Fern's friend, Ran, always tells her. And it's always been true. Ran has always had a way of getting Fern through the difficult things in her life. Things like her dad's hare-brained schemes of bringing publicity to the family's ice cream parlor/diner; or the way her mother is always running off to meditate, leaving Fern and her brothers and sisters (but mostly Fern, it seems) to deal with situations that come up; or the problems her older brother, Holden, is having with bullies at their middle school and their parents, who just can't seem to deal with who Holden really is. Then there's her little brother, Charlie, a tag-along baby, who gets away with everything because, at three-years-old, he's just so darned cute. Fern is always left to take care of him, and she gets pretty tired of it. But Ran and his mantra are always there to help Fern through.

But then the day comes when it seems that Ran's mantra just isn't enough. When a tragic death strikes Fern's family, everything comes apart, and Fern is sure it's all her fault. Her mother shuts down, her

siblings deal with it in their own ways, and her dad tries to keep the family together. But nothing is the same, and Fern's self-blame is threatening to overwhelm her. Not even Ran can make this better. Can all really ever be well, ever again? Read *See You at Harry's*, by Jo Knowles, to find out how Fern and her family come to grips with a tragedy so awful, nothing in their lives will ever be the same.

Prepared by:

Julie Hornick, River Oaks Middle School, jhornick@dorchester2.k12.sc.us

Shadow and Bone

Leigh Bardugo

Henry Holt & Company, 2012

358 pages

SUMMARY:

Orphaned by the Border Wars, Alina Starkov is taken from obscurity and her only friend, Mal, to become the protégé of the mysterious Darkling, who trains her to join the magical elite in the belief that she is the Sun Summoner, who can destroy the monsters of the Fold.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

Rift, Andrea Cremer

Stormdancer, Jay Kristoff

Silver Phoenix, Cindy Pon

Seraphina, Rachel Hartman

The Gathering Storm, Robin Bridges

WEBSITES:

- Leigh Bardugo's Website, www.leighbardugo.com, includes book trailer, synopsis, a free excerpt, and *World of the Grisha*. *World of the Grisha* includes the story behind writing *Shadow and Bone*, recipes inspired by the book, a pronunciation guide for names and phrases in the book, archives of posts and interviews with the author, and *Grisha Swag*—a great place to get free stuff!
- Macmillan Publisher's Website, <http://us.macmillan.com/shadowandbone/LeighBardugo>, includes a summary of the book, excerpts, reviews, about the author, a reading guide, and links to official book websites, Facebook and Twitter pages.

BOOKTALK:

Surrounded by enemies, the once-great nation of Ravka has been torn in two by the Shadow Fold, an area of near impenetrable darkness crawling with monsters who feast on human flesh. Now Ravka's fate may rest on the shoulders of one lonely refugee.

Alina Starkov has never been good at anything. When her regiment is attacked on the Fold and her best friend is brutally injured, Alina reveals a dormant power that saves his life—a power that could be the key to setting her war-ravaged country free. Wrenched from everything she knows, Alina is whisked away to the royal court to be trained as a member of the Grisha, the magical elite led by the mysterious Darkling.

Yet nothing in this lavish world is what it seems. With darkness looming and an entire kingdom depending on her untamed power, Alina will have to confront the secrets of the Grisha...and the secrets of her heart.

Prepared by:

Dana Whelchel, Liberty Middle School, danawhelchel@pickens.k12.sc.us

Spy School
Stuart Gibbs
Simon and Schuster, 2011
290 pages

SUMMARY:

Twelve year old Ben Ripley leaves his public middle school to attend the CIA's highly secretive Espionage Academy, which everyone is told is an elite science school.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Belly Up, Stuart Gibbs

Geeks, Girls, and Secret Identities, Mike Jung

H.I.V.E (Higher Institute of Villainous Education), Mark Walden

I'd Tell You I Loved You But Then I'd Have To Kill You. Ally Carter

Independence Hall, Roland Smith

Liar & Spy, Rebecca Stead

Look Into My Eyes, Lauren Child

NERDS: National Espionage, Rescue and Defense Society, Michael Buckley

Shadow on the Mountain, Margi Preus

Stormbreaker, Anthony Horowitz

Summer at Forsaken Lake, Michael Beil

WEBSITES:

- The author's website, <http://stuartgibbs.com/books/>, provides information about the author and his books.
- The online booktalk at <http://www.schooltube.com/video/3133255f93a84357902e/Spy%20School%20Book%20Talk> Spy School booktalk, presents a prerecorded booktalk for this book.

BOOKTALK:

(from the author) Can an undercover nerd become a superstar secret agent? Maybe not, but it'll be fun to watch him try! Ben Ripley may only be in middle school, but he's already pegged his dream job: C.I.A. or bust. Unfortunately for him, his personality doesn't exactly scream "secret agent." In fact, Ben is so awkward, he can barely get to school and back without a mishap. Because of his innate nerdiness, Ben is not surprised when he is recruited for a magnet school with a focus on science – but he's entirely shocked to discover that the school is actually a front for a junior C.I.A. academy. Could the C.I.A. really want "him"? Actually, no. There's been a case of mistaken identity – but that doesn't stop Ben from trying to morph into a supercool undercover agent, the kind that always gets the girl. And through a series of hilarious misadventures, Ben realizes he might actually be a halfway decent spy...if he can survive all the attempts being made on his life.

Prepared by:

Michal Hope Brandon, Muller Road Middle School, mbrandon@richland2.org

Unchained
By L.B. Tillit
Saddleback Educational Pub., 2012
197 pages

SUMMARY:

TJ lives a rough life. He has gotten involved in a gang and his parents are addicted to drugs. It gets even worse when his father dies from an overdose, and he is taken from his mother to live in a foster home. Or is it worse? In the end he has to decide which is his “real” home, with his mom or Ms. Dixie, his foster mother?

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

One for the Murphys, Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Almost Home, Joan Bauer

Pictures of Hollis Woods, Patricia Reilly Giff

Any book by Walter Dean Myers

WEBSITES:

- *Unchained* by L.B. Tillit, www.lbtillit.com/books-unchained.html, summarizes the book and the awards the book has received, and provides a link to information about the author.
- South Carolina DSS, dss.sc.gov/content/customers/protection/fcs/index.aspx, provides an explanation of the South Carolina foster care system.
- Gangs or Us, www.gangsorus.com/sc.html, includes information on gangs in South Carolina, including videos and links to studies.

BOOKTALK:

I knew I should have listened to my dad and stayed away from Kaden and his gang, but why would I take advice from a drug addict? Now it's too late. Dad is dead and Kaden is after me. But things could be looking up for me, now that I'm in a foster home with people who care and far away from the drugs and gangs of my old neighborhood. How long will it last? Is this where I belong?

Prepared by:

Michele Bates, Northside Middle School, batesm@gwd50.org

What the Dog Said

Randi Reisfeld with H.B. Gilmour

Bloomsbury, 2012

239 pages

SUMMARY:

Ever since her police officer father was killed a few months ago, Grace Abernathy hasn't wanted to do much of anything. She's pulled away from her friends, her grades are plummeting . . . it's a problem. The last thing Grace wants is to be dragged into her older sister Regan's plan to train a shelter dog as a service dog. But Grace has no idea how involved she'll get – especially when a mangy mutt named Rex starts talking to her. Has Grace gone off the deep end? Or might this dog be something really special-an angel? A spirit? Either way, he is exactly the therapy that Grace needs. (Source: titlepeek.fsc.follett.com)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY . . .

Bird in a Box, Andrea Davis Pinckney

Claim to Fame, Margaret Peterson Haddix

Coping With Loss: the Life Changes Handbook, Anita Naik

A Dog Called Homeless, Sarah Lean

Dog Obedience: Getting Your Pooch Off the Couch and Other Dog Training Tips, Liz Palika

Everything for a Dog, Ann M. Martin

The Fast and the Furriest, Andy Behrens

The Garden of Eve, K. L. Going

Guide Dogs, Melissa McDaniel

How I Got a Life and a Dog: A Novel, Art Corriveau

Therapy Dogs, Sara Green

Wild Life, Cynthia DeFelice

WEBSITES:

- Dog Camp Agility. <http://animal.discovery.com/tv-shows/animal-planet-presents/videos/planets-best-dog-camp-agility.htm> , is a website where you will learn about what dog camp is all about. You will see how an agility course is set up and how owners train their pets to complete the course. Find out how agility classes can strengthen the bond between the owner and the dog. Dog owners talk about the benefits of taking their dog to agility camp.
- Educated Canines: Assisting With Disabilities, <http://www.ecad1.org>, is one of the organizations used by the author to research Assistance Dogs.
- Guiding Eyes for the Blind, www.guidingeyes.org, is the website for Guiding Eyes, an internationally accredited, nonprofit guide dog school that provides the blind and visually impaired with Guiding Eyes dogs, training, and lifetime support services. This website was recommended by the author for further information.
- Help for Kids, <http://www.dougy.org/grief-resources/help-for-kids/>, is for people who have experienced the death of a loved one. This web site can help you get through the tough time you will experience. Choose a link according to your age, twelve and younger or thirteen and older. No matter how old you are, there is some helpful advice available. Following these suggestions if you are twelve and younger you will find links for things to do, books to read, and centers in your area. If you are thirteen and older you will find links to a special bill

BOOKTALK:

Ever since her police officer father was killed a few months ago, Grace Abernathy hasn't wanted to do much of anything. She's pulled away from her friends, her grades are plummeting . . . it's a problem. The last thing Grace wants is to be dragged into her older sister Regan's plan to train a shelter dog as a service dog. But Grace has no idea how involved she'll get-especially when a mangy mutt named Rex starts talking to her. Has Grace gone off the deep end? Or might this dog be something really special-an angel? A spirit? Either way, he is exactly the therapy that Grace needs. (Source: Titlepeek.fsc.follett.com) Part comedy, part mystery, part family drama, part super-natural---this book has something for everyone. You'll see why Grace had to listen to *What the Dog Said*.

Prepared by:

Mary Cockrell, James Island Middle School & St. Andrews Middle School,
Mary_Cockrell@charleston.k12.sc.us