

All the Answers
Kate Messner
Bloomsbury USA Childrens, 2015
256 pages

SUMMARY:

What if your pencil had all the answers? Would you ace every test? Would you know what your teachers were thinking? When Ava Anderson finds a scratched up pencil she doodles like she would with any other pencil. But when she writes a question in the margin of her math quiz, she hears a clear answer in a voice no one else seems to hear.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Serafina and the Black Cloak, Robert Beatty
Mark of the Thief, Jennifer A. Nielsen
The Sword of Summer, Rick Riordan
Fish in a Tree, Lynda Mullaly Hunt
11 Birthdays, Wendy Mass
A Snicker of Magic, Natalie Lloyd

WEBSITES:

Located on Kate Messner's webpage, <http://www.katemessner.com/all-the-answers/> you will find links on where to buy the books as well as information about the title. If you visit <http://www.katemessner.com/> you will be able to get links to other books written by the author, her blog, her appearances, and more. At *Goodreads*, https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/22313641-all-the-answers?ac=1&from_search=true you can find information and reviews on this title from other readers as well as lists of similar reads. *Goodreads* is a free website for book lovers. Imagine it as a large library that you can wander through and see everyone's bookshelves, their reviews, and their ratings. You can also post your own reviews and catalog what you have read, are currently reading, and plan to read in the future.

BOOKTALK:

Ava is a worrier, and she can't stand not knowing the answers to all the questions she has. Then she discovers a magical pencil that will answer any question she writes down. Ava and her friend Sophie start thinking of many questions they want answered, but the more and more they use the pencil, the shorter it gets. Ava then starts to worry that she won't be able to get all the answers to the many questions she has. Messner does a great job dealing with the anxiety of middle grade children, as well as dealing with the realities of growing up. Many children will be able to relate to Ava and the types of questions she asks, as well as her fears of asking an adult. However, there are times when she may not want to know the answers to her questions.

Prepared by:

Lauren Black, Imagine Columbia Leadership Academy, blacklh1210@gmail.com

Bayou Magic
Jewell Parker Rhodes
Little, Brown and Company, 2015
239 pages

SUMMARY:

Every summer, one of the Lavalier sisters must go and stay with their grandmother in the Louisiana bayou. It is ten-year-old Maddy's turn to venture into the swamp and the unknown magic that awaits her. She also begins to discover if she has what it takes to be a hero.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Sugar, Jewell Parker Rhodes

Ninth Ward, Jewell Parker Rhodes

Circus Mirandus, Cassie Beasley

WEBSITES:

Jewell Parker Rhodes, <http://jewellparkerrhodes.com/children/books/bayou-magic/>, This website gives a book description, praise for the book from different reviewers, links to purchase the book, book resources, audio book connections on Audible, as well as a book trailer.

BOOKTALK:

All of Maddy's sisters have taken their turn spending the summer with Grandmère Lavalier. Now it's Maddy's turn. Her Grandmère isn't like most grandmothers though, she's a witch, or at least that's what her sisters say. But Maddy's fears melt away as she sees the beauty of the bayou that surrounds her. Fireflies twinkle like stars, and Grandmère's house feels like a cottage from a magical storybook. Maddy feels at home, she feels brave, and she feels that something big is about to happen. Her Grandmère asks her "who" she wants to be when she grows up - not "what", but "who." Maddy responds with the only answer she can, "A hero. Like in my stories." But as Grandmère reminds her, if you're going to be a hero, then something bad will have to happen along the way. Is Maddy strong enough to face the danger that is approaching? Will her family's magical legacy continue with her or will it end? And what is stirring deep within the water of the bayou that only Maddy can see? Could it really be a mermaid? To find out if Maddy has what it takes to make magic of her own and become the hero she dreams, be sure to read *Bayou Magic* by Jewell Parker Rhodes!

Prepared by:

Nikki Mock, Clearwater Elementary School, nmock@acpsd.net

Circus Mirandus

Cassie Beasley
Puffin Books, 2015
304 pages

SUMMARY:

Do you believe in magic? Micah Tuttle does. Even though his awful Great-Aunt Gertrudis doesn't approve, Micah believes in the stories his dying Grandpa Ephraim tells him of the magical Circus Mirandus: the invisible tiger guarding the gates, the beautiful flying birdwoman, and the magician more powerful than any other—the Man Who Bends Light. Finally, Grandpa Ephraim offers proof. The Circus is real. And the Lightbender owes Ephraim a miracle. With his friend Jenny Mendoza in tow, Micah sets out to find the Circus and the man he believes will save his grandfather. The only problem is, the Lightbender doesn't want to keep his promise. And now it's up to Micah to get the miracle he came for.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Big Fish, Daniel Wallace

Peter Pan, J. M. Barrie

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl

James and the Giant Peach, Roald Dahl

A Snicker of Magic, Natali Lloyd

Fish in a Tree, Lynda Mullaly Hunt

WEBSITES:

About the book and author, read an excerpt; <http://www.circusmirandus.com/home>

The Insider's Guide to *Circus Mirandus*: 8 Attractions You Won't Want to Miss

<http://www.readbrightly.com/the-insiders-guide-to-circus-mirandus/>

An Educator's Guide to *Circus Mirandus*; http://www.penguin.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CircusMirandus_EducatorsGuide_16_4p_FORWEB.pdf

Texas Bluebonnet Awards 2016-2017 includes Readers Theater, Author Interview and Book Trailer and much more! <https://texasbluebonnetaward2017.wordpress.com/circus-mirandus/>

BOOKTALK:

Micah is a ten-year-old boy who has lived with his grandfather since the death of his parents. His grandfather tells Micah stories of Circus Mirandus, a magical place he visited as a child. The man who bends light made his grandfather a promise many years ago. Micah is determined to find the Lightbender so he can save his grandfather's life.

Prepared by:

Tamra Pingle, Bridge Creek Elementary School, tpingle@richland2.org

Crenshaw

Katherine Applegate

Feiwel & Friends, 2015

256 pages

SUMMARY:

Rising fifth grader Jackson is a bit alarmed when his imaginary friend, a very large black and white cat named Crenshaw, begins to reappear in his life. He thinks he must be losing his mind or maybe he is going crazy from hunger. But, Crenshaw refuses to disappear until Jackson discovers the real reason why his old friend has returned.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Confessions of an Imaginary Friend, Michelle Cuevas

Death by Toilet Paper, Donna Gephart

Stonebird, Mike Revell

WEBSITES:

Located on Macmillan's *Crenshaw* webpage, <http://www.mackidsbooks.com/crenshaw/>, you will find information about the book, a book trailer, and brief information about the author. However, the most useful link, [Food Drive](#), presents facts about childhood hunger and several ideas for holding a Crenshaw themed food drive. Another location on the Macmillan site, hosts a [Teacher's Guide](#) and Reading Group Guide, which lists discussion questions and standards-based activities for core subject areas. [The National Coalition for the Homeless Youth Projects](#) page lists links to manuals for hosting various service events in your school or community. It also provides links to annual nationwide events.

BOOKTALK:

"Where did these purple jelly beans come from? I love purple jelly beans, but I am suspicious of anything that seems to appear out of nowhere, even if it is my favorite food and flavor. I also love facts, especially ones about animals. I want to be an animal scientist when I grow up. Scientists deal in facts, and as a rising fifth grader, I do not want to get a reputation for being crazy. But, the purple jelly beans are not the only thing that I have started to see appearing out of thin air. I'm also seeing a cat. To be specific, I'm seeing Crenshaw, a very large black and white cat, who was my imaginary friend years ago. Why is he here, and why won't he go away? I have enough real problems to overcome. What does he want?" To find out more about Jackson's struggles and the reason why Crenshaw has reappeared read *Crenshaw* by Katherine Applegate.

Prepared by:

Faith Barber, J.D. Lever Elementary, fbarber@acpsd.net

The Enchanted Files: Cursed (Originally published as Diary of a Mad Brownie)

Bruce Coville
Random House 2015
256 pages

SUMMARY:

Nothing like inheriting a magical brownie who does all your chores. Alex isn't very happy that Angus, a brownie from the Enchanted Realm, is hers because of a century old curse. She doesn't want him, period. Diary entries and reports chronicle the unfortunate and often hilarious tales of the two trying to find a way to get along. This sour relationship between brownie and human turns out sweet in the end, or is this just the beginning.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Pip Bartlett's Guide to Magical Creatures, Jackson Pearce and Maggie Stiefvater
Upside Down Magic, Sarah Mlynowsky
The Familiars series, Adam Jay Epstein
Spiderwick Chronicles series, Tony DiTerlizzi

WEBSITES:

Information about Brownies and their folklore, be sure to check out [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brownie_\(folklore\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brownie_(folklore)). If you would like to find out more information and other books by author Bruce Coville, be sure to check out his page at <https://www.brucecoville.com/>.

BOOKTALK:

Who wouldn't love to have someone do all their chores? Really. Someone to pick up everything you leave behind and clean up every mess you make. But what if that someone is a something? As in, a magical brownie named Angus who has a wee bit of a temper. Yep. A magical brownie from the Enchanted Realm. Would you be able to handle him? Are you sure? Because, Alex really struggled according to the reports. Treat yourself and your students to the audiobook version to hear all the accents.

Prepared by:

Shannon Ryan, Lake Carolina Elementary Upper Campus School, sryan@richland2.org

Escape from Baxters' Barn

Rebecca Bond

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015

246 pages

SUMMARY:

Burdock, the one-eyed cat, overhears a plot from his farmer to burn down their barn in order to collect insurance money. He and the other farm animals develop a plan that uses each animal's talent in order to try and escape. This wonderful story displays moments of humor, family and a true spirit of teamwork among animals of all different abilities.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Charlotte's Web, E.B. White

The One and Only Ivan, Katherine Applegate

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, Kate DiCamillo

The Mouse and the Motorcycle, Beverly Cleary

Poppy's Return, Avi

The Tale of Despereaux, Kate DiCamillo

WEBSITES:

Macmillan Publishers, <http://us.macmillan.com/author/rebeccabond>. Find out more about the author and other books that she has written.

Rebecca Bond, <http://rebeccabondart.com/new-page-1/>. Cover art and book titles by author and illustrator can be found at this website.

BOOKTALK:

Burdock, the one-eyed barn cat, is snuggling one night in his secret hiding place in the kitchen when he overhears some very disturbing news. One of the farm owners wants to burn the barn down just to get the money from the insurance company! Burdock knows that he must alert the other animals immediately so they can save the farm! This is the story of animals who come together and work to save the only home known to them. In a sweet story that will remind you of *Charlotte's Web* you will fall in love with all of the farm animals as they work together to escape from Baxters' Barn.

Prepared by:

Michelle Weaver, Walker Gamble Elementary, michelle.weaver@clarendon3.org

Full Cicada Moon
Marilyn Hilton
Penguin Random House 2015
389 pages

SUMMARY:

It's 1969, the Apollo mission is in the news and Mimi dreams of being an astronaut. She also wants to take shop class and enter a science competition but that isn't what girls are supposed to participate in or enjoy. To make things even more complicated, Mimi has just moved to Vermont and her mixed heritage is all that people notice about her. She is too different from her new community in so many ways. Mimi chronicles her year in middle school in this novel-in-verse as she learns to overcome challenges and continues to pursue her dreams despite constantly being told "no" while discovering one person really can affect change.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Brown Girl Dreaming, Jacqueline Woodson

Booked, Kwame Alexander

Inside Out and Back Again, Thanhha Lai

Words with Wings, Nikki Grimes

WEBSITES:

Discover more information from on the Apollo 11 mission at

http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/missions/apollo11.html. You can find a Book Club Discussion Guide at

http://www.marilynhilton.com/cmsdocuments/Full_Cicada_Moon_Book_Group_Guide.pdf

To learn more about author Marilyn Hilton, check out her website

<http://www.marilynhilton.com/>

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever been told you can't do something because that's the way it's always been done? Well, in 1969, girls aren't supposed to take shop class, enter science competitions, or dream of being an astronaut. It isn't easy, but no matter how many times she is told no, Mimi doesn't stop pursuing her dreams. Will Mimi get to take shop class and enter a science competition or will too many barriers get in her way? Read *Full Cicada Moon* to find out.

Prepared by:

Shannon Ryan, Lake Carolina Elementary Upper Campus School, sryan@richland2.org

Fuzzy Mud
Louis Sachar
Delacorte Press, 2015
183 pages

SUMMARY:

A shortcut home through the woods behind school leads to trouble for fifth grader Tamaya and seventh grader Marshall. Not only are they being followed by the school's newest arrival and bully, Chad, but all around them something is growing. Something fuzzy. Something threatening to infect the world.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Holes, Louis Sachar

Masterminds, Gordon Korman

A Week in the Woods, Andrew Clements

WEBSITES:

Louis Sachar is featured on <http://www.louissachar.com/featured.html>. This website gives a book description, praise for the book from different reviewers, a link to a featured article about the book, book resources - inspiration for the book, a question and answer about the book, and a link to an interview with Louis Sachar.

BOOKTALK:

Tamaya's friends think she's a goody-goody. Always doing what she's told. Always prepared for class. Always pressed and polished, ready for anything. Marshall used to have a lot of friends. He used to give every situation his all with his teachers claiming that 'what he lacked in talent, he made up for in enthusiasm.' His enthusiasm, however, left when Woodridge Academy's newest student, and resident bully, Chad Hilligas showed up and picked him as a target. Marshall will do anything to avoid a confrontation, the problem is he and Tamaya have walked home from school the same way every day for three years--past the same corner Chad has promised to wait at for Marshall. Now Tamaya and Marshall are taking a shortcut through unfamiliar woods and trouble is creeping their way, looking to catch them. Tamaya notices that there is a strange, fuzzy mud growing all around them, mud that soon the entire world will know about, mud that has a life of its own. Will Tamaya and Marshall make it out of the woods? Will Chad ever leave them alone? And what will happen if the fuzzy mud keeps spreading? Read *Fuzzy Mud* by Louis Sachar to find out!

Prepared by:

Nikki Mock, Clearwater Elementary School, nmock@acpsd.net

Game Changer: John McLendon and the Secret Game

John Coy

Carolrhoda Books, 2015

32 pages

SUMMARY:

“When they piled into cars and drove through Durham, North Carolina, the members of the Duke University Medical School basketball team only knew that they were going somewhere to play basketball. They didn't know whom they would play against. But when they came face to face with their opponents, they quickly realized this secret game was going to make history. Discover the true story of how in 1944, Coach John McLendon orchestrated a secret game between the best players from a white college and his team from the North Carolina College of Negroes. At a time of widespread segregation and rampant racism, this illegal gathering changed the sport of basketball forever.” (from the publisher)

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Hoop Genius: How a Desperate Teacher and a Rowdy Gym Class Invented Basketball, John Coy
Take Your Best Shot, John Coy

Around the World, John Coy

The Story of Basketball, Anastasia Suen

Center Court: the History of Basketball, Jamie Winters

National Basketball Association, David Rausch

The Crossover, Kwame Alexander

WEBSITES:

John Coy: Author, Speaker, Educator, <http://www.johncoy.com>. This website focuses on the author and the books that he has written. Sports are the subjects of most of his books, basketball seeming to be the most popular. The site is broken up by grade level interest, information about the author, and information on visits. There is a summary of the book, *Game Changer*, and also a video clip of John McLendon and some of his team, talking about James Naismith.

BOOKTALK:

Do you like basketball? Can you imagine it being illegal to play another team because of the color of their skin? Well in 1944 black and white players could not legally play one another. Coach John McLendon, coach of the North Carolina College of Negroes, orchestrated a secret game with the Duke University Medical School team, the best team in North Carolina. How would Coach McLendon's players stack up to this team? Would they be discovered? Would the players accept one another? There was a lot on the line, but history was secretly made in North Carolina with this game.

Prepared by:

Susan DuBose, Lexington Elementary, sdubose@lexington1.net

A Handful of Stars

Cynthia Lord

Scholastic Press, 2017

184 pages

SUMMARY:

Lily and Salma meet when Lily's blind dog, Lucky, runs ahead of her during a walk and nearly gets hit by a truck. When the girls meet again they discover they have much in common and quickly become friends. That friendship is tested as they work toward meeting goals that are very important to each of them.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Stay!: Keeper's Story, Lois Lowry

Allie, First at Last, Angela Cervantes

The Small Adventure of Popeye and Elvis, Barbara O'Connor

Truth and Salsa, Linda Lowery

WEBSITES:

Tate Kids, <https://kids.tate.org.uk/> - A website that allows children to play art games and share art with other children. Winner of a 2009 Youth Webby Award

¡ Colorín Colorado! A bilingual site for educators and families of English language learners, <http://www.colorincolorado.org/> - Colorín Colorado provides free research-based information, activities, and advice to parents, schools, and communities. An annotated list of migrant family books is included.

The Humane Society Of The United States: Tips,

<http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/tips/?referrer=https://www.google.com/> - A website that contains a wide selection of articles on caring for and training dogs.

BOOKTALK:

Lily's relationship with her BFF Hannah has started to change. The two girls no longer have as much in common as they once did. While Lily is dealing with this change she meets Salma, the daughter of a migrant worker. This meeting takes place when Lily's blind dog, Lucky, runs off and is nearly hit by a truck. Salma saves the day by luring Lucky away from the road with her lunch. Lily discovers that she and Salma have a great deal in common, including art, the love of dogs, and loss. Their friendship grows as they spend more time together, painting, caring for Lucky, and raising funds for Lucky's treatment.

A twist in the story leaves Lily with some important choices to make. Will Lily and Hannah restore their friendship? Will Lily and Salma continue their friendship? Will Lucky receive the treatment he needs? Read *A Handful of Stars* by Cynthia Lord to find out.

Prepared by:

Bonnie Middleton, McBee Elementary School, bmiddleton@chesterfieldschools.org

I, Fly: The Buzz About Flies and How Awesome They Are

Bridget Heos

Henry Holt and Company 2015

48 pages

SUMMARY:

Fly is fed up with everyone studying butterflies. After all, flies go through metamorphosis too – and they are so much cooler! They flap their wings 200 times a second, compared to a butterfly's measly five to twelve times. Their babies – maggots – are much cuter than caterpillars (obviously). And when they eat solid food, they even throw up on it to turn it into a liquid. Who wouldn't want to study an insect like that? Both funny and informative, this earnest (and highly partisan) narrator provides a refreshing new perspective on his fascinating species.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Animals Nobody Loves, Seymour Simon

Bat Spit, Maggots, and Other Amazing Medical Wonders, Kristi Lew

Forensics Squad Unleashed, Monique Polak

Freaky Science Discoveries, Sarah Machajewski

What to Expect When You're Expecting Larvae: A Guide for Insect Parents (and Curious Kids),

Bridget Heos

WEBSITES

Author's Website, <http://www.authorbridgetheos.com/i-fly.php> includes coloring pages and activity sheets related to the book.

National Geographic, <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/weirdest-housefly-maggots>.

This 2-minute video explains (quite graphically) how houseflies regurgitate on food, spreading harmful bacteria, and how their squirming offspring play a vital role as nature's recyclers.

Pest World for Kids, <http://pestworldforkids.org/pest-guide/flies/>. Facts about various flies + crafts, videos, eBooks, and games for kids; lesson plan ideas for teachers.

Virtual Teacher Aide: <http://www.vtaide.com/png/housefly.htm>. This kid-friendly interactive site explains the stages of the fly life cycle. Other insect life cycles are included for comparison.

BOOKTALK

Admit it. Aren't you a little fascinated by maggots? I know I am, but maybe that's just the science lover in me talking. But before you dismiss this book about the lowly housefly because you're grossed out, consider everything the fly does for us: they recycle our rotten food, they help police determine when a crime occurred, and their speedy life cycle provides opportunities for some neat math questions! OK, so they spread an occasional deadly disease or two; they never claimed to be perfect! Flies just want a chance. So the next time you study life cycles, animals, or metamorphosis, try reading and learning about the common housefly in this book: *I Fly: The Buzz about Flies and How Awesome They Are* by Bridget Heos.

Prepared by:

Kellyanne Burbage, Sangaree Intermediate School, burbagek@bcschools.net

The Last Kids on Earth

Max Brallier

Viking Books for Young Readers, 2015

240 pages

SUMMARY:

The zombie apocalypse has hit Wakefield, but thirteen-year-old foster kid Jack Sullivan is ready! He assembles a monster fighting team with his best friend, Quint, a science whiz, and his former bully, Dirk, and his new pet monster, Rover, and together they team up to rescue June, the girl he had a crush on before the world ended. If the zombies weren't bad enough, there are also Vine Thingies, Winged Wretches, and worst of all, Blarg, a super intelligent monster with a personal vendetta against Jack. Jack and his tiny army shelter in a well-defended tree house by night and battle monsters by day in order to survive in this new world.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Almost Super, Marion Jensen

Space Case, Stuart Gibbs

Masterminds, Gordon Korman

WEBSITES:

Find out more about author Max Brallier on his website, <http://www.maxbrallier.com>.

Boy's Life: Book Zone, <http://bookzone.boystlife.org/author-max-brallier-talks-the-last-kids-on-earth/>, has an interview with the author, book summary and the first chapter online.

BOOKTALK:

If you love video games, zombies, monsters and books with cartoons, then this book is for you! Repeatedly described as a *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* meets the *Walking Dead*, *The Last Kids on Earth* is equal parts funny and scary as Jack Sullivan and his friends fight off an army of the undead, hordes of mutants, and a terrifyingly smart monster named Blarg while scavenging Cheetos and Mountain Dew from deserted convenience stores, designing new weapons for their tree house, and planning the heroic rescue of the girl Jack loves. Can they survive in a town overrun with monsters and no grown ups? Will Jack's former bully fight by his side? Will the girl he loves ever realize he exists? Find out when you read *The Last Kids on Earth*!

Prepared by:

Charlotte Evans, Ebenezer Avenue Elementary School, cevans@rhmail.org

Moving Target
Christina Diaz Gonzalez
Scholastic Inc., 2015
248 pages

SUMMARY:

Eighth grader Cassie Aroyo has moved from one college town to another her whole life because of her father's job. This time, her father's job takes them to Rome. While this should be an exciting time, Cassie is bored with her life, until her father picks her up from school one day in a panic. He tells her there are people after them and they must leave immediately. After her father is shot, he tells her she must leave him to find Brother Gregorio, a monk who is the only person she can trust. Cassie begins to learn about her past and how she is a descendant of an ancient bloodline that has power over the Spear of Destiny: an object that allows its controller to shape the future. Because of her connection with the spear, Cassie learns that she is a target of the Hastati, a secret organization that wants the spear for itself or will go to any lengths to make sure no one else gets it, including her. With her best friend at her side, she goes on the adventure of a lifetime to find the spear before the Hastati does.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Colossus Rises, Peter Lerangis,
Rowan and the Travelers, Emily Rodda
The Forbidden Stone, Tony Abbott
Gabriel Finley & the Raven's Riddle, George Hagen
The Dragon's Tooth, Nathan D. Wilson
A Dark Inheritance, Chris D'Lacey
Sword in the Stacks, Jen Swann Downey
Archie Greene and the Alchemists' Curse, D. D. Everest

WEBSITES:

Find out about author Christina Diaz Gonzalez on <http://www.christinagonzalez.com>. You can learn about her books, author visits, and discussion guides, and the author herself.

BOOKTALK:

Cassie Aroyo is an eighth grader who is bored with her life. That is until the day her whole world is torn apart when her father goes missing and she discovers she is the target of the Hastati, a secret organization whose purpose is to protect the Spear of Destiny. As events unfold, Cassie learns she is the descendant of an ancient bloodline of people and the last one left to be able to access the spear's powers. This makes Cassie a threat to the Hastati's purpose and they will do anything to find the spear and keep it out of the wrong hands. Anything. Including eliminating Cassie herself. As Cassie realizes she is truly a moving target, she goes on the run to find the Spear of Destiny. When she learns of its ability see different paths and to change destiny, she becomes even more determined to find the spear and save her father. Will she find the spear before the Hastati finds her? Will she be able to save her father? Find out in this exciting, adventurous story that is sure to change the way you see your own destiny.

Prepared by:
Karen Rogers, North Pointe Elementary, karenrogers@anderson5.net

A Night Divided

Jennifer A. Nielsen

Scholastic Inc., 2015

336 pages

SUMMARY:

In this historical novel that takes place during the rise of the Berlin Wall, twelve-year-old Gerta finds her family suddenly divided overnight. Living on the Soviet-controlled, eastern side of Germany, Gerta, her mother and her brother Fritz find themselves separated from Gerta's father and middle brother, who traveled west in search of work. Soon after, Gerta finds herself thinking forbidden thoughts of freedom. She hates being a prisoner in her own city under the watchful eyes of the East German soldiers with their guns. She longs to be with the rest of her family. A secret message from her father, hidden in a silly dance, gives Gerta hope and a plan for escape: tunneling to freedom out of East Berlin. Seeking help from her brother Fritz and facing deadly consequences, including hunger, exhaustion, and detection, Gerta learns that no one can be trusted. Getting caught will mean certain death. Will they find their way to freedom? Will the family be reunited, and if so, at what cost?

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY:

The War That Saved My Life, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

Arcady's Goal, Eugene Yelchin

On the Wings of Heroes, Richard Peck

Paper Wishes, Lois Sepahban

WEBSITES:

Scholastic, <http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/books/book-trailers/night-divided>

This book trailer by author Jennifer A. Nielsen explains the creation of *A Night Divided*.

Reading to Kids, <http://readingtokids.org/Books/BookView.php?bookID=00001278>

Includes a synopsis, discussion topics, vocabulary words, craft ideas, and special activities.

BOOKTALK:

If you like a fast-paced novel full of danger, excitement, and suspense then look no further. *A Night Divided* is the story of Gerta and her attempt to reunite her family, a family who became separated by a barbed wire fence guarded by soldiers with guns. When Gerta receives a secret message from her father on the western side of Berlin, she knows what she must do. Will she succeed or will hunger, exhaustion, and being possibly shot get the best of her?

Prepared by:

Cheryl Curtis, Chukker Creek Elementary, ccurtis@acpsd.net

Nooks and Crannies

Jessica Lawson

Simon & Shuster Books for Young Readers, 2016

352 pages

SUMMARY:

Sweet, shy Tabitha Crum, the neglected only child of two parents straight out of a Roald Dahl book, doesn't have a friend in the world—except for her pet mouse, Pemberley, whom she loves dearly. But on the day she receives one of six invitations to the country estate of wealthy Countess Camilla DeMoss, her life changes forever. Upon the children's arrival at the sprawling, possibly haunted mansion, it turns out the countess has a very big secret—one that will change their lives forever...

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl

Book Scavenger, Jennifer Chambliss

Curiosity House: The Case of the Shrunk Heads, Lauren Oliver

The Wollstonecraft Detective Agency: The Case of the Missing Moonstone, Jordan Stratford

WEBSITES

Check out Jessica Lawson's webpage at www.jessicalawsonbooks.com. There you will find information on the author, books, appearances, and other links.

Do Mice make nice pets? Find information on how to take care of a pet mouse. Check out the Humane Society's webpage at

http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/mice/tips/mice_as_pets.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/

BOOKTALK:

I got a special invite to Countess Camilla DeMoss's estate. Funny thing when I told Mummy and Daddy they dismissed it until they read they may receive money. What does the Countess want with six children? After arriving at the country estate, Pemberley and I know we need our wits to survive. One by one the kids are disappearing. Why does the Countess keep talking about keeping us here? Is it for money? Doesn't she have gobs of it? She's not at all like what's been written about her in the newspapers. Why is her staff afraid of her? Should we be afraid of her? I must use my powers of observation to solve that mystery. Things change when Pemberley and I discover the hidden passages. We've again relied on our powers of observation. The passages lead us through the house...but what do they mean? What does the key I got off the dead maid unlock? Will it help find the missing kids? Will it solve the Case of the Cruel Countess? Will it change my life? Find out in *Nooks and Crannies*!

Prepared by:

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Roller Girl
Victoria Jamieson
Dial Books for Young Readers, 2015
239 pages

SUMMARY:

For most of her twelve years, Astrid and her best friend Nicole have been inseparable. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. This begins the most difficult summer of Astrid's life as she struggles to keep up with the older girls at camp, hang on to the friend she feels slipping away, and cautiously embark on a new friendship. As the end of summer nears and her first roller derby bout (and junior high!) draws closer, Astrid realizes that maybe she is strong enough to handle the bout, a lost friendship, and middle school . . . in short, strong enough to be a roller girl.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY:

El Deafo, Cece Bell
Sisters, Raina Telegemeier
Sunny Side Up, Jennifer L. Holm

WEBSITES:

Located on Victoria Jamieson's webpage, <http://www.victoriajamieson.com/>, you will find information about the author and a free e-book on how she made *Roller Girl*.
Information on Columbia, South Carolina's roller derby club: <https://columbiarollerderby.com/> . They have junior rollers too!

BOOKTALK:

Astrid is used to her mom's "evenings of cultural entertainment". She and her best friend Nicole have been dragged along to operas, art galleries, and poetry readings - usually stuff that bores Astrid out of her mind. But one night, Astrid's mom takes her and Nicole to a roller derby...and Astrid's life is changed forever. Roller derby is a sport played on roller skates. It's fast and INTENSE. The ladies on roller derby teams aren't afraid to get knocked around and they all have cool roller derby names like Scald Eagle, Scrappy Go Lucky, and Rainbow Bite. As soon as she sees it, Astrid knows she wants to try it. However, the game does not come easily to Astrid. She stumbles and falls; gets bruises and bumps. Many players would throw in the towel. Does Astrid have what it takes to see this roller derby thing through?

Prepared by:
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Ruby on the Outside

Nora Raleigh Baskin

Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2015

163 pages

SUMMARY:

Eleven-year-old Ruby Danes really wants someone in whom she can confide. But, with her mother in prison, Ruby has always felt like her life is divided into two worlds, one on the inside and one on the outside. With the exception of her aunt, life on the inside is everything Ruby has been unable to share with anyone. It's life inside the prison where she goes to visit her mother and all her internal feelings associated with having an incarcerated parent. Life on the outside is where Ruby would like to assume a normal life, one with a best friend who comes over for dinner and shares everything. When Margalit Tipps moves into the condo complex and becomes the closest friend she has ever known, Ruby is ecstatic. That is, until, both of her worlds begin to collide and she risks losing the best friend she has always wanted.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

All Rise for the Honorable Perry T. Cook, Leslie Connor

Visiting Day, Jacqueline Woodson

Knock, Knock, Daniel Beaty

WEBSITES:

Nora Raleigh Baskin, <http://www.norabaskin.com>, provides more information about the author. The page for *Ruby on the Outside* under the [Nora's Books](#) link features a video interview with Baskin talking about writing the book and what inspired her. The [Teacher Guides](#) link provides discussion questions for all of the author's works, including *Ruby on the Outside*.

[Just Us](#), a website created by New Zealand organization Pillars, is designed specifically for kids with a parent in prison. Compiling web content from various sources, the site provides students with an understanding of the shared experience and struggles of children with incarcerated parents.

BOOKTALK:

Everyone entering middle school needs a best friend. At least, that's what eleven-year-old Ruby Danes wants most. So, when Margalit Tipps moves into the condo complex where Ruby lives with her aunt, she hopes she will find her first genuine friend. But, she has a secret she's never told anyone her age. Her mother is in prison. Why? Ruby doesn't remember and has avoided finding out until her new friend's family history seems to coincide with the very events that put her mother in prison. Will she be able to keep her secret? Or, will she lose the first true-blue friend she has ever had? And, how will Ruby deal with knowing the truth about her mother? Find out by reading *Ruby on the Outside* by Nora Raleigh Baskins.

Prepared by:

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The Safest Lie
Angela Cerrito
Holiday House, 2015
175 pages

SUMMARY:

Nine-year-old Anna Bauman is one of the Jewish children whom Jolanta (code name for the real-life World War II resistance spy Irena Sendler) smuggles out of the Warsaw ghetto. Anna, given a new name and false papers, must keep her true identity secret, first at a Catholic orphanage and then with a foster family. Ironically, she discovers that the most difficult part isn't remembering her new identity, but trying not to forget the old one.

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

Jars of Hope: How One Woman Helped Save 2,500 Children During the Holocaust, Jennifer Roy
Irena's Jars of Secrets, Marcia K Vaughan
Irena's Children: a True Story of Courage, Tilar J. Mazzeo adapted by Mary Cronk Farrell
Yellow Star, Jennifer Roy
The War that Saved My Life, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

WEBSITES:

Angela Cerrito Website, <http://www.angelacerrito.com/educators-guide.html> an educator's Guide and additional information is provided.
Irena Sendler Story, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opc0yAhbVNk> a brief video about the life of Irena Sendler.

BOOKTALK:

Nine-year-old Anna Bauman understands the dangers of being Jewish in Nazi occupied Poland. Surviving in the Warsaw Ghetto, waking each morning hungry and scared of what the day will bring, Anna knows that she must constantly be on guard. In order to save her, Anna's parents insist that she become Anna Karwolska an eight-year-old orphan Catholic girl. Anna is smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto and begins her secret life, one that is filled with the constant threat of discovery. Read *The Safest Lie* by Angela Cerrito to discover if Anna is able to keep her secrets safe and survive the war.

Prepared by
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Serafina and the Black Cloak

Robert Beatty
Disney-Hyperion, 2015
293 pages

SUMMARY:

Serafina lives with her father in the basement of Biltmore Estate. He is a maintenance man working for the wealthy Vanderbilt family; Serafina is his secret. So that she remains unseen, she roams the mansion only at night. Why must her father keep her hidden? Even Serafina does not know. Serafina risks discovery when she is the only witness to an otherworldly abduction of a child visiting the Vanderbilts and realizes that she must take action. What lengths will Serafina go to solve the mystery and what will she learn about herself in the process?

IF YOU LIKE THIS BOOK, TRY...

Serafina and the Twisted Staff, Robert Beatty
The Wolves of Willoughby Chase, Joan Aiken
The Accidental Afterlife of Thomas Marsden, Emma Trevayne

WEBSITES

More information about the author and the next book in the series can be found at <http://robert-beatty.com/>

This Wikipedia entry, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wampus_cat, provides a background for the legend of the Wampus Cat of Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee.

The Biltmore Estate, <http://www.biltmore.com/>, and its surrounding forest, serves as the setting for this book.

BOOKTALK:

Imagine that your life is a secret. Imagine not being allowed to have friends or being allowed to play outside. That is what life is like for Serafina, the daughter of a maintenance man working at one of the largest mansions in the world. Her father insists that she stay hidden in the secret apartment he has created in the basement. Serafina doesn't seem to mind, though. At night she has the run of the mansion and is an expert at creeping quietly through all parts of the house. On one of her nighttime prowls, however, she sees a terrible crime committed, and knows that she has to do something about it. Who can she tell if she is supposed to stay hidden? Will she disobey her dad? Will she solve the mystery?

Prepared by:
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Tucky Jo and Little Heart

Patricia Polacco

Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books, 2015

48 pages

SUMMARY:

Tucky Jo was the “kid from Kentucky” when he enlisted in the Army at fifteen-years-old. Being the youngest recruit in the Pacific during World War II was tough, but he finds a friend in a little girl who helps him soothe his bug bites, and he gets to know her family and shares his rations with them. Although the little girl doesn’t speak English, Tucky Jo and Little Heart share the language of kindness. Many years later, Tucky Jo and Little Heart meet again, and an act of kindness is returned when it’s needed the most. This touching picture book is based on a true story.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Pink and Say, Patricia Polacco

My Secret War: the World War II Diary of Madeline Beck, Mary Pope Osborne

Remember World War II: Kids who survived tell their stories, Dorinda M. Nicholson

World War II: Visual Encyclopedia, Brian Williams

Learning about World War I and World War II with Arts and Crafts, Paul C. Challen

One Thousand Tracings: Healing the Wounds of World War II, Lita Judge

A Boy at War, Harry Mazer

WEBSITES:

TeacherVision, www.teachervision.com/world-war-2/teacher-resources/6680.html, Lesson plans, activities, suggested literature about study of World War II.

KidsKonnect, www.kidskonnect.com/history/world-war-ii, Facts and information on World War II, as well as activites to use in teaching a unit.

Scholastic, <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/home/>, has Eyewitness interviews, lesson plans, and other resources that help students discover the history of World War II. Simply search World War II to find a variety of resources.

BOOKTALK:

Friendship, loyalty, and kindness are abundant in this World War II picture book based on a true story by author Patricia Polacco. Tucky Jo, a fifteen year old kid from Kentucky, enlists in the army as the youngest recruit in the Pacific during World War II. He finds a friend in a little girl he calls “Little Heart”, who helps him by giving him something to soothe his bug bites. After this kindness, Tucky Jo shares some of his rations with Little Heart and her family. Many years later Tucky Jo and Little Heart meet again in another situation, and another act of kindness between them happens. This is truly a touching story.

Prepared by:

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