

# English Language Arts 10-12

*Selecting Young Adult Texts:  
An Annotated Bibliography  
for Senior High School  
2023*



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# Introduction

## Purpose

*Selecting Young Adult Texts: An Annotated Bibliography for Senior High School* is designed to complement the curriculum documents that describe the authorized curriculum for Senior High School English language arts.

*Selecting Young Adult Texts: An Annotated Bibliography for Senior High School* provides a list of suggested texts and annotations for student selected reading and teacher supported novel study. The suggested titles can provide opportunities for cross-curricular reading and support students' growing independence in choosing texts to read.

## Reading in Grades 10-12

Reading allows students to explore the spectrum of human experience, and shapes their conceptions of the world.

Through reading, students gain:

- access to models for language development
- a love of language
- an awareness of the interaction of emotion and intellect evoked by the text
- experiences through the imaginations and eyes of others

In English language arts, students are expected to *select, read, and view with understanding a range of literature, information, media, and visual texts*. As well, they are expected to *respond personally and critically to a range of texts, applying their understanding of language, form, and genre*.

As outlined in curriculum, students are expected to identify and select texts that meet their needs and interests and:

- Think about how meaning is created in texts through the author's:
  - intended purpose
  - use of language, form, and genre
  - use of text features and structure
- Reflect on their responses to texts by considering how:
  - diverse values, cultures, and realities are presented in texts
  - their point of view on issues, themes, and situations is informed by what they read and view
- Think about and practice different reading and viewing strategies to develop their independence in accessing and navigating texts

In the Senior High English language arts curriculum, students are invited to experience and create texts that become significant to them. Knowledge about text features enables students to:

- analyze the effectiveness of various techniques
- deepen their understanding as they think
- discuss their interactions with texts
- make critical and aesthetic judgements

It is important that students study various works in detail, as well as direct their own reading and viewing choices through personal selection. Wide reading experiences with texts can help them to:

- broaden their experiences
- develop as life-long readers
- develop their imagination
- improve their reading power
- increase awareness of text forms and literary elements
- reflect on the emotions and opinions elicited by a novel
- use their talents and skills to create stories

## Criteria for Selecting Young Adult Texts

The titles listed in this document have been carefully selected to adhere to the criteria as set forth on page 54 of *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada English Language Arts Curriculum* (1996). The selections:

- broaden students' understanding of social, historical, geographical, and cultural diversity
- develop sensitivity and understanding that reflects individual qualities such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, ability, community influences, and political/social values
- elicit personal and thoughtful critical responses
- have literary merit
- provide motivating and challenging experiences
- represent a range of styles and text forms
- use language effectively and responsibly

## Novels

While every book listed in this document has received careful review according to the criteria listed above, teachers should always exercise particular care in selecting or recommending texts to students. Teachers are in the best positions to know both their students and the communities in which they live.

The broad selection of titles listed in this document:

- allows students to explore their own and others' cultural and literary heritage
- balances traditional and contemporary texts
- includes prose that deals with issues and ideas related to students' experiences
- includes texts that can be paired or linked to provide text-to-text connections
- provides support for all strands of the English language arts curriculum

## Audience

Teachers and administrators may continue to refer to *Selecting Young Adult Texts: An Annotated Bibliography for Senior High School* for additional assistance when selecting learning resources for their classrooms and school resource centres.

Suggested audiences are noted for each title listed in *Selecting Young Adult Texts: An Annotated Bibliography for Senior High School*. They include the following:

- Lower Secondary
- Middle Secondary
- Upper Secondary
- Secondary

These recommendations are based on reading level as well as content. Titles recommended for Lower Secondary, for example, will have a lower reading level than Upper Secondary and will have less mature content and themes. Titles listed as Secondary should be accessible and of interest to a broad range of students in Grades 10-12. These recommendations are guidelines only; selection decisions should be made by teachers and students.

## Alternate Formats

The Department of Education's Alternate Format Materials Library (AFM-NL) provides curriculum resources in alternate formats for students who are unable to access print materials.

Alternate Format Materials are available for students whose comprehensive assessment verifies a Perceptual/Print disability (as defined by the Canadian Copyright Act, Section 32) and their learning profile indicates they have:

- an inability to hold or manipulate a book and/or;
- a significant impairment relating to comprehension.

Alternate Format Materials is an accommodation and is documented on the student's IEP (RTL K-6) or Record of Accommodations (SDM 7-12).

For further information, visit the AFM-NL Library at [cmf.gov.nl.ca](http://cmf.gov.nl.ca).

# Genre Definitions

Genre definitions provided in this document are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The list below is for the purpose of reference within this document.

**Action/Adventure**

The action/adventure genre is characterized by more emphasis on exciting action sequences than on character development or story-telling. Action is mainly focused on any kind of movement while adventure focuses on an exciting undertaking involving risk and physical danger.

**Contemporary/Realistic**

Realistic fiction creates characters and situations that depict our world and society, focusing on themes of growing up and confronting personal and social problems. It portrays characters coming to understand themselves and others.

**Dystopian**

Dystopian fiction takes place in a futuristic world in which oppressive societal control and the illusion of a perfect society are maintained. Dystopias, through an exaggerated worst-case scenario, make a criticism about a current trend, societal norm, or political system.

**Fantasy**

Fantasy tells tales of secondary worlds, creatures and people. Motifs include magic, good versus evil, heroism, special character types, and fantastic objects.

**Graphic Novels**

Graphic novels present stories using visual frames to support dialogue. They are similar to comic books but can offer complex plots that engage readers. Graphic novels deal with character transformation and challenging thematic concepts.

**Historical**

Historical fiction is characterized by stories set in the past. The details of the setting are usually authentic and accurate and may contain documented historical figures. Other characters, including the protagonist, are often fictionalized.

**Horror**

Horror concentrates on the dark aspects of fantasy. Common motifs in this genre include supernatural elements, dark isolated settings, and battles between good and evil.

**Informational and Nonfiction**

Informational books explain facts about specific topics. These texts must be accurate and present the information so that it is easily understood. The layout allows for additional facts, statistics, and illustrations to be included to extend the concepts presented.

## **Mixed Media**

This type of text has a variety of sources and images. It may include different writing forms, visuals, emails, manipulatives, charts, etc. The reader has to be flexible in order to create meaning from the pages because the meaning does not emerge in a traditional, linear manner.

## **Mystery**

Mystery novels emphasize plot. Usually, the protagonist is seeking an answer to a crime or to a mysterious event. Characteristics of this style of writing include suspense and a fast-paced style.

## **Picture Books**

While associated with younger readers, these texts can be brought to a higher level of reflection to develop critical understandings for older learners. They often convey a powerful and thought-provoking message.

## **Poetry**

Poetry encompasses many diverse forms and subjects. Some of these forms include free verse, blank verse, limericks, haiku. Poetry expresses intense emotions and reflections as it is usually written in a compressed form.

## **Science Fiction**

Science Fiction involves alternate, futuristic settings based on motifs such as alien encounters, time travel, artificial intelligence and futuristic technologies. Science Fiction is the improbable made possible.

## **Traditional**

Traditional literature consists of ancient stories and tales that were originally preserved by the use of oral traditions and were later written down. It is often formulaic and explains some kind of natural phenomena or moral teaching.

## **Verse Novels**

Verse novels tell the story by using verse instead of using full sentences organized in paragraph structures.

# Annotations (Organized Alphabetically by Author)

## **Albom, Mitch**

### **The Magic Strings of Frankie Presto**

ISBN: 978-0062294432

Publisher: Harper Paperbacks, 2016

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 368

Frankie Presto's legacy, narrated by none other than music itself and a few of its friends, tells his story, shares his triumphs, and mourns as Frankie learns some of the hardest truths of his life. Mitch Albom takes us through rural Spanish settings, to an Elvis Presley concert, to the infamous Woodstock, and to small encounters with rock and roll greats like Paul Stanley and Hank Williams. But the true magic of Frankie's life lays in the hands of a nun, an old maestro, and a girl named Aurora. As Frankie masters his own strings, he learns the tempos of sacrifice and deception to finally realize that the orchestra of our lives can only be meaningful when we leave something behind.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## **Chariandy, David**

### **I've Been Meaning to Tell You: A Letter to My Daughter**

ISBN: 978-0771018077

Publisher: McClelland and Stewart, 2018

Genre: Informational/Nonfiction

Pages: 127

David Chariandy addresses directly his "dearest daughter" and explores the hard truths of being Canadian and visibly of colour. This heartfelt letter is written as his daughter turns thirteen and Chariandy recognizes her nascent strength and power but also the precariousness of being a Canadian of mixed race.

Reflective and earnest, but also at times light-hearted, Chariandy's letter to his daughter serves as a powerful tribute to the family's history and struggle. It also speaks about the tough truths of our nation's racism. Chariandy recognizes both his vulnerability and his privilege as a Canadian

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## **Cotter, Charis**

### **The Swallow: A Ghost Story**

ISBN: 978-1770495920  
 Publisher: Tundra, 2017  
 Genre: Fantasy/Mystery  
 Pages: 314

Set in Toronto in the 1960s, two young girls form an unusual friendship. Polly is an outgoing, optimistic, and imaginative young girl and Rose is quiet, introverted, and shy. However, they soon realize they have a lot in common.

They both feel unseen by their schoolmates and family. They both have an unusual connection to ghosts. Polly is obsessed with ghosts and hopes to one day see one. Rose just wishes she could stop seeing them.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Dimaline, Cherie**

### **The Marrow Thieves**

ISBN: 978-17708648633  
 Publisher: Dancing Cat Books, 2017  
 Genre: Dystopian  
 Pages: 231

Frenchie is trying to survive. In a world where people have lost the ability to dream, the bone marrow of Indigenous people is seen as the key to returning that ability, no matter the cost of obtaining it. Having lost his family, Frenchie has found a group of companions to help him evade the ruthless marrow thieves. Little do they know that one of their group has the ability to defeat the marrow thieves forever....

Recommended for: Secondary

## **Firestone, Carrie**

### **Dress Coded**

ISBN: 978-1984816436  
 Publisher: Putnam, 2020  
 Genre: Contemporary/Realistic  
 Pages: 303

Molly Frost is an eighth-grader, who attempts to navigate the complexities of growing up, while becoming a social activist and inspiring an entire school community. Molly starts a podcast from her tree-house in hopes of defending her old friend Olivia who was unfairly and shamefully dress-coded at Fisher Middle School, but her cause quickly grows as her and a group of friends decide to take on the dress code at FMS and advocate for all of the girls being shamed for their choice of clothing. Hundreds of students and parents join with Molly to make a change, many of them sharing their own tragic stories of being dress-coded and the lasting effects they endure.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary



**Joe, Mi'sel and  
Sheila O'Neill**

**My Indian**

ISBN: 978-1550818789  
Publisher: Breakwater Books, 2021  
Genre: Historical Fiction  
Pages: 176

William Epps Cormack has sought the expertise of Sylvester Joe in finding the last remaining Beothuk. *My Indian* follows Joe from his childhood (in the now Miawpukek First Nation), up to his journey guiding Cormack across the interior of Newfoundland in search of the remaining Beothuk. The question is whether Joe will lead Cormack to the Beothuk or lead his colonial explorer away from them.

Recommended for: Secondary

**Johnson, Leah**

**You Should See Me In a Crown**

ISBN: 978-1338503296  
Publisher: Scholastic Press, 2020  
Genre: Contemporary/Realistic  
Pages: 336

Liz Lighty is one of the few black students in her school. She is also bisexual, has a deceased mother, doesn't know her father, and has a seriously ill brother. Because of all these things, she wants to keep her head down and blend in as best she can. Her main goal is to just make it through high school and go to medical school. When the scholarship she was counting on falls through, her friends convince her that the only way to make her dreams come true is to become prom queen and get the \$10000 scholarship that goes with it. Her journey is one of discovery of self, life, friendship, and love.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

**Jones, Kimberly and  
Gilly Segal**

**I'm Not Dying With You Tonight**

ISBN: 978-1492678892  
Publisher: Sourcebooks, 2019  
Genre: Contemporary/Realistic  
Pages: 249

Lena and Campbell come from very different backgrounds, yet need to find some common ground through a series of violent and tense experiences they face together. What starts off as a routine football game between McPherson High School and their rivals Jonesville quickly progresses toward an unexpected night of violence, racial tension, rioting and looting in the streets of Atlanta. The unlikely friends must rely on and support one another to survive.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Joseph, Bob

### **21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act**

ISBN: 978-0995266520

Publisher: Indigenous Relations Press, 2018

Genre: Information/Nonfiction

Pages: 160

Bob Joseph gives a glimpse into some of the ugliest events of the history of our Nation. Joseph breaks down the key elements of the Indian Act and provides a detailed, informative explanation. His discussion is honest and clear, often revealing shocking details about Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples. It provides readers with all of the background information they require in order to process the Truth and Reconciliation Report and make a meaningful connection to the Calls to Action.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Joseph, Frederick

### **The Black Friend: On Being a Better White Person**

ISBN: 978-1536217018

Publisher: Candlewick Press, 2020

Genre: Information/Nonfiction

Pages: 272

The Black Friend plays on the statement people use to justify racist behaviour: "I can't be racist - I have a Black friend!". In this narrative, part advice, part memoir, part teaching text, Joseph shares his experiences in racism, anti-racism and reverse racism, as well as being the 'token Black kid' in the hopes of inspiring and teaching people to be kinder, more understanding and less racist.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Lee, Stacey

### **The Downstairs Girl**

ISBN: 978-1524740979

Publisher: G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2021

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 390

Lee explores the racism and gender prejudices that Jo, a Chinese-American growing up in Atlanta, Georgia in the late 1800s, encounters daily. Jo finds herself rebelling against society's norms when she anonymously takes on the mantle of "Miss Sweetie", the local paper's advice columnist. As if that weren't enough, Jo also juggles the mystery of her parentage, a growing admiration for an unattainable suitor, and a dangerous encounter with a notorious criminal, all the while living secretly in the basement of said newspaper.

Recommended for: Secondary

**Lee, Sungju and  
Susan Elizabeth  
McClelland**

**Every Falling Star: The True Story of How I Survived and  
Escaped North Korea**

ISBN: 978-1419721328

Publisher: Harry N. Abrams, 2016

Genre: Information/Nonfiction

Pages: 336

Sungju Lee, as a young North Korean, was forced to live on the streets after his military family was disgraced and banned from Pyongyang. He becomes a hardened street kid who turns to gang life in order to survive. He must come to terms with the constant threat of arrest, imprisonment, and even execution.

Recommended for: Secondary

**Lippincott, Rachel  
with Mikki Daughtry  
and Tobias Laconis**

**Five Feet Apart**

ISBN: 978-1665904964

Publisher: Simon and Schuster, 2018

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic

Pages: 265

Stella likes to be in control. She's even developing an app to help others take control of their health. She does everything she can to ensure that she will qualify for a lung transplant - medication, education, distance. Will has stopped caring about everything and is waiting for the day when he turns 18 and can take control of his own health and refuse all the treatments his mother keeps foisting on him. When they find themselves in the hospital at the same time, it is frustration at first sight. Both of them cystic fibrosis patients, both of them taking completely different approaches to the remainder of their lives, both of them needing love and friendship. Will it happen or will the five feet they need to keep between them keep them apart?

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

**Morris, Heather**

**The Tattooist of Auschwitz**

ISBN: 978-0062870674

Publisher: Harper, 2018

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 272

Lale Sokolov is imprisoned by the Nazis at the infamous death camp Auschwitz. Through a combination of luck, charm, personality, grit, and determination he finds himself safe from many of the horrors endured by other prisoners at the camp when he becomes the tattooist of Auschwitz, the man responsible for numbering inmates after they survive selection and enter the camps as prisoners and slaves. After a chance encounter, Lale meets inmate 34902, Gita, and this chance encounter becomes Lale's reason to live and to survive the horrors that surround him.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Nelson, Colleen

### Sadia

ISBN: 978-1459740310

Publisher: Dundurn Press, 2018

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic

Pages: 240

Sadia Ahmadi, 15, is an immigrant from Syria living in Winnipeg. Though she loves being a Canadian, she and her family often feel different because they are Muslim. However, when Sadia wears her hijab, she feels proud. Her best friend Miriam always felt the same but has recently begun removing her hijab at school and even dressing in shorts and a t-shirt for gym. This makes Sadia feel even more other. Sadia takes comfort in her one passion - basketball.

When her team makes it into a major competition, the rules state Sadia can not play with her hijab on. She must decide whether to compromise her beliefs for her beloved sport, or leave her passion behind.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## O'Ree, Willie with Michael McKinley

### Willie

ISBN: 978-0735239760

Publisher: Penguin Canada, 2021

Genre: Information/Nonfiction

Pages: 239

Willie O'Ree is a former Boston Bruin and professional hockey player who holds the distinction of being the first Black hockey player to play for an NHL team. O'Ree takes the reader on a powerful and moving journey that starts at childhood with a dream and ends with induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame. Along the way, he experiences love, friendship and the importance of family and identity while also living in a world of prejudice and discrimination.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Reynolds, Jason

### Long Way Down

ISBN: 978-1481438261

Publisher: Altheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2017

Genre: Verse Novel

Pages: 306

*Long Way Down* follows a fifteen-year-old Will, as he prepares to avenge the murder of his brother, Shawn. While travelling down in his building's elevator, with his brother's gun tucked in the back of his waistband, Will is visited by a series of ghosts who serve to warn him against his search for vigilante, revenge-fueled justice.

*Long Way Down* is clever, insightful, and poetic from its chapter divisions represented by a graphic of an elevator button panel, to its inclusion of meaningful anagrams and rich, figurative language.

Recommended for: Secondary

**Rhodes, Jewell Parker**
**Ghost Boys**

ISBN: 978-0316262262

Publisher: Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2018

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic

Pages: 240

Jerome Rogers, 12 years old, is shot by a white police officer in Chicago. In exploring his death, the narration switches from the immediate past - Jerome's home and school life, alive - and the aftermath of the shooting, death. Jerome, as a ghost, attends the hearing of the police officer. The officer's daughter, also in the courtroom, is the only living person who can see Jerome. She cannot understand how her father could have shot him. Jerome and Sarah connect with the ghosts of other African American boys who have been killed due to racism, in particular, Emmett Till. In the process, Sarah becomes determined to help change things.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

**Shusterman, Neal and Jarrod Shusterman**
**Dry**

ISBN: 978-1481481977

Publisher: Simon and Schuster, 2019

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic

Pages: 390

When the California drought escalates to catastrophic proportions, one teen is forced to make life and death decisions for her family in this harrowing story of survival. The drought, or the Tap-Out, as everyone calls it, has been going on for a while now. Everyone's lives have become an endless list of don'ts: don't water the lawn, don't fill up your pool, don't take long showers. Until the taps run dry. Suddenly, Alyssa's quiet suburban street spirals into a war zone of desperation with neighbours and families turned against each other on the hunt for water. And when her parents don't return and her life, and the life of her brother, is threatened, Alyssa has to make impossible choices if she's going to survive.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

**Sones, Sonya**
**Stop Pretending: What Happened When My Big Sister Went Crazy**

ISBN: 978-0064462181

Publisher: Harper Teen, 2016

Genre: Verse Novel

Pages: 145

A rare glimpse into the intimate thoughts and process of healing endured by a family who is faced with issues of mental illness. Based on true events in the author's life and told in verse from the viewpoint of a young sibling, Sones offers a perspective that is honest and sincere. Cookie is having to adapt to her sister's absence, watch her parents fight, and carry undeserved shame from others as she desperately tries to reclaim life in the midst of her sister's hospitalization.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Talaga, Tanya

### **Seven Fallen Feathers**

ISBN: 978-1487002268

Publisher: House of Anansi Press, 2017

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 376

A recount of the tragic deaths of Indigenous teenagers in Thunder Bay, Ontario. From 2000-2011, seven teens died, hundreds of kilometres away from their family, forced to leave home because there was no high school available in their community. Talaga combines explanation of systemic racism towards First Nations people in Canada with at the moment description of the loss and death of the seven and the impact on their families and community.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Weir, Andy

### **The Martian: Classroom Edition**

ISBN: 978-0804189354

Publisher: Balantine Books, 2014

Genre: Science Fiction

Pages: 369

*The Martian* follows the adventures of Mark Watney, an astronaut stranded on Mars after an aborted Mars mission. Watney must rely on his training as an astronaut, a botanist, and an engineer to survive long enough for NASA to mount a rescue mission. It will take every last shred of Watney's ingenuity, humour, and willpower to handle everything Mars throws at him.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Weimer, Liza

### **The Assignment**

ISBN: 978-0593123195

Publisher: Ember, 2020

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic

Pages: 309

*The Assignment* is set in a quiet, small American community. However, hidden yet embedded in that community are feelings of privilege and superiority. An assignment by a schoolteacher to explore the Nazi perspective of The Final Solution highlights how easily a community can be fractured and how discrimination and prejudice can rise. It is a novel about isolation and community; love and hatred; and standing up for what is right.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

**Woodson, Jacqueline****Brown Girl Dreaming**

ISBN: 978-0399252518

Publisher: Nancy Paulson Books, 2014

Genre: Verse Novel

Pages: 306

A poetic memoir of Jacqueline Woodson, an American author who grew up in the '60s and '70s in South Carolina and New York. As a young Black girl, Jacqueline experiences the remnants of Jim Crowe as well as a growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement and how it impacts her and her family.

Recommended for: Secondary

# Annotations (Organized Alphabetically by Author)

## Albom, Mitch

### **Tuesdays with Morrie**

ISBN: 978-0767905923

Publisher: Broadway Books, 1997

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 192

Whether it is a friend, a family member, a teacher, or a colleague, everyone has that one person who inspires them. For Mitch Albom, that person is his college professor Morrie Schwartz. After leaving college and growing apart, Albom decides to reconnect with his mentor only to find that he is ill. Albom quickly resumes their past practice of meeting every Tuesday. This novel is a chronicle of those prized Tuesdays and the laughter, tears, and lessons that result.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Anderson, M. T.

### **Burger Wuss**

ISBN: 978-0763631789

Publisher: Candlewick Press, 2008

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 188

Anthony is a typical nice guy teenager. When his girlfriend, Diana, cheats on him with her co-worker from a burger joint, Anthony plans his revenge. He also plans to win Diana back. This book offers a satirical look at typical teenage problems such as bullying, sex, and mental illness.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Armistead, Cal

### **Being Henry David**

ISBN: 978-0807506165

Publisher: Albert Whitman & Company, 2013

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 304

Imagine waking up in the middle of Penn Station with no idea who you are, where you're from, or how you got there. For seventeen year old Hank, the only clue to his identity is a copy of *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, which appears to be his only possession. Hank, or Henry David as he also calls himself, struggles with his identity, reclaiming his memories, and the emotions that arise in connection to his past, but learns that when you can't look back, you must move forward.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary



**Barton, Chris &  
Hoppe, Paul**

**Can I see your I.D.? True Stories of False Identities**

ISBN: 978-0803733107

Publisher: Dial Books, 2011

Genre: Nonfiction with Graphic Panels

Pages: 121

*Can I See Your I.D.?* tells the stories of ten individuals best known for the frauds and crimes they have committed. The stories cover a range of locations in the world as well as dates from the early 1800s to the late 1990s. Each tale is accompanied by a visual panel as well as a "What Happened Next?" feature. A compelling read about decision making and the dangers of deception.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

**Bell, William**

**The Blue Helmet**

ISBN: 978-0770430023

Publisher: Seal Books, 2009

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 209

Lee is on a journey of belonging that every young person, at one time, struggles to find. After one too many encounters with the law, he is sent to live with his aunt in Toronto. Through unlikely friendships, including one with a former soldier who is undergoing treatment for post traumatic stress syndrome, he learns that he can welcome violence or that he can embrace peace and he learns how to apply this lesson to his own life.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

**Bell, William**

**Crabbe**

ISBN: 978-0773674837

Publisher: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2002

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 169

Eighteen year old Franklin Crabbe is a privileged, smart, but troubled youth. Just before final exams, he decides to leave home and drive into the wilderness to disappear completely. But living "in the bush" brings its own challenges, many for which Crabbe is unprepared. There he meets Mary, a woman who helps him but has her own reasons to hide. Crabbe learns a lot about himself and how to deal with his problems. The story unfolds in a series of short journal entries told from Crabbe's point of view. This is a coming of age story filled with adventure, loss and self-discovery.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Betcherman, Michael**

### **Face-Off**

ISBN: 978-0143182160  
 Publisher: Razorbill Canada, 2014  
 Genre: Action/Adventure  
 Pages: 304

Seventeen year-old Alex Petrovic is a goalie for Team British Columbia. During a game against a team from Eastern Europe, Alex meets Stefan Divac, a goalie for the opposing team who looks a lot like him. While he considers it a strange coincidence, his mother reacts very differently. They all soon learn that as past secrets come to light, knowledge of the past opens up a new and complicated world involving murder, escape, and the desire for justice.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## **Blanc, JeanDavid**

### **Three Days in Nepal**

ISBN: 978-1443424028  
 Publisher: Harper Collins, 2013  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 127

This is the true story of JeanDavid Blanc, an Internet entrepreneur based in Paris who grew up with a fascination for flying. On a paragliding trip across the Himalayas, Blanc crashes into the side of a mountain, grabbing on to a bush to prevent himself from falling. He sends out an SOS with his GPS, but weather makes it very difficult for a rescue attempt. Alone on the side of a mountain, Blanc has to figure out how he can survive to get back home to his daughter.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Boo, Katherine**

### **Behind the Beautiful Forevers**

ISBN: 978-0812979329  
 Publisher: Random House Publishing Group, 2012  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 256

In the shadow of Mumbai's luxury hotels, lies Annawadi, a slum settlement with residents living in desperation as they witness prosperity around them. This narrative nonfiction is the result of the author's four year process of interviewing and following the lives of Annawadians as they struggle to survive by any means possible while living in abject poverty. Despite being surrounded by corruption and conflict, families remain resilient and hopeful that they will one day find a better life.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Boyle, Brian

### **Iron Heart**

ISBN: 978-1616083601

Publisher: Skyhorse Publishing, 2011

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 252

After a horrible car crash, eighteen-year old athlete Brian Boyle suffered a pulverized pelvis, shifted organs, and a massive loss of blood. When he woke from a two-month coma, doctors predicted he might never walk again. In *Iron Heart*, Boyle recounts his ordeal and his miraculous recovery. Defying the odds, he fights back and realizes his dream of competing in a triathlon. His journey is an inspirational one of perseverance and optimism.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Bradley, Alan

### **The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie**

ISBN: 978-0385665834

Publisher: Anchor Canada, 2009

Genre: Historical/Mystery

Pages: 373

Eleven year-old Flavia de Luce, narrator of the story, is a budding chemist who dabbles in poisons. The story takes place in the summer of 1950 in a large English manor house where Flavia lives with her family. Intelligent and independent, Flavia is excited to take on the role of detective when she finds a man dead in her garden. Flavia's crime-solving abilities are put to the test when her family is placed under suspicion and she must uncover the truth amongst mounting deceptions.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

Sequel: *The Weed That Strings the Hangman's Bag*

## Bragg, Georgia

### **How They Croaked**

ISBN: 978-0802798176

Publisher: Walker and Company, 2011

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 162

Guts, lungs, liver, and bits and pieces. Almost beyond comprehension are the lives - and more importantly, the deaths - of nineteen famous figures. From blowing up in coffins, draining blood, and drilling holes in stomachs without the aid of pain relief, this book covers all the gory details of the awful ends of the awfully famous.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Bronte, Charlotte

### **Jane Eyre (Graphic Novel: Quick Text)**

ISBN: 978-1906332488

Publisher: Classical Comics, 2009

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 132

Jane Eyre is a young orphan being raised by a wealthy but cruel aunt who eventually sends her away to school. From there, Jane's life takes many turns; towards hard work, poverty, love, and loss. She experiences many ups and downs, and is forced to make life-altering decisions in order to survive. She must decide whether she will choose a new path or return to a life she once thought she knew and loved.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Brown, Cassie

### **Death on the Ice: The Great Newfoundland Sealing Disaster of 1914**

ISBN: 978-0385685061

Publisher: Doubleday Canada Limited

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 256

Each year, for generations, poor, ill-clad Newfoundland fishermen sailed out "to the ice" to hunt seals in the hope of a few pennies in wages from the merchants of St. John's. The year 1914 witnessed the worst in the long line of tragedies that were part of their harsh way of life. For two long days and nights a party of 132 seal hunters were left stranded on an icefield floating in the North Atlantic in winter. They were thinly dressed, with almost no food, and with no hope of shelter against the snow or bitter winds. To survive they had to keep moving, always moving. Those who lay down to rest died. This is an incredible story of bungling and greed, of suffering and heroism.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Brown, Dan

### **Inferno**

ISBN: 978-1400079155

Publisher: Anchor Books, 2013

Genre: Mystery

Pages: 609

Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor of symbology, wakes in an Italian hospital bed in the middle of the night with no recollection of the previous thirty-six hours. His only clue is an object discovered in his belongings. After his doctor informs him that he was grazed by a bullet, Langdon and his doctor Sienna Brooks are hunted as they race to unravel a series of codes and clues developed by a scientist obsessed with two things - the end of the world, and Dante Alighieri's epic poem, *The Inferno*. Langdon finds himself involved in pursuit of the codes that will either save the world, or destroy it.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Carter, Ally

### **Heist Society**

ISBN: 978-1423116615

Publisher: Disney-Hyperion, 2010

Genre: Mystery

Pages: 287

Katarina Bishop has been a part of her family's criminal lifestyle since she was a child. Now a teenager, she is determined to live a normal life, and decides to leave her former life behind after she cons her way into a boarding school. Unfortunately, the robbery of a mobster's priceless art collection forces her to reconsider after her father is implicated in the crime. She is quickly torn between the love of her family and her newfound freedom.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

*Sequel: Uncommon Criminals*

## Chafe, Robert

### **Tempting Providence**

ISBN: 978-0887547225

Publisher: Playwrights Canada Press, 2004

Genre: Historical Nonfiction

Pages: 96

Nurse Myra Bennett arrived in Newfoundland and Labrador in 1921 to serve the Northern Peninsula, a very rugged and isolated area at the time. Quickly establishing herself as a no-nonsense type of woman, she settled into life in a small community where she quickly became the person everyone relied on for any health related problems. This is the story of an ordinary woman who did extraordinary things.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Chen, Justina

### **North of Beautiful**

ISBN: 978-0316025065

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company, 2009

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 373

Terra Cooper is a beautiful girl but gets noticed because she has a large birthmark on her face. She also has an over-controlling father. These things have taken a toll on her, however, when she meets Jacob, she starts to see herself differently. Her desire to escape the things that torment her is more possible than she ever thought and with Jacob, her travels help her to learn not only about the importance of love, friendship and family, but also about what beauty really means.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Coelho, Paulo

### **The Alchemist: A Graphic Novel**

ISBN: 978-0062024329

Publisher: HarperOne/HarperCollins Publishers, 2010

Genre: Fantasy/Adventure (Graphic Novel)

Pages: 208

Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy from Spain, travels to the Egyptian desert seeking a treasure believed to be buried somewhere in the pyramids. On his journey he encounters a Gypsy woman, a man who claims to be the King of Salem, and an alchemist, all of whom direct him towards his ultimate goal, finding the treasure. Mystery and obstacles await Santiago in the pyramids. But his quest for worldly treasure leads to something much more valuable, a young man discovering his personal legacy and following his dreams.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Collins, Gary

### **A Day on the Ridge**

ISBN: 978-1771170406

Publisher: Flanker Press, 2012

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 211

This is a memoir of Newfoundlander Gary Collin's life as a woodsman growing up in Bonavista in the 1950s. Learning the skills from his father, Collins recalls for the reader his life as an outdoorsman. The nearly two dozen varied stories from the book about canoeing down dangerous rivers, moose hunting, and coming from the woods for Christmas, are based on diary entries that he kept for four decades. This memoir is a testament to the hardworking family men of the time.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Condie, Ally

### **Matched**

ISBN: 978-0525423645

Publisher: Dutton Books, 2010

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 366

Cassia lives in a world where 'The Society' makes all the choices for its citizens. She has always trusted their choices until the matching ceremony when Xander's face appears on-screen and then Ky's face flashes for an instant before the screen fades to black. She is told it's a glitch and she should focus on the happy life she's destined to lead with Xander. Cassia begins to doubt the Society's infallibility and is faced with a choice between following the only life she has ever known or a new path that no one else has dared to follow.

Recommended: Lower - Middle Secondary

*Sequel: Crossed*

## Coriell, Shelley

### **Welcome, Caller, This is Chloe**

ISBN: 978 -1419705458

Publisher: Amulet Books, 2012

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 299

Chloe Camden is left lonely and confused when her two best friends suddenly abandon her and destroy her reputation at school. At home, things aren't much better as her beloved Grams' health is deteriorating and she is fighting against moving to a personal care home. Chloe is also in danger of failing a school program known as the Junior Independent Study Project, or JISP, unless she quickly finds a new topic. She joins the school radio station and attempts to turn it around with her own call-in show, resulting in Chloe having to make some very careful decisions.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## Dashner, James

### **The Maze Runner**

ISBN: 978-0385737951

Publisher: Delacorte Press, 2010

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 374

Thomas has woken up in an elevator lift with no memory of anything but his first name. He has landed in the 'Glade'; a world of boys his age with a common goal: to escape. Each month, another boy is delivered to their community and joins in the tasks that keep them alive. The community is thrown into shock when the routine is broken and a girl appears. She comes with a note stating that she would be the last to appear ever. What will happen to the children of the Glade and what role will Thomas play in their survival?

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

*Sequel: The Scorch Trials*

## Delany, Vicki

### **Juba Good**

ISBN: 978-1459804906

Publisher: Raven Books, 2014

Genre: Mystery

Pages: 119

Sergeant Ray Robertson has been working in Juba, South Sudan for almost a year. The country is poor, crowded and has been suffering from civil war for many years. Two weeks before his much anticipated departure for home, the body of a woman is found with a white ribbon tied around her neck, the fourth in three weeks. Fearing that there is a serial killer on the loose, Robertson must decide whether this is a case he should take, and if so, whether he can find the killer before someone else dies.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Denman, K.L.**

### **Me, Myself and Ike**

ISBN: 978-1554690862

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers, 2009

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 192

Kit Latimer, a 17 year old with undiagnosed schizophrenia, is being led astray by his 'friend', Ike. One year earlier, Kit had a circle of friends, a girlfriend, and a place on the basketball team. Ike is determined that it is Kit's destiny to follow in the footsteps of Otzi, a 5 000-year-old 'Ice Man'. Kit slowly alienates his family and friends, growing more paranoid that they want to stop him from completing his life's mission.

Recommended for: Secondary

## **Dessen, Sarah**

### **What Happened to Goodbye**

ISBN: 978-0670012947

Publisher: Viking, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 402

Life for Mclean has been all about change. Her parents are divorced and she now has step-siblings. Mclean has chosen to live with her dad, despite their constant moving around due to his career. To cope, she reinvents herself with each move, but her latest move leaves her with a desire to find out who she really is and where she wants to be.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Dickens, Charles**

### **A Christmas Carol**

ISBN: 978-0486268651

Publisher: Dover Publications, 1991

Genre: Realistic/Fantasy

Pages: 104

Ebenezer Scrooge is a miser who enjoys his own misery. He is well known for disliking both people and Christmas. When Scrooge is visited by his old partner, Jacob Marley, and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Yet to Come, he is led to reminisce about the events and actions of his past. Lessons of charity and kindness are available for Scrooge to learn, but he must first be a willing participant.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary



## **Doctorow, Cory**

### **Little Brother**

ISBN: 978-0765323118

Publisher: Tor Teen, 2010

Genre: Science Fiction

Pages: 382

Marcus, a seventeen year old hacker, knows how to 'net' work the system until he finds himself in the aftermath of a terrorist attack on San Francisco. He and his friend are arrested by Homeland Security. They are imprisoned and interrogated as if they were the terrorists. Angry and seeking justice, Marcus and his friends manage to create havoc for the Department of Homeland Security, but at what cost? Marcus, and those around him, are challenged to question who they are and what they stand for.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## **Ellis, Deborah & Walters, Eric**

### **Bifocal**

ISBN: 978-1554550623

Publisher: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2008

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 273

This story is told in the alternating voices of two students: Haroon, a serious student who is devoted to his family and Jay, a rising popular football star devoted to his team. Neither boy seems to be aware of much prejudice in the school until Azeem, a Muslim student, is arrested following a bomb plot. As Azeem's trial progresses, vandalism and racial slurs escalate, and the narrators are jolted by the actions and attitudes of people they thought they knew. Their struggles to understand prejudice and their journeys toward self-discovery are subtle and authentic.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Ferris, Jean**

### **Of Sound Mind**

ISBN: 978-0374455842

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR), 2004

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 224

Theo dreams of going to college but his family needs him to stay home. He struggles to help his family and at the same time find time for himself. He meets Ivy, whose support for her deaf father, as well as her support of Theo himself, guides him in making some life changing decisions.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Fitzgerald, F. Scott**

### **The Curious Case of Benjamin Button**

ISBN: 978-1594742811

Publisher: Quirk Books, 2008

Genre: Fantasy (Graphic Novel)

Pages: 119

Benjamin Button is born into the world elderly and grows younger. His story is told in order of his life as he moves in the opposite direction of everyone around him. He falls in love and starts a family but his experiences are very different from a typical life. As he 'ages' and gets younger he becomes more active and shows interest in activities that his other family members don't, or because of their age, no longer can.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Fitzgerald, F. Scott**

### **The Great Gatsby**

ISBN: 978-0140007466

Publisher: Penguin Books, 1925

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 172

At the height of the Jazz age, in 1922, Nick Carraway, a young man from Minnesota, moves to New York and encounters a group of people who are prone to outlandish displays of wealth. It is there that he meets Jay Gatsby, who is known for his lavish parties and lifestyle and who is in love with and pursues a married woman, DAISY. This is the story of the American Dream; making it big, making money, and living large.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## **Foreman, Gayle**

### **If I Stay**

ISBN: 978-0142415436

Publisher: Speak, 2010

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 201

Seventeen year old Mia finds herself faced with the ultimate decision: life or death. What should have been a wonderful family event, has become a nightmare when a devastating car accident leaves her in a coma. Alone and afraid, Mia struggles to make sense of her reasons to stay or to let go. She struggles to put together the pieces; to figure out what she has lost, what she has left, and the difficult choice she must make.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Gagnon, Michelle

### **Don't Turn Around**

ISBN: 978-0062102904

Publisher: Harper Collins, 2013 (reprint edition)

Genre: Science Fiction

Pages: 309

Noa, a sixteen year old girl who has been alone since her parents died wakes up in an empty warehouse with an IV in her arm, a scar on her chest, and no memory of how she got there. Peter, the leader of a hacker alliance, is looking for help from those with Noa's brilliant computer hacking skills. Together, they find themselves in the middle of a conspiracy where neither Noa nor Peter realize that one of them holds the key to a terrible secret, and both their lives become meaningless to those who want to silence them permanently.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Gladwell, Malcolm

### **Outliers**

ISBN: 978-0316017930

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company, 2008

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 309

The 10 000 hour rule. Could you practice something repeatedly for 10 000 hours? This is what author Malcolm Gladwell suggests is one way to become successful. He also suggests that society ignores individual potential and if we want to understand how people flourish we should look at factors such as their family, their birthplace, or their birth date. Separated into two parts, "Opportunity" and "Legacy", this book looks at people like Bill Gates and Steven Jobs, who do not fit into the normal understanding of achievement as well as how culture and circumstances affect success.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Golding, William

### **Lord of the Flies**

ISBN: 978-0399501487

Publisher: Perigee Books, 1959

Genre: Adventure

Pages: 182

In this classic allegory, a group of British schoolboys are stranded on a tropical island and have to learn to fend for themselves. As rules break down and civilization is taken away, the boys reveal their savage nature. The desire for power and control surpass the importance of friendships and logic. True personalities emerge, and life can never be the same.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## **Green, John**

### **The Fault In Our Stars**

ISBN: 978-0525478812  
 Publisher: Dutton Juvenile, 2012  
 Genre: Realistic Fiction  
 Pages: 313

At 13 years old, Hazel Lancaster was ready to die. Then, a miracle drug shrinks the tumors and she's made it to sixteen. At a support group meeting for young people with cancer, she meets Augustus Waters who pushes Hazel to live her life and examine the legacy she wishes to leave behind. Both funny and poignant, this novel examines how sickness and health, life and death can define both young and old alike.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## **Hadfield, Col. Chris**

### **An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth**

ISBN: 978-0345812704  
 Publisher: Random House Canada, 2013  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 282

As Commander of the International Space Station orbiting the Earth during a five-month mission in 2013, Chris Hadfield provides a rare insider's perspective into the world of space: the preparation, the thinking, and the training. Chris shares stories of successes and challenges through anecdotes about family, work, and life in general. He writes with honesty, humour, and humility to answer the one thing everyone wants to know; What is life like in outer space? This is more than the story of one man's journey into space; it is an inspiring tale of dedication to achieving a dream, lessons learned while living in space, and optimism for future space exploration. Canada's most famous astronaut brings the world of outer space to the lives of everyone around him.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## **Halse Anderson, Laurie**

### **Prom**

ISBN: 978-0142405703  
 Publisher: Speak (Reprinted edition), 2006  
 Genre: Realistic Fiction  
 Pages: 215

Ashley Hannigan is a normal high school girl who is determined not to go to her Senior Prom. Her best friend, Nat, is the head of the committee and loves every minute of it. When the committee chairperson is busted for taking all the prom money, Nat enlists Ashley's help to make the prom happen. Through her experiences, Ash learns some surprising things about how to make her own life happen too.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

**Halse Anderson,  
Laurie**

**Wintergirls**

ISBN: 978-0142415573

Publisher: Penguin Group, 2009

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Pages: 278

Lia and Cassie both suffer from eating disorders. In their attempts to compete with each other to be the thinnest, Cassie dies from the disease in a motel room by herself. Lia, riddled with guilt for not answering Cassie's final phone calls to her, is haunted by memories of her friend. Lia cannot escape Cassie's ghost, making her painful struggle with anorexia even worse. This story is about Lia's struggle with this eating disorder and whether or not she can survive it.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

**Hautman, Pete**

**Blank Confession**

ISBN: 978-1416913283

Publisher: Simon & Schuster, 2010

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Pages: 170

While Shayne Blank, the new kid at school, sits in a police interrogation room, a series of flashbacks create the narrative that piece together the events leading up to his confession. Through two narrators, Mikey, a lovable underdog that befriended Shayne, and Detective Rawls, the officer assigned to Shayne's case, we learn that there is more to the story, and to Shayne, than meets the eye.

Recommended For: Lower Secondary

**Hautman, Pete**

**Invisible**

ISBN: 978-0689869037

Publisher: Simon Pulse, 2005

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Pages: 149

In school, everyone considers Doug Hanson a freak – he gets called names and beaten up on a regular basis. Only his retreat into his model railroad set and his afterschool friendship with Andy, a popular football player, keeps him anchored. Yet, as time goes on, Doug becomes more and more buried in his own reality. Yet this reality is threatened by the surfacing of secrets - long buried and tragic – secrets that could easily destroy Doug's fragile world.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

**Haworth-Attard,  
Barbara**

**Haunted**

ISBN: 978-1554689767  
 Publisher: Harper Trophy Canada, 2009  
 Genre: Mystery/Horror  
 Pages: 273

Defiance (Dee) Vale lives with her grandmother who, like Dee, has 'the sight.' While Gran can sometimes predict the future and sense evil, Dee can actually see spirits and experience their deaths. Dee becomes an unwilling participant in solving an old friend's murder as well as the murders of several other missing girls.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

**Hillenbrand, Laura**

**Unbroken**

ISBN: 978-0812974492  
 Publisher: Random House, 2010  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 416

Unbroken is the story of Californian Louis Zamperini. As a delinquent teen, Zamperini found himself in a lot of trouble. To try to save himself, he channeled his energy into running and was so good, he participated in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. He then enlisted at the beginning of WWII and became an airman. In 1943 while on a mission over the Pacific, Zamperini's bomber crashes into the ocean but he survives. He is faced with a vast ocean, enemy aircraft, dangerous predators, and starvation. His journey takes him to the limits of human existence and back as he struggles to keep hope and humour alive. Zamperini's harrowing experiences are brought to life in this tale of triumph and tragedy.

Recommended For: Upper Secondary

**Hinton, S. E.**

**Rumble Fish**

ISBN: 978-0440975342  
 Publisher: Laurel Leaf, 1989 (1st edition 1975)  
 Genre: Realistic Fiction  
 Pages: 135

Rusty James is a fourteen year old boy, known for being tough, who is being raised by his single father. Rusty James admires his older brother, the Motorcycle Boy, who has his own troubles. The boys search for their own identity as they struggle to maintain family ties. These particular teenagers, including Rusty's best friend, Steve, have a lot to deal with in their family situations as well as in their fight to survive and fit in.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Houston, James

### **Whiteout**

ISBN: 978-1550050523

Publisher: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2002

Genre: Action/Adventure

Pages: 157

Jonathan Aird is a rebellious seventeen year old who is sent to live with his uncle on Baffin Island. Angry at his family, he must come to terms with new ways – and with the harsh reality of an environment where one small mistake can mean certain death.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Jocelyn, Marthe

### **Would You**

ISBN: 978-0887768163

Publisher: Tundra Books, 2008

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 160

Natalie is experiencing a typical summer until her older sister, Claire, is involved in an accident. Then everything changes. The whole family has to deal with the hospital visits, the empty house, and the decisions that have to be made while life continues for the people around them.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Johnson, Angela

### **The First Part Last**

ISBN: 978-0689849237

Publisher: Simon Pulse, 2004

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 132

Bobby, an aspiring artist, is ready to graduate early from high school but his whole world turns upside down when his girlfriend, Nia, tells him she's pregnant. The story alternates between 'then' (the story of Nia's pregnancy), and 'now' (Bobby as the baby's father). The couple must decide whether to raise their child or to give in to pressure from their middle-class families and give the baby up for adoption. They want to do the right thing – if only they knew what the right thing was.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## Johnson, Maureen

### **The Madness Underneath**

ISBN: 978-0142427545

Publisher: Speak/The Penguin Group, 2013

Genre: Mystery/Supernatural

Pages: 290

Since her experiences with the Jack the Ripper copycat, Rory Deveaux's life has been close to normal. She lives with her parents, has regular appointments with a therapist, and has not met any ghosts. Despite attempts at normalcy, Rory soon realizes that her encounter with the Ripper has changed her in more ways than she thought – she is now a human terminus, with the power to eliminate ghosts on contact. She returns to the boarding school where it all began. With her newfound ability, and a string of suspicious deaths, she must convince the ghost-fighting division that something is wrong.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

*Others in series: The Name of the Star (not necessary to read first)*

## Johnson, Maureen

### **The Name of the Star**

ISBN: 978-0142422052

Publisher: Speak, 2012

Genre: Mystery/Supernatural

Pages: 372

The day that Louisiana teenager Rory Deveaux arrives in London to attend a boarding school is also the day a series of brutal murders breaks out in the city, killings mimicking the Jack the Ripper spree of more than a century ago. The police are left with few leads and no witnesses, except Rory. But she is the only one who saw him – the only one who can see him. And now Rory has become his next target. In this thriller, full of suspense, humour, and romance, Rory learns about the ghost police of London and her own shocking abilities.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

Sequel: *The Madness Underneath*

## Jones, Patrick

### **Side Control**

ISBN: 978-1467714884

Publisher: Lerner Publishing Group, 2013

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 120

The second novel in a series that focuses on the physical and life skills learned at a martial arts dojo, *Side Control* centers around Jackson James as he tries to remain honest so he can become a mixed martial arts fighter and eventually a member of the United States Special Forces. With tough choices to make, Jackson must continuously decide whether he is making the right ones.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

*Sequel: Head Kick; Body Shot*



**Kizer, Amber**
**Pieces of Me**

ISBN: 978-0385741163

Publisher: Delacorte Press, 2014

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Pages: 284

Jessica, a beautiful, introverted, high school student, dies on the way to her very first party. In an attempt to give meaning to her death, her parents donate her organs to other teens who otherwise might not survive. Unfortunately, Jessica doesn't appreciate being dissected and begins to follow the recipients of her organs. It is through her ties with these teens and their struggles and triumphs that Jessica begins to realize the importance of the role she has played and can continue to play.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

**Knowles, John**
**A Separate Peace**

ISBN: 978-0743253970

Publisher: Scribner, 2003

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 204

Set at a boys' boarding school in New England during World War II, this story centers around two friends who couldn't be more different. Gene is an intellectual introvert and Phineas, a handsome daredevil. What happens between them reflects, like the war, a loss of innocence for both.

Recommended for: Middle – Upper Secondary

**Knutsson, Catherine**
**Shadows Cast by Stars**

ISBN: 978-1442401914

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 456

Sixteen-year-old Cassandra is different. She is a 'half-blood' who must find a way to face prejudice and hide from the government. Cassandra and her twin brother have mystical abilities, but that's not why the government wants them. They are hunted because their blood contains antigens needed to cure a devastating plague. When she and her family flee to "the Island" she learns she is the voice and instrument of the spirit world. This story is poetically written and full of surprising twists.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## **Korman, Gordon**

### **Losing Joe's Place**

ISBN: 978-0590427692

Publisher: Scholastic, 1991

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 210

The summer before their senior year, Jason and his two friends get a golden opportunity to sublet Jason's, older brother's, Toronto apartment. All the boys have to do – after convincing their parents to let them try it – is to pay the rent. But they didn't know about their landlord, Mr. Plotnick, or Joe's friend Rootbeer, who wanders in and out of the apartment whenever he wants to. Their summer experiences, although at times funny, provide some valuable lessons about independence and responsibility.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Kwok, Jean**

### **Girl in Translation**

ISBN: 978-594485152

Publisher: Riverhead Books, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 307

Eleven year old Kimberly Chang and her mother emigrate from Hong Kong to New York City in search of a better life. Life does not treat them well, and Kimberly struggles to survive as an exceptional student during the day and by helping her mother, a sweatshop worker, during the evening. Kimberly lives in a run down, infested apartment, deals with prejudiced teachers and classmates, and struggles with language barriers. Through determination, perseverance, and sacrifice, mother and daughter struggle to succeed in their new country. Through relationships formed, Kimberly begins a transformation that no one expects.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## **Larochelle, David**

### **Absolutely, Positively Not**

ISBN: 978-0439591102

Publisher: Scholastic, 2009

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 224

Sixteen year-old Steven struggles with his sexuality, insisting that he is absolutely, positively not gay and trying various tactics, including dating girls, to convince himself and others that he is straight. This light-hearted novel is told from Steve's point of view and revolves around his experiences in high school. Can he help, not only himself, but those around him, find out what is important in life?

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Lee, Harper

### **To Kill a Mockingbird**

ISBN: 978-0446310789

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing, 1960

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 324

Scout is a tomboy, living in the southern United States in the 1930s. Her biggest thrills are hanging out with her older brother Jem, and the possibility that she may meet their mysterious neighbour, Boo Radley. Her father, Atticus, is a well respected lawyer in the town however when he is appointed by the court to represent an African American man accused of raping a white woman, his family finds itself in the middle of a major conflict. Through the process, both Scout and Jem learn about the power of respect, of courage and of standing by the truth, even when it is the unpopular stance to take.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Levithan, David

### **Every Day**

ISBN: 978-0307931894

Publisher: Ember, 2012

Genre: Realistic Fantasy

Pages: 322

Imagine waking up and not knowing whose body you are in. For 'A', this is reality. Each new day brings a new body and a new life. 'A' never makes attachments because tomorrow those people will be all gone and a new set will appear. 'A' has accepted this fate until one day Rihannon appears, someone 'A' wants to stay for, someone that is worth seeing day after day for a lifetime. Now that 'A' knows the power of attachment, the challenge is to figure out a way to stay close, a way to remain a part of Rihannon's life, every day.

Recommendation: Middle Secondary

## Lloyd Kyi, Tanya

### **Truth**

ISBN: 978-1551432656

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers, 2003

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 123

When an adult neighbour is brutally murdered during a high school house party, everyone seems to know who did it, but no one will go to the police. Jen was there and saw the body, so she has her own ideas about who is responsible. As a school reporter, she tries to uncover the truth and discover if a classmate's violent behaviour is to blame. When she starts digging, tempers flare, and more violence is not far behind.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Lockhart, E.

### **We Were Liars**

ISBN: 978-0385741262

Publisher: Delacorte Press, 2013

Genre: Contemporary Fiction/Mystery

Pages: 225

*We Were Liars* introduces the reader to the very wealthy, mysterious Sinclair family. Each summer Cadence connects with three other teens and falls in love with one, Gat. Cadence then suffers a terrible accident and cannot recall anything about it. Two years later, suffering from migraines and taking pills to deal with the pain, she returns to the island to be with Gat and her family again. However, things are different this time. Accidents, secrets, and lies threaten their friendships and their lives.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Lore, Pittacus

### **I Am Number Four**

ISBN: 978-0061969577

Publisher: Harper Collins, 2010

Genre: Science Fiction

Pages: 440

*I Am Number Four* is the story of Lorien aliens and their guardians hiding in different places on earth from the rival intergalactic group, the Mogadorians. Nine aliens escaped their home planet Lorien, but only six are still alive. They have to be killed in order for the Mogadorians to dominate. Number 4 is John Smith, a teen currently living/hiding in Ohio. While developing his paranormal powers in preparation for a possible invasion, John tries to live the life of a somewhat normal teen with his guardian-father Henri. However the inevitable happens and John must find a way to survive.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

*Sequel: The Power of Six*

## Lowry, Lois

### **The Giver**

ISBN: 978-0440237686

Publisher: Laurel Leaf, 2002

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 179

Jonas happily lives in a utopian world where there is no crime or sickness and where everyone's lives are very similar. However, when he is chosen to hold an important position in the community, everything begins to change. He soon discovers that his perfect world is not as he first thought and begins to struggle with its hypocrisy. Jonas wonders if the price to live in this perfect society is too high.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Lowry, Lois

### **Son**

ISBN: 978-0547887203

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers, 2012

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 393

In *Son*, we experience a riveting conclusion to *The Giver*. When Clare washes up on shore, nobody knows her past. Nobody knows that she came from a place without color, without emotions or that at age 13 she became a vessel to carry a package which she delivered at age 14. Plagued by questions she cannot escape, Clare will stop at nothing and make unimaginable sacrifices to accomplish her goal, to find her son.

Recommendation: Lower Secondary

## Major, Kevin

### **No Man's Land (The Play)**

ISBN: 978-1894463713

Publisher: Flanker Press, 2005

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 114

War is a difficult concept to understand – except for those who have been through it. Kevin Major lets the reader ‘see’ ordinary people experiencing the extraordinary events of war by following soldiers who came together prior to a bloody day on July 1st, 1916. The reader ‘watches’ their comradeship and their feelings of excitement change to fear as the trench war they have heard about becomes a reality.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Martel, Yann

### **Life of Pi**

ISBN: 978-0307363053

Publisher: Seal Books, 2001

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 354

Pi Patel is a young boy from Pondicherry, India where he lives at a zoo owned and operated by his family. As the political situation in 1970s India becomes unsettled, Pi's family sells the zoo and its animals and sets off to start a new life in Canada. Aboard their ship are many of the zoo animals also setting off for their new homes in North America. Tragically, the cargo ship sinks, taking Pi's family with it and leaving Pi alone in the Pacific Ocean with a hyena, an orangutan, an injured zebra, and Richard Parker (a 450-pound tiger) as companions. Pi's incredible journey lasts several months and shows no limits when it comes to survival.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## McDaniel, Lurlene

### **Breathless**

ISBN: 978-0440240167

Publisher: Delacorte Books, 2010

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 165

Travis Morrison knows how good his life is. He's a champion diver and one of the most popular kids at school. He has Darla, the girl he loves, Emily, his sister, whom he actually doesn't mind hanging out with, and Cooper, his best friend. Then comes the day on the lake when everything changes. Told in alternating voices, this book makes the reader question what is important and who you can count on.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## McLean, Stuart

### **Stories from the Vinyl Cafe**

ISBN: 978-0143050699

Publisher: Penguin Canada, 2005

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 233

From Stuart McLean's CBC radio show "The Vinyl Cafe" comes a collection of stories about ordinary Canadians. Stories include fictional tales of the small disasters, family interactions, and work life of Dave, a record store owner in Toronto, Margaret Dwyer, a suburban housewife who surprises herself by shoplifting a pepperoni sausage, Ed, who is shocked by the death of his favourite rock star and decides to travel to New York City to meet the singer's widow, and others. Originally written for radio, McLean's stories take a humorous look at ordinary lives.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Meyer, Marissa

### **Cinder**

ISBN: 978-0312641894

Publisher: Feiwel & Friends, 2012

Genre: Science Fiction

Pages: 390

Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect her world's future.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

*Sequel: Scarlet*

## Monk Kidd, Sue

### **The Secret Life of Bees**

ISBN: 978-0142001745

Publisher: Penguin Books, 2002

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 302

Lily Owens is haunted by memories of the death of her mother. In an attempt to escape her troubled life and complicated relationship with her father, Lily escapes with her caregiver, Rosaleen to a small South Carolina town where she hopes to find out more about her mother's past. Invited to stay with three sisters, Lily becomes fascinated with their world of beekeeping. In doing so, she also learns the importance of relationships as well as the truth.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Myers, Walter Dean

### **Monster**

ISBN: 978-0064407311

Publisher: Amistad, 2001

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 281

Sixteen year old Steve Harmon is called 'Monster' by the judge after his apparent involvement in a fatal shooting. Readers look into the life of Steve in this novel through journal writings which provide insight into his life before the murder and his experiences and feelings while being held in prison before the trial. The reader becomes both the juror and the witness during the most difficult period of Steve's life.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Northrop, Michael

### **Trapped**

ISBN: 978-0545210133

Publisher: Scholastic Press, 2012

Genre: Contemporary/Realistic Fiction

Pages: 232

When Scotty decides to stay after school to work on a project, he has no idea the impact it will have. After a freak snow storm disables their town, Scotty and his friends are forced to spend the night in their school. But when one night turns into another, and things start to go terribly wrong, they must carry on with no heat, no power, and a dwindling food supply while the snow outside piles higher. Scotty and his friends are forced to make tough decisions in order to survive.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Oliver, Lauren

### **Before I Fall**

ISBN: 978-0061726811

Publisher: Harper, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 470

What would you do to save your own life? That's the question Samantha has to ask herself every day. Friday, February 12th should have been a perfect day: hanging out with her boyfriend and friends and relishing in her perfect looks and life. However, that Friday was her last, unless she can break the pattern. She lives her last day seven times in one week, untangling the mystery of why she died and how she can return to her life. Along the way, Samantha has to decide what is really important and what the word perfect actually means.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Oppel, Kenneth

### **This Dark Endeavour**

ISBN: 978-0316322409

Publisher: Harper Trophy Canada, 2011

Genre: Traditional/Fantasy

Pages: 298

Victor Frankenstein, along with his twin brother, Konrad, and their cousin Elizabeth, all lead charmed lives. They study at home and spend their spare time fencing, horseback riding, and living out imaginary adventures. They think they have explored all the secret rooms of the chateau until they stumble upon The Dark Library. Though they are forbidden to visit the library because of its secret books and knowledge, Victor feels he must when his brother becomes ill. He believes it is the only place where he can find the cure his brother needs. Victor's success depends on how much he is willing to sacrifice for those he loves.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Orwell, George

### **Animal Farm**

ISBN: 978-0141036137

Publisher: Penguin UK, 2008

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 152

When Mr. Jones got drunk and forgot to feed his animals, a revolution was sparked; not by the field hands, but by the animals. The farm pigs, led by Napoleon and Wellington, promise to eliminate all the inequalities and bring power to those who walk on four legs. However, equality is soon forgotten as those in power begin to enjoy their positions of authority. This allegory of events leading up to the Stalin era before WWII is a chilling tale of the effects of the abuse of power.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary



## **Patterson, James**

### **Maximun Ride: The Manga Vol. 1**

ISBN: 978-0759529519

Publisher: Yen Press, 2009

Genre: Action/Adventure (Graphic Novel)

Pages: 256

Fourteen-year-old Maximum Ride knows what it's like to soar above the world. She and all the members of her 'flock' – Fang, Iggy, Nudge, Gasman, and Angel – are just like ordinary kids, except they have the ability to fly. It may seem like a dream come true to some, but for this group, it becomes more like a nightmare. When the mysterious 'School' turns up and kidnaps their youngest member, Max and her group are in a race against time to rescue one of their own.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Paulsen, Gary**

### **The Rifle**

ISBN: 978-0152058395

Publisher: Harcourt Inc., 2006

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 105

Set prior to the American Revolution and working its way up to modern day, this novel is a work of historical fiction, written for a young adult audience. The story focuses on the history of a rifle and on the lives of its various owners as it is passed down through generations. Where it ends up will surprise, devastate and even shock! Although he romanticizes the creation and the uniqueness of the rifle, Paulsen matter-of-factly deals with the importance of handling guns responsibly and attempts to convey the message that, "guns don't kill people, people do".

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Pittman, Al**

### **West Moon**

ISBN: 978-1550811230

Publisher: Breakwater Books Ltd., 2012

Genre: Drama/Fantasy

Pages: 64

West Moon is set in Newfoundland and Labrador during the time of resettlement in the mid-1960s. Characters in this play are dead and in various states of decay. On one particularly important night, they are fortunate enough to regain their personalities, memories and emotions, all while still lying beneath the ground. Social, political, moral, and theological themes are explored throughout using a unique blend of humour and despair as characters briefly come to life while still within the confines of their mortality.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Polak, Monique

### **Home Invasion**

ISBN: 978-1551434827

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers, 2005

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 123

All around the city, home invasions are happening at an alarming rate. The invasions are made that much worse with the knowledge that the victims are home during the crime. Josh thinks it's pretty creepy, but is more worried about the invasion that having a new stepfather has made in his life. When Josh's mother leaves town and Josh is left to spend the week with his new stepfather, he tries to spend as little time at home as possible. After an unplanned trespassing visit at his neighbour's house, Josh becomes interested in how 'real families' live. However, when his trespassing goes wrong, he has to find the courage to be more than just an observer.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Riggs, Ransom

### **Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children**

ISBN: 978-1594746031

Publisher: Quirk Books, 2011

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 382

After the murder of his grandfather, Jacob journeys to a remote island near Wales, and finds the ruins of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children. As he explores the abandoned orphanage, Jacob remembers his grandfather's stories from growing up on the island. Interspersed throughout the story are vintage photographs which help tell the story of the children who inhabited the orphanage. Events take a turn when Jacob realizes that Miss Peregrine's children are more peculiar than most.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

*Sequel: Hollow City*

## Rollins, James & Blackwood, Grant

### **The Kill Switch: A Tucker Wayne Novel**

ISBN: 978-0062325242

Publisher: William Morrow, 2014

Genre: Action/Adventure

Pages: 384

Captain Tucker Wayne, former US Army Ranger and his military dog, Kane, are given a mission: get a Russian scientist, who has knowledge of a doomsday plant, out of Russia to the US and keep him from being killed. Sometimes the story is told from Kane's point of view which makes for interesting story-telling. It is a fast-paced, entertaining thriller about eco-terrorism.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Roth, Veronica

### **Divergent**

ISBN: 978-0062024039

Publisher: Katherine Tegen Books, 2012

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 487

In Dystopian Chicago, society is separated into five factions: Amity, Candor, Erudite, Abnegation, and Dauntless. All residents choose their path at sixteen, either remaining with their family in the faction to which they were born or giving up all they know and joining another faction. Beatrice Prior must make that choice, knowing she is a secret anomaly. She is Divergent. Once her choice is made, Beatrice, must test herself in ways she never imagined in a system that has become more corrupt than anyone could have dreamed.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

*Sequel: Insurgent by Veronica Roth*

## Sáenz, Benjamin Alire

### **Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe**

ISBN: 978-1442408920

Publisher: Simon and Schuster, 2012

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 355

Aristotle and Dante are two Mexican-American loners who meet in the summer at age fifteen. Ari, an angry teen whose brother is in prison, and Dante, who has an unusual way of viewing the world, combine and they develop a friendship that neither expected. Their friendship becomes life-changing as they explore identity, life and the world of growing up. Through them, the reader learns about relationships, family, and love as Ari and Dante discover who they want to be.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Salinger, J. D.

### **The Catcher in the Rye**

ISBN: 978-0316769174

Publisher: Back Bay Books, 2001 (1951 - original publication)

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 277

Holden Caulfield, a seventeen year old prep school student, tells the story of his twenty-four hour stay in New York City after he is kicked out of school. He relates his struggles with the phoniness of the adult world while attempting to deal with the death of his younger brother. Holden deals with other troubling childhood experiences as he searches for truth and belonging in a world where he feels completely alienated.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Sheinkin, Steve

### **Bomb: The Race to Build – and Steal – the World’s Most Dangerous Weapon**

ISBN: 978-1596434875

Publisher: Flashpoint, 2012

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 241

The race is on; who will succeed? In the midst of WWII, the world’s race to build the atomic bomb spans three continents and each country wants to be the first to build this formidable weapon. Spies, commando forces, and hidden laboratories populate this true story of how the atomic bomb was developed. With primary-source photographs, the account is well-documented and the fast-paced narrative of intrigue and deception reads like a spy thriller.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Shelley, Mary

### **Frankenstein**

ISBN: 978-1424031849

Publisher: Sherrise Roehr- Heinle, Cengage Learning, 2010

Genre: Classic/Horror (Graphic Novel)

Pages: 130

Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein tells the story of Victor Frankenstein and his experiments with life and creation. Victor, obsessed with discovering how life is created, assembles a human being from stolen body parts. However, once his creature is alive, Victor is repulsed and horrified by the hideousness of his monster. The creation, alone and lonely as a result of the rejection by his creator, turns to evil and revenge. This version, though slightly abridged, retains much of the original dialogue and remains true to Shelley’s of a tale of acceptance, tolerance and understanding.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## Sherrard, Valerie

### **Accomplice**

ISBN: 978-1554887644

Publisher: Dundurn Press, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 142

Lexie is a Vancouver teen who has recently broken up with her heroin addicted boyfriend, Devlin. Despite the breakup, she continues to enable his habit financially, out of guilt. Just when Lexie decides that she can no longer carry and support the burden of Devlin’s personal issues, she finds herself drawn back into his life only to end up being part of a criminal act.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Shusterman, Neal

### **Bruiser**

ISBN: 978-0061134104

Publisher: Harper Teen, 2010

Genre: Realistic Fantasy

Pages: 328

Brewster “Bruiser” Rawlins has always been an outsider at school – an object of derision and fear. However, when he begins a relationship with Bronte, a kind hearted and caring classmate, he begins to open up to her and her brother. However, this change comes with a price, the revealing of a secret life of pain and suffering. This is a story of unconditional friendship and what is sometimes endured for those we love.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## Skuy, David

### **Undergrounders**

ISBN: 978-1443107280

Publisher: Scholastic, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 194

Since the death of his mother, Jonathon has been living on the street. She instilled values, but when the issue is one of survival, living a moral life is not priority number one. Jonathon steals a pair of skates in order to play hockey and is noticed as a skilled player. His actions, however, return to haunt him. Will he ever return to any type of a happy life or will he spend the rest of his life homeless?

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Stein, Garth

### **The Art of Racing in the Rain**

ISBN: 978-1443404969

Publisher: Harper Perennial / Harper Collins, 2008

Genre: Contemporary Fiction

Pages: 321

This heart wrenching, yet humorous story is narrated by Enzo, a philosopher dog who yearns for a human soul. He learns about the world by watching television and listening to his human family who continue to love and care for him. Through his family, Denny, a race car driver, and his little girl, Zoe, Enzo applies the rules of race car driving to life, as he reflects upon all that he has discovered about the human condition.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Steinbeck, John

### **Of Mice and Men**

ISBN: 978-0749717100

Publisher: Penguin Books 1993, (1937- original publication)

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 103

George, a small, quick man, and Lennie, a large man with the mind of a child, have become an unlikely pair. Both are laborers in California's dusty vegetable fields and have become family to each other in the face of loneliness and a life of poverty. Just when their dreams of each owning a piece of land seem to be within reach, they are faced with lessons and choices that cannot be changed.

Recommended for: Secondary

## Stiefvater, Maggie

### **The Scorpio Races**

ISBN: 9780545224918

Publisher: Scholastic, 2011

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 432

On the island of Thisby, November brings the excitement and the danger of the Scorpio Races: a traditional race in which riders attempt to reach the finish line on their deadly Celtic water horses. Told from the alternating perspectives of Sean, a silent but passionate young man who has won the competition four of six times, and Puck, a strong and driven young woman trying to protect and support her family, this story follows two riders both desperate to win the race, knowing that only one will survive.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Stoppard, Tom

### **Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead**

ISBN: 978-0802132758

Publisher: Grove Press, 1994 (Reprint edition)

Genre: Drama/Traditional

Pages: 126

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, share their musings as the events of *Hamlet* take a background seat to their own misadventures. In *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are used by the King in an attempt to discover Hamlet's motives and to plot against him. Hamlet, however, mocks and outwits them and because of this, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are portrayed as fools in a world they don't really understand. Both humorous and touching, the tale they tell gives an account of events happening to them as it becomes clear that they have no control over their own destiny.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Stratton, Allan

### **Chanda's Wars**

ISBN: 978-1554680252

Publisher: Harper Trophy Canada, 2008

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 384

When her mother dies of AIDS in a small African village, Chanda takes on the role of raising her brother and sister. When she is told to marry against her will, she stands her ground and refuses. And when her brother and sister are snatched away by rebels in their war torn country to be trained as child soldiers, she refuses to let anything, including her fear, stand in the way of trying to get them back.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

*Others in the Series: Chanda's Secrets (not necessary to read first)*

## Tashjian, Janet

### **The Gospel According to Larry**

ISBN: 978-0440237921

Publisher: Laurel Leaf Books, 2003

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 227

Josh Swensen is a prodigy. He sees America as a wasteland of consumerism and greed. When he tries to do something about it by creating a website, where he is known only as 'Larry', he realizes that the results are more than he bargained for and that greed and lies are now an even bigger part of his life. When Larry continues to grow in popularity, Josh formulates a dangerous plan – to stage his own death and therefore be free of his Internet alter-ego. This plan comes with its own dangers, and soon Josh finds himself with problems that he is hoping someone will help him out of.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

## Thompson Walker, Karen

### **Age of Miracles**

ISBN: 978-0385676656

Publisher: Anchor Canada

Date: 2012

Genre: Dystopian

Pages: 272

Julia, a typical 11-year-old, wakes one morning to find that the rotation of the Earth has slowed. Society is faced with the fear and uncertainty created by "The Slowing". Julia and her family must continue to deal with day-to-day routines and problems against a backdrop of altered gravity, weather, and daylight. Julia's social world changes as well as she copes with the challenges of loneliness, peer pressure and first love. Thompson Walker has written a coming-of-age tale that asks whether it's worth coming of age at all in a world that might end at any minute. *Age of Miracles* is about the existence of hope and whether it can prevail in the face of uncertainty.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## Tolkien, J. R. R.

### **The Hobbit**

ISBN: 978-0547928227

Publisher: Mariner Books, 2012 (1937 - original publication)

Genre: Fantasy

Pages: 365

Bilbo Baggins is quite happily living his very quiet peaceful life in his comfortable home at Bag End in the bustling hobbit village of Hobbiton. The arrival of the old wizard Gandalf changes all of this – he persuades Bilbo to set out on an adventure with a group of thirteen militant dwarves. The dwarves are embarking on the quest to reclaim their treasure from the dragon Smaug and need Bilbo to act as their ‘burglar’. Throughout the journey there and back Bilbo finds himself in situations that he could never imagine and making choices of which he can only dream.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

## Twain, Mark

### **Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

ISBN: 978-0486280615

Publisher: Dover Publications 1994, (1884 - original publication)

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 327

Huckleberry Finn has been taken in by Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson, who intend to teach him proper manners, cleanliness, school, and religion. Huck, however, encounters bad luck and through the course of his own escape, meets Jim, the widow’s slave. This tale comes alive as Huck tells the story of his and Jim’s adventures in their search for freedom, as well as the story of his own enlightenment in a society that he once thought was free and equal.

Recommended For: Upper Secondary

## Walters, Eric

### **Between Heaven and Earth**

ISBN: 978-1554699414

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers, 2012

Genre: Action/Adventure

Pages: 245

Orca’s ‘The Seven Series’ is written by seven authors, each writing the story of one of David McLean’s grandsons. In his will, David has left letters instructing each grandson to complete a task. In *Between Heaven and Earth*, DJ’s task is to climb Mount Kilimanjaro to spread his grandfather’s ashes. DJ’s success in life thus far has him believing that his youth and physical fitness will allow him to meet this request easily. However, things are not what they seem. Once in Tanzania, he struggles with immigration, getting robbed, having a female porter, and climbing with an elderly woman. DJ learns that success on the mountain, like in life, depends on working with others.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary



**Walters, Eric**
**Overdrive**

ISBN: 978-1551433189  
 Publisher: Orca, 2004  
 Genre: Realistic Fiction  
 Pages: 106

Jake has finally got his driver's license, and tonight he has his brother's car as well. He and his friend Mickey take the car out and cruise the strip. When they challenge another driver to a street race, the results are disastrous. Even though Jake and Mickey try to convince themselves they were not involved, Jake finds he cannot pretend it didn't happen and struggles to figure out the right thing to do. Should he pretend he was not involved? Or should he go to the police?

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

**Walters, Eric**
**Shaken**

ISBN: 978-0385670814  
 Publisher: Doubleday Canada, 2011  
 Genre: Realistic Fiction  
 Pages: 295

Josh is dealing with some major life changes. His mom has died. His dad has moved him and his sister away from their friends. Now he has to go to Haiti with a mission group led by his father. After grudgingly befriending some of the other teens involved in the mission, Josh slowly begins to understand and forgive his father. When an earthquake hits, Josh and his friends in Haiti learn what is important and how much strength they need to survive.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

**West, Spencer**  
 (with Susan McClelland)

**Standing Tall: My Journey**

ISBN: 978-1553659518  
 Publisher: Me to We, 2011  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 208

Spencer West was born without the use of his legs and had them amputated when he was five. But he has accomplished many things in his life. He is a motivational speaker, university graduate, cheerleader, and mountain climber. Believing that he is different for a reason, West writes about the struggles he has overcome and the decisions, both good and bad that he has made during his personal journey. Following the Me to We philosophy, the story is meant to inspire others to think outside themselves and how they can make a difference in the world.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Westerfeld, Scott

### **The Uglies: Shay's Story**

ISBN: 978-0689865381  
 Publisher: Simon Pulse, 2005  
 Genre: Dystopian  
 Pages: 448

Tally lives in a world where at sixteen, all are operated on and turned 'pretty'. They are catapulted from a regular life into a high tech paradise where their only job is to party. Her friend Shay would rather be free and tells Tally of a place where rebels have formed their own society. When Shay disappears, Tally is given a choice, to work with the 'Special Circumstances' authority to find her friend or never turn pretty at all. Tally's choice will change her world forever.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

*Sequels – Pretties, Specials, and Extras*

## White, Kiersten

### **Mind Games**

ISBN: 978-0062135315  
 Publisher: Harper Teen, 2013  
 Genre: Fantasy/Thriller  
 Pages: 241

The story is told in flashback and first person point of view, alternating between the two main characters, sisters Fia and Annie. Both girls have psychic powers: Fia's instincts are always right and Annie is blind but has visions of the future. They are in a school for "special girls" run by males who use the girls' talents for corporate espionage. Girls at the school are either a Seer, Feeler, or Reader but Fia is none of those things, and that makes her different and dangerous.

Recommended for: Lower - Middle Secondary

Sequel: Perfect Lies

## Wiesel, Elie

### **Night**

ISBN: 978-0374500016  
 Publisher: Hill and Wang, 2006  
 Genre: Nonfiction  
 Pages: 115

A chilling account of one boy's experiences during the Holocaust. Eliezer is a young Jewish teenager and religious scholar whose life is suddenly turned upside down when he is caught up in the Holocaust. After witnessing the death of family members, friends and strangers, Eliizer must also face the death of his innocence. Confronting what he has experienced and then living beyond it becomes a struggle that may be too much even for the strongest.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Wilde, Oscar

### **The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays**

ISBN: 978-0451531896

Publisher: Signet Classics 1985, (1895 - original publication)

Genre: Satire (Plays)

Pages: 180

Society's expectations and unspoken rules are satirized in this classic comedy. Jack Worthing creates an alter ego Ernest, and falls in love with Gwendolyn, who assumes he really is Ernest. In the country, mistaken identities result in a comedy of errors that ties identity with money and class. However, control over identity and its conflict with our choices in life resonates in the play just as it does in society today. Also included in this collection are the plays, *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *Salomé*.

Recommended for: Upper Secondary

## Wittlinger, Ellen

### **Parrotfish**

ISBN: 978-1442406216

Publisher: Simon & Schuster, 2011

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 287

Angela Katz-McNair has never felt quite right as a girl, but it's a shock to everyone when she cuts her hair short, buys men's clothes, and announces she'd like to be called Grady. Although Grady is happy about his decision to finally be true to himself, everybody else is having trouble processing the news. There are also more practical concerns – for instance, which locker room is he supposed to use for gym class? Grady knew his decision would be difficult to live with, but he didn't expect the kids at school to be so nasty. Even as he loses trust in some, he finds unexpected allies who help him to have strength when he needs it the most.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## Yang, Gene Luen & Kim, Derek Kirk

### **The Eternal Smile**

ISBN: 978-1596431560

Publisher: First Second, 2009

Genre: Fantasy (Graphic Novel)

Pages: 170

Comprised of three short stories, *The Eternal Smile* is a thought-provoking text that offers a commentary on life and its struggles. Readers will encounter a prince whose seemingly perfect world is destroyed by a mysterious cola bottle, an entrepreneurial frog whose money hungry lifestyle leaves him unfulfilled, and a lonely office worker who seems to be the only hope for the family of a Nigerian prince; all he needs is her bank account information. These are different, yet complementary, tales of personal discovery and the importance of making decisions.

Recommended for: Secondary

## **Yousafzai, Malala**

### **I Am Malala**

ISBN: 987-0316322409

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company, 2013

Genre: Nonfiction

Pages: 386

Malala is an amazing young woman who is forced to leave the country she loves because of her continuous fight for girls' education. She tells the incredible tale of what her life has been like since, at the age of fifteen, she was shot in the head at point-blank range by the Taliban while riding the bus home from school. Not expected to survive, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. Malala continues to advocate for universal access to education and inspires others to believe that one person's voice can inspire change.

Recommended for: Middle Secondary

## **Zindel, Paul**

### **The Pigman**

ISBN: 978-0060757359

Publisher: Tween, 2005

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Pages: 166

John and Lorriane are two high school students who come from unhappy homes but are glad that they have each other. They prefer to hang out and play practical jokes rather than go to school. Through one practical prank, they meet a lonely old man, Mr Pignati. An intense friendship develops and the three create a strange world until Mr Pignati's death. This book is the 'Memorial Epic' of their friendship.

Recommended for: Lower Secondary

## **Zusak, Markus**

### **The Book Thief**

ISBN: 978-0375842207

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2007

Genre: Historical Fiction

Pages: 550

Death narrates the story of Liesel, a young girl in Nazi Germany. After her family is torn apart, Liesel is transported into foster care where her lighthearted Papa and her stern Mama Rosa shape her future. At a time when information is being censored and literature being destroyed, she becomes a book thief, stealing books from grave sites, Nazi book burnings, and the mayor. Her love of reading brings comfort to the community as she shares her stolen books with neighbours during bombing raids. This is a story of friendship, love, bravery and loss.

Recommended for: Middle - Upper Secondary

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