

**Best Books for Middle School and High School Libraries**  
**Presented January 16, 2019 at the Parsippany-Troy Hills Public Library**  
**for the Morris County School Media Association**  
**by**  
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**FICTION**

**Acevedo, Elizabeth. *The Poet X*. HarperTeen, 2018. 361p. (grades 9-12)**

This novel in verse tells the struggles of Xiomara, who lives in Harlem with her twin brother and her parents, who are both from the Dominican Republic. She and her mother have a fraught relationship because she is unable to live up to her mother's expectations, which include ignoring boys, keeping quiet around authority figures, and being a devout Catholic. Xiomara finds refuge by writing in her journal and creating poetry, which allows her to find her voice. When her mother reads her journal and punishes her for it, Xiomara becomes more determined than ever to share her poetry out loud.

**Adeyemi, Tomi. *Children of Blood and Bone*. Henry Holt and Company, 2018. 525p. (grades 9-12)**

Zélie Adebola remembers when Orisha was full of magic and she will never forget the night that a ruthless king took that magic away and killed all who possessed it, including her mother. Years later, Zélie has a chance to get magic back for good with the help of a rogue princess. They just need to outrun the prince and his soldiers who will stop at nothing to put an end to their journey. The hunt across Orishan land brings about many unexpected discoveries and Zélie must figure out how to control her new powers but also the feelings that she is developing for the young prince.

**Albert, Melissa. *The Hazel Wood*. Flatiron Books, 2018. 359p. (grades 8-12)**

Alice and her mother Ella have been on the run for years, but trouble seems to find them wherever they go and they have to keep moving. Alice's grandmother was the author of a book of dark fairytales with a devoted following, although Alice herself has never seen a copy of the book, which is out of print and notoriously hard to find. After her grandmother dies, Ella is abducted by a mysterious man that Alice has seen before. Alice and her classmate Ellery, a devotee of *Tales From the Hinterland*, go searching for her mother at her late grandmother's estate, The Hazel Wood and learn that the creepy stories her grandmother wrote were all too real.

**Albertalli, Becky. *Leah on the Offbeat*. Balzer + Bray, 2018. 343p. (grades 9-12)**

In this sequel to *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, the focus is on Leah and her struggles with her band, the changing dynamics within her friend group, and her feelings for her friend Abby, which are moving from platonic to romantic. Now that she is a senior and everything starts to change as her friends plan to head in different directions after graduation, she does not always handle challenges smoothly. She finally finds a way to let Abby know how she feels on prom night.

**Black, Holly. *The Cruel Prince*. Little, Brown and Company, 2018. 370p. (grades 9-12)**

Living in a world that is not her own, 17 year old Jude finds herself at the center of conspiracy, betrayal and murder in the High Court of Fae. It has been 10 years since she witnessed the brutal murder of her parents, 10 years since she and her sisters were taken away from their home and brought to live in the faerie world. Faeries despise humans and young Prince Cardan has a special hatred for Jude. Desperate to fit in and prove her worthiness, she is drawn into palace politics. She quickly realizes that she must make difficult choices in order to keep those that she loves safe. Book two, *The Wicked King*, was just released.

**Bliss, Bryan. *We'll Fly Away*. Greenwillow Books, 2018. 416p. (grades 9-12)**

Luke and Toby have been friends forever with big plans to leave their small town after graduation. As has always been the case, Luke will be taking Toby under his wing as he sets off to college with a full wrestling scholarship. Their senior year brings about circumstances that threaten to ruin all their plans. Toby is being pulled into his father's criminal world while Luke is trying to protect his younger twin brothers from the realities of their new life with an unreliable mother and her new boyfriend. The story is told through letters from death row and a third-person narrative.

**Chokshi, Roshani. *Aru Shah and the End of Time*. Disney Hyperion, 2018. 355p. (grades 4-7)**

Aru lives in the Museum of Ancient Indian Art and Culture, where her mother is the curator. She has told her classmates that she is spending her fall break in Paris, but she is really just hanging out at the museum. When these classmates stop by to catch Aru in her lie and she feels the need to save face, she lights the Lamp of Bhatara in order to impress them and ends up freeing an ancient demon and freezing time. In order to get everything back to the way it should be, Aru embarks on a series of adventures in order to find the reincarnations of the Pandava brothers. Readers will learn about Hindu mythology in this first book in a series that is sure to be popular with fans of Rick Riordan.

**Clayton, Dhonielle. *The Belles*. Freeform, 2018. 448p. (grades 8-12)**

Carmellia Beauregard is a Belle. In the world of Orleans, people are born gray, cursed by the God of the Sky to forever be ugly. But the Goddess of Beauty created the Belles who are able to transform anyone to be beautiful as they see fit with their arcana, and they are naturally beautiful themselves. When Carmellia is chosen as the favorite, the Belle that tends to the royal family, the queen asks her to save the firstborn princess who has been sleeping for years. Carmellia must unravel the truth of the Belles while she decides if she can use her powers to save the kingdom.

**DasGupta, Sayantani. *The Serpent's Secret*. Scholastic Press, 2018. 338p. (grades 5-8)**

Kiranmala never understood why her parents insisted she was a real Indian princess. She was just a normal girl living in Parsippany, New Jersey. That is, until her parents disappear, and a rakkhosh demon tries to eat her alive. With the help of two princes, she sets off to another dimension to save her parents, and the world.

**DiCamillo, Kate. *Louisiana's Way Home*. Candlewick Press, 2018. 227p. (grades 5-7)**

In this sequel to *Raymie Nightingale*, Louisiana is woken up in the middle of the night by her Granny Elefante, who has had a vision that they must leave their Florida home in order to right a family curse. They stop in a small town in Georgia so her grandmother can have emergency dental work, and then make their way to a motel so Granny can recuperate. When her grandmother abandons her, leaving behind a note explaining that she isn't really Louisiana's grandmother and she doesn't even know who Louisiana's parents are, Louisiana has to rely on her new friend Burke and his family while she tries to figure out her next steps.

**Doll, Jen. *Unclaimed Baggage*. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2018. 379p. (grades 9-12)**

Doris is a longtime employee of Unclaimed Baggage, a store that sells items left behind in airports. Nell is new to town and looking for friends and work and Grant is a once-popular football player who has made some serious mistakes and needs a job. Told from each teen's viewpoint, this is the story of how the three unlikely friends bond over their summer job.

**Hiranandani, Veera. *The Night Diary*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2018. 264p. (grades 6-8)**

In the summer of 1947, Nisha's world is torn apart when part of India is partitioned into a new country called Pakistan, and she and her family must flee the only home she has ever known because her father is a Hindu and Pakistan is intended for Muslims. The family travels on foot as violence erupts all around them in the turmoil of the changing countries. Nisha records this harrowing journey in a diary where every entry is meant for her mother, who died when Nisha was born.

**Holm, Jennifer L. *The Third Mushroom*. Random House, 2018. 217p. (grades 5-7)**

In this sequel to *The Fourteenth Goldfish*, Ellie's grandfather returns, still in the form of a teenager thanks to his unusual scientific discoveries. He needs help with some research on an unusual animal he has come across. Ellie and her friend Raj, who is starting to feel like more than a friend, are ready and eager to help. Ultimately, they solve their scientific mystery, Ellie realizes that she is not ready to date, and her grandfather finally reverts back to being an adult in an adult's body.

**Ireland, Justina. *Dread Nation*. Balzer + Bray, 2018. 451p. (grades 9-12)**

Two days after Jane was born in Kentucky, the dead started rising on the battlefields of Gettysburg. Now as a young woman, she is being trained to fight the shamblers, as is required of all African American and Native American teenagers. She is one of the best students in her Baltimore County school and after she saves the mayor from a zombie attack at a public event, she and a classmate are sent on a special assignment to a Kansas town called Summerland, where the sheriff and his father, the town preacher, run things and are not too keen on listening to Jane's ideas on how zombies can be eradicated.

**Johnson, Maureen. *Truly Devious*. Harper Collins, 2018. 416p. (grades 9-12)**

Ellingham Academy is an elite private school in Vermont founded by business tycoon Albert Ellingham in 1936. Not long after opening, Ellingham's wife and daughter are kidnapped. The only clue left behind is a riddle signed by "truly devious". Fast forward to the present, the academy still thrives with talented unique students. One student in particular, Stevie Bell, is a true-crime fanatic. She is determined to solve the mystery of the Ellingham kidnappings. But when "truly devious" makes an unexpected return, Stevie and her housemates are faced their own mystery to solve.

**Khorram, Adib. *Darius the Great Is Not Okay*. Dial Books, 2018. 314p. (grades 9-12)**

High school sophomore Darius is a tea enthusiast who enjoys science fiction and fantasy and doesn't quite fit in at school, where he struggles with being bullied. He also has a hard time fitting in with his family and takes medication to help with depression, a condition that his father also has. When Darius' grandfather in Iran becomes gravely ill, he and his family travel there for the first time in his life. He finally finds a place where he fits in, makes a real friend, and has the opportunity to learn more about why he has a hard time connecting with his father.

**Lee, Mackenzi. *The Lady's Guide to Petticoats and Piracy*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2018. 464p. (grades 9-12)**

In this standalone sequel to *The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue*, Felicity Montague is determined to become a surgeon, even though none of the medical schools she has approached will take her seriously because she is a woman and in the 18th century, there were no female medical students. When she is given the opportunity to meet her idol, Doctor Alexander Platt, she jumps at the chance and finds herself reconnected with a former childhood friend, Johanna, who just so happens to be engaged to the doctor. When Platt proves to be a terrifying foe and not the ally she had hoped for, Felicity, her pirate acquaintance Sim, and Johanna embark on a whirlwind adventure as they try to recover Johanna's late mother's research on sea dragons, which has fallen into the wrong hands.

**Menon, Sandhya. *From Twinkle, with Love*. Simon Pulse, 2018. 336p. (grades 7-12)**

Told through letters that Twinkle writes to her female filmmaker idols, Twinkle, an aspiring filmmaker, jumps at the chance to direct a movie for the upcoming Summer Festival when the brother of her crush, Sahil Roy asks her. She figures it'll get her closer to Neil, and she'll be able to showcase her skills as a director. Soon enough, Twinkle starts to receive emails from a mysterious "N" who she thinks is Neil Roy. The only problem? She's starting to realize she might have fallen for the geeky Sahil instead.

**Nwaubani, Adaobi Tricia & Mazza, Viviana. *Buried Beneath the Baobab Tree*. Harper Collins, 2018. 336p. (grades 9-12)**

This novel tells the story of an unnamed Nigerian girl who is kidnapped by the Boko Haram terrorist group. Based on survivor interviews of the 2014 Boko Haram kidnapping of 276 Chibok girls, Nwaubani creates a heartbreaking and powerful story. The narrator shares tales of happiness, joy and ambition as she recalls life before the kidnapping. She had dreams of going to university, becoming a teacher and one day having a family of her own. That all changed when the terrorists come to her village to destroy everything that she has always known. Men are killed, boys are taken to become soldiers, women and girls are taken to become wives and slaves. It is story about surviving the unimaginable. Afterword by journalist Viviana Mazza.

**Ormsbee, K.E. *The House in Poplar Wood*. Chronicles Books, 2018. 344p. (grades 4-7)**

Per the Agreement, Lee Vickery would help his mother serve Memory and Felix Vickery would help his father serve Death. Both boys hate that the Shades don't allow them to be a proper family, forever separated into a different side of the house, but when Gretchen Whipple bulldozes into their life, they realize they might have a way to defeat Death and break the Agreement once and for all.

**Pearson, Mary E. *Dance of Thieves*. Henry Holt and Co., 2018. 512p. (grades 9-12)**

Set in the world of the Remnant Chronicles, Kazi is a reformed thief that is journeying with two other women of the Queen's Guard to find out why Ballenger family is ravaging a Vendan settlement. There she meets Jase Ballenger, the new head of the family who believes they have a right to the land as the first family. Kazi and Jase both race to uncover the secrets surrounding the continent, losing their hearts while she plots to make him pay for his past.

**Poston, Ashley. *Heart of Iron*. Balzer + Bray, 2018. 480p. (grades 7-9)**

In this retelling of Anastasia set in space, Ana was found adrift in space with only a sentient android D09 by a space captain and her crew. Now at seventeen, Ana is trying to find a way to save D09, one of the last illegal Metals who has started to glitch. On the way to find answers, she meets a Ironblood named Robb, one of the ruling class, who is seeking the same lost spaceship she is. With an uneasy alliance, they unearth dangerous secrets that change both of their lives.

**Ritchie, Krista & Becca. *The Raging Ones*. Wednesday Books, 2018. 400p. (grades 10-12)**

Everyone knows the day they're going to die, no one can avoid it, and they don't try. But then Franny wakes up the day after her deathdate and she's...alive and connected to two other boys who escaped their deathdates, as well. Told through the alternating perspectives: Court, a boy who grew up "Influential" and then escaped from jail; Mykal, a warrior that lived alone for years in the arctic cold; and Franny, a girl who lived fast and was meant to die young. Together they plot to be accepted into the Star Dust project, a way to escape the planet and go on a secret mission into the stars.

**Saeed, Aisha. *Amal Unbound*. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2018. 226p. (grades 6-8)**

Aisha is the oldest daughter in her Pakistani family and because of this, a lot is expected of her. When her mother has another baby girl and falls into a depression because she has yet to have a son, household duties fall to Aisha, who desperately wants to return to school and continue her education. When Aisha inadvertently insults the wealthy man whose family controls their village, she is sent to work in his house as a servant. She is told that it is only going to be temporary, but soon figures out that she has been sent there for the long haul and needs to cope with her new situation.

**Shusterman, Neal. *Dry*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2018. 390p. (grades 7+)**

California residents are already living under water restrictions but they are not prepared when the water runs out. Suburban communities turn into war zones and neighbors turn against each other as desperation grows. Alyssa and her younger brother, Garrett, need to find a way to get out before it is too late. They embark on a journey with a band of unlikely companions as they navigate through chaos and danger in an attempt to survive.

**Silvera, Adam. *What If It's Us?* HarperTeen, 2018. 437p. (grades 9-12)**

A chance encounter at the post office sets the stage for an unexpected romance. Arthur, a boy visiting New York for the summer, is full of optimism and a love for all things Broadway. Ben, a New York resident, has a much more skeptical outlook on life. After walking away from each other, the question haunts them both...what if? Arthur sets out on a crusade to find the boy at the post office. With the help of friends, social media and, maybe, a little bit of luck, the two are reunited for a summer neither will ever forget.

**Summers, Courtney. *Sadie*. Wednesday Books, 2018. 311p. (grades 10-12)**

After her younger sister Mattie is murdered, nineteen year old Sadie leaves her small town without telling anyone where she is going and her disappearance becomes as much a mystery as who killed Mattie. The sisters become the focus of a popular podcast called *The Girls*. Alternating between Sadie's perspective as she investigates and transcripts of the podcast, the reader learns who killed Mattie and why, but there are unanswered questions regarding Sadie's whereabouts.

**White, Kiersten. *The Dark Descent of Elizabeth Frankenstein*. Delacorte Press, 2018. 304p. (grades 8-12)**

In this retelling of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Elizabeth Lavenza was rescued from squalor and abuse to be the friend of Victor Frankenstein, a boy with a brilliant mind and a cold heart. To ensure her survival, Elizabeth must entertain Victor's every whim with a smile, no matter how depraved. In her quest to find her place in the world at Victor's side, Elizabeth covers up his grisly experiments. But when she comes face to face with the true monster, she has to figure out just how far she'll go to stay alive.

**Woodfolk, Ashley. *The Beauty That Remains*. Delacorte Press, 2018. 327p. (grades 9-12)**

Autumn's best friend Octavia was killed in a car accident, Logan's secret boyfriend Bram is dead from an apparent suicide, and Shay's sister Sasha lost her life to leukemia, which she had been battling for years. The one thing all three grieving teens have in common is a connection to a now-defunct indie band called Unraveling Lovely, which brings them together and helps them heal.

## **GRAPHIC NOVELS**

**Gudsnuk, Kristen. *Making Friends*. Graphix, 2018. 272p. (grades 4-7)**

Now that she's in seventh grade, Dany is dealing with the fact that all of her old friends are in a different class, and she's not handling being alone well. When she finds a magical sketchbook that makes anything she draws come to life, she decides to draw a new best friend, Madison. But keeping a friend isn't easy, especially when they're coming to terms with not having a family, and then there's the severed head of Prince Neptune, the first thing Dany drew, the villain from her favorite anime. He has his own ideas of how to become popular, and Dany and her friends, old and new, have to come together to defeat him.

**Sell, Chad. *The Cardboard Kingdom*. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2018. 288p. (grades 4-7)**

In *The Cardboard Kingdom*, sixteen neighborhood kids create alter egos out of ordinary boxes. With them they play together in their mythical world using their imagination. But they also battle problems in their everyday lives such as The Banshee who is dealing with being a loud, outspoken girl whose grandmother thinks girls should be quiet and nice or Professor Everything who just wants to make friends.

**Wang, Jen. *The Prince and the Dressmaker*. First Second, 2018. 360p. (grades 7-12)**

With the help of his best friend and dressmaker, Frances, Sebastian sheds his princely attire every night and becomes Lady Crystallia, a fashion icon. But Frances dreams of becoming a great designer, and she can't do that if she's designing for Lady Crystallia and hiding Prince Sebastian's secret. Afraid to tell the truth to his parents, Sebastian puts away his dresses, intent on hiding who he truly is to the world. Meanwhile, Frances is creating a dress collection that isn't true to her heart. But with their friend's help, they both show the city who they really are.

## **NONFICTION**

**Bagieu, Penelope. *Brazen: Rebel Ladies Who Rocked the World*. First Second, 2018. 291p. (grades 7-12)**

This graphic-format book provides biographical information on a variety of spirited women throughout history, ranging from well known pioneers such as Nellie Bly and Mae Jemison to lesser knowns such as actress Margaret Hamilton and Empress Wu Zeitan.

**Conkling, Winifred. *Votes for Women! American Suffragists and the Battle for the Ballot*. Algonquin, 2018. 312p. (grades 7-12)**

This book provides a comprehensive history of the nineteenth amendment and the struggles leading up to getting women the right to vote.

**Krosoczka, Jarrett. *Hey, Kiddo*. Graphix, 2018. 294p. (grades 9-12)**

In this graphic-format memoir, Jarrett Krosoczka describes how he was raised by his grandparents because his mother was a drug addict who was in and out of rehab and subsequently in and out of his life his life. His father chose to remain out of the picture and Krosoczka didn't even learn the man's name until he was a teenager. By the time he graduates from high school, he realizes that his grandparents are his true parents, even if they are considerably older than his peers' mothers and fathers and he has gotten in touch with his biological father and starting forming a relationship with his half-siblings.

**Partridge, Elizabeth. *Boots on the Ground: America's War in Vietnam*. Penguin Young Readers, 2018. 213p. (grades 7-12)**

This in-depth look at the Vietnam War includes interviews with Vietnam veterans, a military nurse, and a Vietnamese refugee, along with a number of photographs, to help explain what caused the war, why America intervened, and what its social and political ramifications were.

**Prout, Chessy & Abelson, Jenn. *I Have the Right To: A High School Survivor's Story of Sexual Assault, Justice, and Hope*. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2018. 416p. (grades 9-12)**

Chessy Prout was a freshman when she was raped at the prestigious St. Paul private high school in New Hampshire. It turns out that she is not the only one who has been a victim of sexual assault on campus. However, she refuses to back down. In her fight for justice, she uncovers decades of abuse and cover-ups in the St. Paul community. Her memoir is a portrayal of an amazing and courageous teenage girl who took on the old boys' club status quo mentality before the #metoo movement was born.