

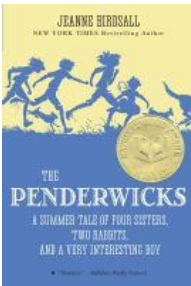
## CONTEMPORARY READS

Realistic Book Recommendations

Curios

### Recommended for 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade and Up

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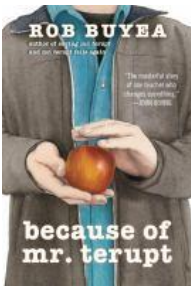
#### ***The Penderwicks:***

***A Summer Tale of four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy***

**By Jeanne Birdsall**

**J/Fic/Birdsall**

While vacationing with their widowed father in the Berkshire Mountains, four lovable sisters, ages four through twelve, share adventures with a local boy, much to the dismay of his snobbish mother.



#### ***Because of Mr. Terupt***

**By Rob Buyea**

**J/Fic/Buyea**

It's the start of fifth grade for seven kids at Snow Hill School. There's Jessica, the new girl, smart and perceptive, who's having a hard time fitting in; Alexia, a bully, your friend one second, your enemy the next; Peter, class prankster and troublemaker; Luke, the brain; Danielle, who never stands up for herself; shy Anna, whose home situation makes her an outcast; and Jeffrey, who hates school. Only Mr. Terupt, their new and energetic teacher, seems to know how to deal with them all.



#### ***Because of Winn-Dixie***

**by Kate DiCamillo**

**J/Fic/DiCamillo**

Ten-year-old India Opal Buloni describes her first summer in the town of Naomi, Florida, and all the good things that happen to her because of her big ugly dog Winn-Dixie.



#### ***Out of My Mind***

**By Sharon Draper**

**J/Fic/Draper**

A brilliant, impatient fifth-grader with cerebral palsy, considered by many to be mentally challenged, discovers a technological device that will allow her to speak for the first time.



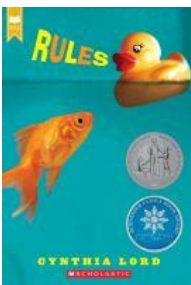
***One for the Murphys***  
by Lydia Mullaly Hunt  
J/Fic/Hunt

Growing up in Las Vegas with her fun-loving mother, Carly has learned to be tough. But she never expected a betrayal that would land her in a foster care. When she's placed with the Murphys, a lively family with three boys, she's blindsided. Do happy families really exist? But just when she's feeling like she could truly be one of the Murphys, news from her mother shakes her world.



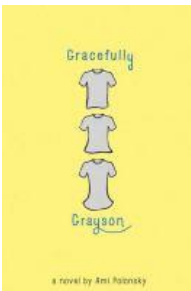
***Ungifted***  
by Gordon Korman  
J/Fic/Korman

Due to an administrative mix-up, troublemaker Donovan Curtis is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction, a special program for gifted and talented students, after pulling a major prank at middle school.



***Rules***  
by Cynthia Lord  
J/Fic/Lord

Frustrated at life with an autistic brother, twelve-year-old Catherine longs for a normal existence, but her world is further complicated by a friendship with a young paraplegic.



***Gracefully Grayson***  
by Amy Polonsky  
J/Fic/Polonsky

Alone at home, twelve-year-old Grayson Sender glows, immersed in beautiful thoughts and dreams. But at school, Grayson grasps at shadows, determined to fly under the radar. Because Grayson has been holding onto a secret for what seems like forever: "he" is a girl on the inside, stuck in the wrong gender's body. The weight of this secret is crushing, but leaving it behind would mean facing ridicule, scorn, and rejection. Despite these dangers, Grayson's true self itches to break free.



***After Ever After***  
by Jordan Sonnenblick  
J/Fic/Sonnenblick

Jeffrey isn't a little boy with cancer anymore. He's a teen who's in remission, but life still feels fragile. The aftereffects of treatment have left Jeffrey with an inability to be a great student or to walk without limping. His parents still worry about him. His older brother, Steven, lost it and took off to Africa to be in a drumming circle and "find himself." Jeffrey has a little soul searching to do, too, which begins with his escalating anger at Steven, an old friend who is keeping something secret, and a girl who is way out of his league but who thinks he's cute.

## Recommended for 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade and Up

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### ***Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda***

by Becky Albertalli

Y/Fic/Albertalli

Sixteen-year-old, not-so-openly-gay Simon Spier is blackmailed into playing wingman for his classmate or else his sexual identity—and that of his pen pal—will be revealed.

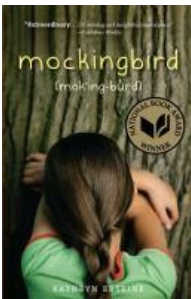


### ***Hope Was Here***

by Joan Bauer

Y/Fic/Bauer

When sixteen-year-old Hope and the aunt who has raised her move from Brooklyn to Mulhoney, Wisconsin, to work as waitress and cook in the Welcome Stairways diner, they become involved with the diner owner's political campaign to oust the town's corrupt mayor.



### ***Mockingbird***

By Katherine Erskine

J/Fic/Erskine

Ten-year-old Caitlin, who has Asperger's Syndrome, struggles to understand emotions, show empathy, and make friends at school, while at home she seeks closure by working on a project with her father.

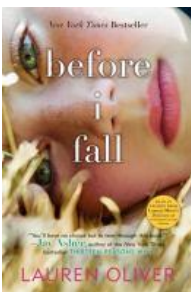


### ***Rain Reign***

by Ann M. Martin

J/Fic/Martin

Rose Howard is obsessed with homonyms, and she purposely gave her dog Rain a name with two homonyms (Reign, Rein). Not everyone understands Rose's obsessions, her rules, and the other things that make her different—not her teachers, not other kids, and not her single father. When a storm hits their rural town, rivers overflow, the roads are flooded, and Rain goes missing—now, Rose has to find her dog, even if it means leaving her rules behind.



### ***Before I Fall***

by Lauren Oliver

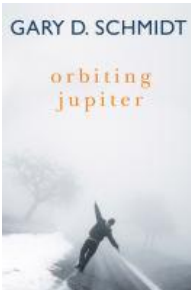
Y/Fic/Oliver

After she dies in a car crash, teenaged Samantha relives the day of her death over and over again until, on the seventh day, she finally discovers a way to save herself.



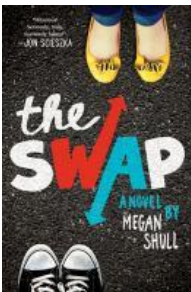
***Ghost***  
by Jason Reynolds  
J/Fic/Reynolds

Ghost has a crazy natural talent, but no formal training. If he can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons, all starting with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill.



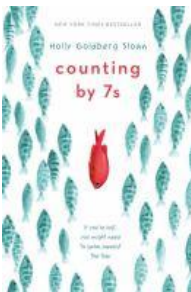
***Orbiting Jupiter***  
by Gary D. Schmidt  
Y/Fic/Schmidt

Jack, 12, tells the gripping story of Joseph, 14, who joins his family as a foster child. Damaged in prison, Joseph wants nothing more than to find his baby daughter, Jupiter, whom he has never seen. When Joseph has begun to believe he'll have a future, he is confronted by demons from his past that force a tragic sacrifice.



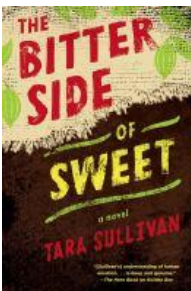
***The Swap***  
by Megan Shull  
Y/Fic/Shull

When seventh-grader Ellie, who is having best-friend problems, and eighth-grader Jack, who is under tremendous pressure from his father, switch bodies and lives, they learn a great deal about themselves and the opposite sex.



***Counting by 7s***  
by Holly Goldberg Sloan  
Y/Fic/Sloan

Twelve-year-old genius and outsider Willow Chance must figure out how to connect with other people and find a surrogate family for herself after her parents are killed in a car accident.

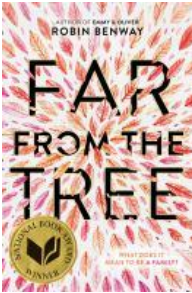


***The Bitter Side of Sweet***  
by Tara Sullivan  
Y/Fic/Sullivan

Kept as forced labor on a chocolate plantation in the Ivory Coast, Amadou and his younger brother Seydou had given up hope, until a young girl arrives at the camp who rekindles the urge to escape.

## Recommended for High School

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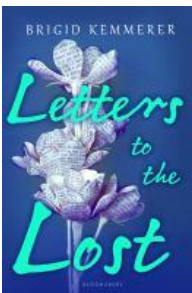


### ***Far from the Tree***

**by Robin Benway**

**Y/Fic/Benway**

After getting pregnant at sixteen and putting her baby up for adoption, Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, goes looking for her biological family. She finds an older brother and younger sister, but she struggles to find the balance between her cautious joy at discovering two brand-new family members and the gaping loneliness that lingers in the space her daughter once held.

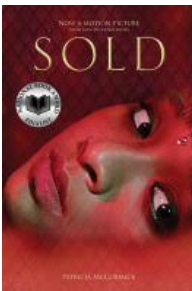


### ***Letters to the Lost***

**by Brigid Kemmerer**

**Y/Fic/Kemmerer**

Juliet Young has always written letters to her mother, a world famous photojournalist—even after her mother's death, she leaves letters at her grave. When Declan finds a haunting letter left beside a grave, he can't resist the urge to write back. Soon, he is sharing his pain with a perfect stranger. When real life interferes with their secret life of letters, Juliet and Declan discover truths that might tear them apart.



### ***Sold***

**by Patricia McCormick**

**Y/Fic/McCormick**

Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid only to find that she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape.

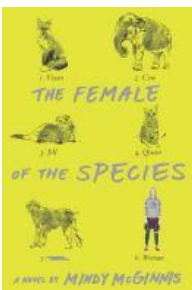


### ***I, Claudia***

**by Mary McCoy**

**Y/Fic/McCoy**

Over the course of her high school years, awkward Claudia McCarthy finds herself unwittingly drawn into the dark side of her school's student government, with dire consequences.

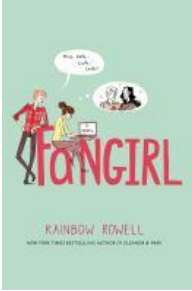


### ***The Female of the Species***

**by Mindy McGinnis**

**Y/Fic/McGinnis**

Alex Craft knows how to kill someone. And she doesn't feel bad about it. When her older sister, Anna, was murdered three years ago and the killer walked free, Alex uncaged the language she knows best. The language of violence.



***Fangirl***  
**by Rainbow Rowell**  
**Y/Fic/Rowell**

Cath is a Simon Snow fan. Okay, the whole world is a Simon Snow fan, but for Cath, being a fan is her life—and she's really good at it. She and her twin sister, Wren, ensconced themselves in the Simon Snow series when they were just kids; it's what got them through their mother leaving.



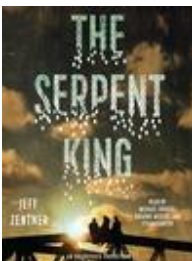
***The Hate U Give***  
**by Angie Thomas**  
**Y/Fic/Thomas**

Sixteen-year-old Starr Carter moves between two worlds: the poor neighborhood where she lives and the fancy suburban prep school she attends. The uneasy balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Khalil was unarmed. Soon afterward, his death is a national headline.



***It's Kind of a Funny Story***  
**by Ned Vizzini**  
**Y/Fic/Vizzini**

Sometimes what's in your head isn't as crazy as you think. That's certainly true for Craig, a stressed-out teenager who checks himself into a mental health clinic for some time out. What he finds instead is an unlikely mentor, a potential new romance and an opportunity to begin anew.



***The Serpent King***  
**by Jeff Zentner**  
**Y/Fic/Zentner**

The son of a Pentecostal preacher faces his personal demons as he and his two outcast friends try to make it through their senior year of high school in rural Forrestville, Tennessee without letting the small-town culture destroy their creative spirits and sense of self.

**Read, loved, and recommended by your librarians.**



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