

2019-2020 LYRC 6-8th Grade Annotated Nominated Title List

1. **All's Faire in Middle School** by Victoria Jameson
Homeschooled by Renaissance fair enthusiasts, sixth grader Imogene has a hard time fitting in when her wish to enroll in public school is granted.
Dial Books, 2017. HC: 9780525429982, 248 pp., \$20.99. PB: 9780525429999, \$12.99
IL: MG - BL: 3.4 - AR Pts: 3.0. AR Quiz No. 190917
[Graphic novel, female protagonist, Renaissance Faire, homeschooling to public school transition, humorous, middle school, family and friend relationships, bullies, coming-of-age, three starred reviews, nominated for ALA Notable Books for Children, a *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book]
2. **Beyond the Bright Sea** by Lauren Wolk
Twelve-year-old orphan Crow embarks on a journey to discover who her parents were and why they abandoned her on a small boat as an infant. In her search she encounters an angry criminal, buried treasure, and discovers that family is not always related by blood.
Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2017. HC: 9781101994856, 304 pp., \$16.99. PB: 9781101994870, \$8.99
IL: MG - BL: 4.8 - AR Pts: 9.0. AR Quiz No. 189077
[Female-protagonist, island life, orphan, leper colony, buried treasure, suspense, search for birth family, 20th century history, Elizabeth Islands, Massachusetts, Louisiana tie-in, four starred reviews, Winner of the 2018 Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction]
3. **Brave** by Svetlana Chmakova
In his daydreams, Jensen is the biggest hero that ever was, saving the world and his friends on a daily basis. But his middle school reality is VERY different - math is hard, getting along with friends is hard, and even finding a partner for the class project is a big problem when you always get picked last. The pressure's on even more once the school newspaper's dynamic duo, Jenny and Akilah, draw Jensen into the whirlwind of school news, social experiment projects, and behind-the-scenes club drama. Jensen's always played the middle school game one level at a time, but suddenly, someone's cranked up the difficulty setting. Will those daring daydreams of his finally work in his favor, or will he have to find real solutions to his real life problems?
JY, 2017. HC: 9780316363174, 248 pp., \$24. PB: 9780316363181, \$11
IL: MG - BL: 2.8 - AR Pts: 2.0. AR Quiz No. 190983
[Graphic Novel, male protagonist, bullying, friendship, companion to AWKWARD, middle school, clubs, popularity]

4. **Clayton Byrd Goes Underground** by Rita Williams-Garcia

Clayton feels most alive when he's with his grandfather, Cool Papa Byrd, and the band of Bluesmen -- he can't wait to join them, just as soon as he has a blues song of his own. But then the unthinkable happens. Cool Papa Byrd dies, and Clayton's mother forbids Clayton from playing the blues. Clayton knows that's no way to live. Armed with his grandfather's brown porkpie hat and his harmonica, he runs away from home in search of the Bluesmen, hoping he can join them on the road. But on the journey that takes him through the New York City subways and to Washington Square Park, Clayton learns some things that surprise him.

Amistad, 2017. HC: 9780062215918, 176 pp., \$16.99. PB: 9780062215932, \$6.99
IL:MG – BL:4.4 – AR Pts:4.0. AR Quiz No. 189070.

[Five starred reviews, African-American male protagonist, best book lists and National Book Award Finalist, racism, multigenerational, bereavement, blues music, grandfathers, death, family relationships]

5. **Forget Me Not** by Ellie Terry

When her mother breaks up with yet another boyfriend, Calliope meets Jinsong at her latest middle school, who becomes her friend despite her Tourette Syndrome and the embarrassment it can cause.

Feiwel & Friends, 2017. HC: 9781250096272, 326 pp., \$16. PB: 9781250144010, \$7.99

IL: MG - BL: 4.1 - AR Pts: 3.0. AR Quiz No. 189690

[Female protagonist with Tourette Syndrome, moving, new school, middle school, mothers and daughters, friendship, being different, novel-in-verse,]

6. **Frogkisser!** by Garth Nix

Princess Anya has a big problem: Duke Rikard, her step-stepfather is an evil wizard who wants to rule the kingdom and has a habit of changing people into frogs, and her older sister Morven, the heir, is a wimp. So with the help of the librarian Gotfried (who turns into an owl when he is upset) and the Royal Dogs, she must find away to defeat Rikard, save her sister, and maybe even turn Prince Denholm back into a human being.

Scholastic Press, 2017. HC: 9781338052084, 384 pp., \$18.99. PB: 9781338052091, \$10.99

IL: MG - BL: 6.0 - AR Pts: 15.0. AR Quiz No. 187558

[Two starred reviews, female protagonist, fantasy fairy tale retelling, talking dogs, evil stepfather, princesses, sisters, wizards, magic, dogs, adventure stories]

7. **Greetings from Witness Protection!** by Jake Burt

Thirteen-year-old Nikki Demere is an orphan and a kleptomaniac, making her the perfect girl to portray the Trevors' daughter in witness protection, but she soon learns that the biggest threat to her new family's security comes from her own past.

Feiwel & Friends, 2017. HC: 9781250107114, 368 pp., \$16.99. PB (October 2018): 9781250179043, \$7.99

IL: MG – BL:5.1 – AR Pts:12.0. AR Quiz No. 187558

[Two starred reviews, female protagonist, humorous, foster families, sibling relationships, moving/new school adjustment, witness protection program, timely adventure, coming of age]

8. In the Shadow of the Sun by Anne Sibley O'Brien

Twelve-year-old Mia is on a five-day tour of North Korea with her older brother, Simon, and their father, Mark, a food aide worker, but she is scared because her father keeps sneaking off at night and terrified that her brother's sullen, rebellious behavior (which has absolutely nothing to do with the Koreans) is going to get them in trouble. Things get much worse when she is pulled into a deadly political game that seeks to expose North Korean atrocities, and her father is arrested.

Arthur A. Levine Books, 2017. HC: 9780545905749, 336 pp., \$17.99. PB: 9781338216196, \$10.95

IL: MG - BL: 5.1 - AR Pts: 13.0. AR Quiz No. 189249

[Brother and sister relationships, Korean female protagonist adopted by American family as a child, fast-paced survival thriller, tourists, Korea, conspiracies, secrets, timely, thought provoking]

9. Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus by Dusti Bowling

New friends and a mystery help Aven, thirteen, adjust to middle school and life at a dying western theme park in a new state, where her being born armless presents many challenges.

Sterling Children's Books, 2017. HC: 9781454923459, 272 pp., \$14.95

IL: MG - BL: 4.6 - AR Pts: 7.0. AR Quiz No. 190934

[Three starred reviews, male and female protagonists, humorous, people with disabilities, overweight persons, Tourette syndrome, adoption, friendship, amusement parks, moving, mystery & detective, for fans of *Wonder*]

10. Refugee by Alan Gratz

Although separated by continents and decades, Josef, a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany; Isabel, a Cuban girl trying to escape the riots and unrest plaguing her country in 1994; and Mahmoud, a Syrian boy in 2015 whose homeland is torn apart by violence and destruction, embark on harrowing journeys in search of refuge, discovering shocking connections that tie their stories together.

Scholastic, 2017. HC: 9780545880831, 352 pp., \$16.99

IL: MG – BL:5.3 – AR Pts:10.0. AR Quiz No. 190739

[Male and female protagonists, multicultural, three stories of harrowing escapes, Jewish boy in 1930's Nazi Germany, Cuban girl in 1994, Syrian boy in 2015, timely, 3 starred reviews, award winning, bestselling author]

11. Slider by Pete Hautman

Hoping to win a cash prize in a pizza eating contest after racking up a tab on his mother's credit card, David must juggle his competitive eating training with the responsibility of looking after his autistic younger brother.

Candlewick, 2017. HC: 9780763690700, 288 pp., \$16.99. PB (March 2019): 9781536204322, \$7.75

IL: MG - BL: 4.3 - AR Pts: 7.0. AR Quiz No. 191877

[Three starred reviews, humorous, finding one's place, autism, siblings, male protagonist, eating contests]

12. The Red Bandanna (Young Readers Adaptation) by Tom Rinaldi

This book, adapted for young readers, presents the story of 9/11 hero Welles Crowther, highlighting his faith, position as a volunteer in his local fire department, and how he sacrificed his life to save people trapped above the airplane embedded in the South Tower.

Viking Books for Young Readers, 2017. HC: 9780425287620, 176 pp., \$17.99 PB: 9780425287644, \$8.99

IL: MG - BL: 6.7 - AR Pts: 5.0. AR Quiz No. 190607

[Narrative non-fiction, Winner of the Christopher Award, An ILA-CBC Children's Choices Book, A NCSS-CBC Notable Social Studies Book, September 11 terrorist attacks, heroes, rescue work, courage, volunteer firefighters, World Trade Center]