



Young Reader's Choice Awards

YRCA 2020 Book Profiles

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Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow by Jessica Townsend

What's it about? Morrigan Crow, a cursed child, is destined to die on her 11th birthday until a mysterious stranger named Jupiter North helps her escape to the magical world of Nevermoor. Here Morrigan competes to join the prestigious Wondrous Society and discovers her magical talent.

Read-alikes? Harry Potter series, Percy Jackson series, and The Mysterious Benedict Society.

If you like adventure, magic, fantasy, friendship and misfits, then you will like this book!

Reading level: 790L

Suggested Age Range: 8-13 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Jessica worked at the Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo and was the editor of the children's magazine *Crikey!* *Nevermoor: The Trials of Morrigan Crow* is the first book in the trilogy and will be soon be adapted into a film.

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgUDaF5dfpo>

Refugee by Alan Gratz

What's it about? The interconnected stories of a boy from 1930s Nazi Germany, a girl from Cuba in 1994, and a boy from modern-day Syria, all of whom are fleeing from certain death in their own countries.

There is quite a bit of violence/death in this book due to the situations the characters are in.
Note to teachers! Scholastic recommends it for grades 6-8.

Read-alikes? *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park, *Illegal* by Eoin (OWE-un) Colfer, *Lifeboat 12* by Susan Hood, *Prisoner B-3087* by Alan Gratz with Ruth and Jack Gruener, *The Red Pencil* by Andrea Davis Pinkney

If you like history, thrillers, refugee stories, or stories of resilience, then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 800L

Suggested Age Range: 10-14 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: In addition to writing books, plays, magazine articles, and tv shows, Alan Gratz has taught catapult-building to middle-schoolers and written more than 6,000 radio commercials.

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89sO3y75hF8>

Restart by Gordon Korman

What's it about? A school bully and football star loses his memory after falling off a roof. As he learns about himself, he finds out he may not like the person he was.

Read-alikes? Ms. Bixby's Last Day by John David Anderson, The Secret Sheriff of Sixth Grade by Jordan Sonnenblick, Swindle by Gordon Korman

If you like realistic stories about bullies, Jr. High, mystery, YouTube videos, and self-discovery, you will like this book!

Reading Level: 730L

Suggested Age Range: 9-14 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Gordon Korman wrote his first book, This Can't Be Happening at Macdonald Hall, when he was just 12 years old! He is also the author of Swindle, Slacker, and The 39 Clues. He has written more than 80 books!

Introduction by the Author: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rf56kldZo78>

The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora by Pablo Cartaya (Car-TYE-ah)

What's it about? 13-year-old Arturo finds himself falling in love and fighting to protect his family's beloved Cuban restaurant from a seedy land developer in a summer filled with laughs, poetry, and great food!

Read-a-likes? Clayton Byrd Goes Underground by Rita Williams-Garcia.

Reading level: 750L

Suggested Age Range: 10-14 (Kirkus reviews)

If you like funny books about family, friendship, community, food, multi-culturalism, and poetry, then you will like this book!

Introduction by the Author: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t-Lujv36Wc>

The Pants Project by Cat Clarke

What's it about? Liv's school institutes a policy insisting all girls wear skirts, but Liv doesn't identify as a girl and isn't comfortable with the new rule.

Read-alikes? The main character has a unique take on the world, similar to Auggie in Wonder by R.J. Palacio.

If you like heartfelt, funny books that make the world a better place, then pick this up and get reading!

Reading Level: 710L

Suggested Age Range: 9-12 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Cat Clarke lives in Edinburgh, Scotland and decided she was going to be a writer when she was 13.

The Tiny Hero of Ferny Creek Library by Linda Bailey

What's it about? Eddie never realized how important his love of reading would be, until the day he had to become every character he had ever read about to save the day!

Read-Alikes: Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library (previous YRCA), Flora and Ulysses (previous YRCA), Charlotte's Web (previous YRCA), Stuart Little

If you like Fantasy, Books About Books, and Adventure stories about unlikely heroes then you'll love this book!

Reading Level: 480L

Suggested Age Range: 5-12 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Bailey (from Vancouver) has written more than 30 kids, including the bestselling picture books about Stanley the dog. Illustrator Victoria Jamieson - Roller Girl – winner of the 2018 Junior YRCA

The Wizards of Once by Cressida Cowell

What's it about? Xar and Wish embark on an exciting adventure in an ancient, magical time full of Wizards, Warriors, Giants, and Sprites!

Read-Alikes: Harry Potter, The Hobbit, How to Train Your Dragon, The Girl Who Drank the Moon, Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Eragon

If you like books about fantasy, magic, and adventure, then check out this book!

Reading Level: 920L

Suggested Age Range: 9-13 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Cressida Cowell (author of How to Train Your Dragon) has filled this book with her own whimsical illustrations. She grew up on a small, uninhabited island off the coast of Scotland, where she was convinced she lived with magical creatures. We meet many of these creatures in her books!

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A68AYuCr3PY>

Wishtree by Katherine Applegate

What's it about? This is a book about welcoming newcomers - written from the perspective of a two hundred year old tree, whose best friend is a crow named Bongo, and who has a thing or two to teach the humans.

Read-alikes? The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate

If you like heartfelt stories about animals, you will like this book!

Reading level: 590L

Suggested Age Range: 8-12 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Katherine Applegate thinks being a writer is the best job on the planet.

Book Trailer: <https://youtu.be/-P5TSKKBlyo>



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Caraval by Stephanie Garber

What's it about? Scarlett receives an invitation to a dangerous and magical game.

Read-alikes? The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern; Neil Gaiman; Three Dark Crowns by Kendare Blake

If you like romance, magic, and adventure then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 830L

Suggested Age Range: 14 and up (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Stephanie Garber wrote five books before she sold *Caraval* to a publisher.

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDE89bxuTY4>

Exo by Fonda Lee

What's it about? Donovan is kidnapped by a resistance group fighting against the alien overlords who've controlled Earth for a century.

Read-alikes? *Divergent* by Veronica Roth

If you like science fiction then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 810L

Suggested Age Range: 12-18 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Fonda Lee wrote her first book on the school bus in the fifth grade.

Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus by Dusti Bowling

What is it about? Aven is a girl who was born with no arms, and this story tells about her move across the country and her new friendship with Connor; together they must solve a mystery.

Read-Alikes? Wonder by R. J. Palacio

If you like realistic fiction, mystery, diverse characters, books about characters with disabilities, humour, you will like this book!

Reading Level: 700L

Suggested Age Range: 9-13 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: The sequel came out in September (2019)! The author lives in Arizona with her family, a dozen tarantulas, a gopher snake named Burrito, and a cockatiel named Cilantro.

Introduction by the Author: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5jj_iBDL2s

Invictus by Ryan Graudin

What is it about? Time travelling treasure thieves find family in each other and save the world.

Read-Alike... Passenger by Alexandra Bracken, Illuminae Files by Amie Kaufman, The Girl From Everywhere by Heilig, Heidi What Goes Up by Katie Kennedy.

If you like Time travel, Treasure Hunting, Multi Universe, Adventure, Guardians of the Galaxy you will like this!

Reading Level: 760L

Suggested Age Range: 14-adult (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Ryan Graudin is the award-winning author of six young adult novels, including the Carnegie nominated Wolf by Wolf duology, Invictus and The Walled City.

Blood Rose Rebellion by Rosalyn Eves

What's it about? Anna Arden has a magic ability to shatter spells. Revolutionaries want her to shatter the Binding – a spell keeping noble elites the only ones to have access to magic and rule nations.

Read-alikes? Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard

If you like Revolution, magic, fantasy, historical fiction you will like this book.

Reading Level: 750L

Suggested Age Range: 13-15 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Rosalyn Eves lives in Southern Utah where she enjoys hiking through the splendid landscapes and dislikes housework on principle.

Saints and Misfits by S.K. Ali

What's it about? Janna is assaulted by a respected boy in her community and she struggles to figure out where she belongs.

Read-alikes? Does My Head Look Big in This? By Randa Abdel-Fattah

If you like realistic drama and diverse characters you will like this book.

Reading Level: 710L

Suggested Age Range: 12-18 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: S. K. Ali's family is consistently listed in the 500 Most Influential Muslims in the world.

Stranger than Fanfiction by Chris Colfer

What's it about? A teenage TV celebrity joins four mega fans on a cross country road trip adventure, but he has a big secret he's keeping from the world. The book has great messages about empathy, acceptance, and true friendship.

If you like books about humour, friendship, roadtrips, diverse and LGBTQ+ characters, misfits, coming of age, you will like this book!

Read-alikes? Simon versus the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli, Carry On by Rainbow Rowell

Reading Level: 880L

Suggested Age Range: 15-17 (Kirkus review)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: The author Chris Colfer is a TV star and talented singer. He got his start on the show Glee. He is also the author of the popular Land of Stories book series.

The Librarian of Auschwitz by Antonio Iturbe

What's it about? The true story of Dita Kraus, who survived the Auschwitz Extermination Camp.

If you like books about real-life stories, WWII history, stories of human survival, then try this book!

Read-alikes? The Diary of Anne Frank, The Book Thief

Reading Level: 940L

Suggested Age Range: 13-16 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: The book was originally written in Spanish and translated to English. The author met Dita Kraus and visited Auschwitz in preparation for writing this book.



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American Street by Ibi Zoboi (EE-bee zoe-BOY)

What's it about? Fabiola Toussaint moves from Haiti to Detroit. She thought she would live a peaceful life here, but she quickly gets caught up in the crime around her and learns of a shocking family secret.

Read-alikes? The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas, The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo, You Bring the Distant Near by Mitali Perkins

If you like gritty stories about growing up, culture shock, and just a little bit of magic, you will like this book!

Reading Level: HL690L

Suggested Age Range: 14 and up (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Ibi Zoboi herself was born in Haiti and immigrated to New York. She now lives in Brooklyn with her three children, her husband, and three pet turtles named Lucky, Jade, and Leo. It's a messy house.

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5idpSk916ns>

One of Us is Lying by Karen McManus

What's it about? A student dies after an allergy attack in detention and the other students are suspects.

Read-alikes? The Pretty Little Liars series by Sara Shepherd

If you like thrillers, then you will like this book!

Reading Level 730L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Karen McManus wrote this book in two months. She only spent two more months editing. That's fast!

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Frgu8A-HruA>

That Inevitable Victorian Thing by E.K. Johnston

What's it about? The setting is Ontario in a near-future world. Princess Margaret, Helena, and August discover they share an unusual bond and maybe a chance to change the world—just like the first Queen Victoria.

Read-alikes? The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue by Mackenzi Lee, The Upside of Unrequited by Becky Albertalli , Wild Beauty: A Novel by Anna-Marie McLemore

If you like English Monarchy, LGBTQIA, romance, alternate history then you will love this!

Reading Level 980L

Suggested Age Range: 14 - adult (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: E.K. Johnston is the author of past YRCA title EXIT Pursued by a Bear

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

What's it about? After Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her friend at the hands of a police officer, she must make the difficult and dangerous decision to tell the truth about what happened that night.

Read-alikes? Dear Martin by Nic Stone; Tyler Johnson Was Here by Jay Coles; Piecing Me Together by Renée Watson

If you like stories about social justice and human rights, you will like this book.

Reading Level 590L

Suggested Age Range: 14 and up (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: The Hate U Give is Angie Thomas' first novel. She is a former teen rapper and holds an unofficial degree in Hip Hop.

Movie Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MM8OkVT0hw>

The Marrow Thieves by Cherie Dimaline

What's it about? In a dystopian future, a young Métis boy, Frenchie, comes of age while fleeing capture.

Read-alikes? Orleans by Sherri L. Smith, Killer of Enemies by Joseph Bruchac, Shadows Cast by Stars by Catherine Knutsson, Ship Breaker by Paolo Bacigalupi, Mockingjay by Suzanne Collins, The Knife of Never Letting Go by Patrick Ness, Internment by Samira Ahmed, Dark Inside by Jeyn Roberts, Life as We Knew it by Susan Beth Pfeffer

If you like Indigenous stories, stories involving global warming, dreams or survival you may enjoy this book! Apocalyptic fiction; Canadian fiction; Dystopian fiction; Science fiction, Band of survivors; Climate change apocalypse

Reading Level 810L

Suggested Age Range: 14-adult (Kirkus reviews)

Something interesting about the author or the book: The epidemic of youth suicide in Indigenous communities preyed on Cherie Dimaline's mind. But what could she do to make a difference? Her solution: Write a novel where young, Indigenous people save the world. She's the first Aboriginal writer in residence for the Toronto Public Library. Nominated for Canada Reads, Trillium Book Award, White Pine Award and Governor General's Literary Award

Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OODJLFEZ-4Y>

They Both Die at the End by Adam Silvera

What's it about? Mateo and Rufus meet on the last day of their lives with one mission: to live a whole lifetime in a single day.

Read-alikes? The Machine of Death by Ryan North and others; Vanilla by Billy Merrell; Release by Patrick Ness

If you like post-apocalyptic, futuristic themes, books about emotional human connection, or books with LGBTQ protagonists, give this book a shot.

Reading Level 870L

Suggested Age Range: 13-adult (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the author or the book: Adam Silvera runs an online book club with three of his friends (who also happen to be authors) that features a monthly reading challenge with the aim of signal-boosting lesser-known but excellent books. Check out www.readbeckminavidera.wordpress.com to take part.

Turtles All The Way Down by John Green

What's it about? 16 year old Aza suffers from anxiety and OCD. Together with her friend Daisy, she sets out to solve a mystery of a disappearance and get a reward. Along the way she falls in love, but her mental health struggles continue to affect her.

Read-alikes? Challenger Deep by Neal Shusterman, All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven, Finding Audrey by Sophie Kinsella, OCDaniel by Wesley King.

If you like realistic fiction, books about mental health and anxiety disorders you will enjoy this.

Reading Level 840L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the book or author: John Green has OCD so this story was very personal for him. He also wrote the YRCA winner *The Fault in our Stars*. He hosts a podcast with his brother called *Dear Hank and John*.

Wintersong by S. Jae-Jones

What's it about? Elizabeth Vogler helps shoulder the burden of running her family's inn and caring for her violist prodigy brother. When the Goblin King takes her younger sister Kathe, Elizabeth must journey to the goblin realm to save her. The Goblin King agrees to free Kathe in exchange for Elizabeth's hand in marriage.

Read-alikes? *Court of Thorns and Roses* – Sarah J Maas

If you like magic, fantasy, dark themes you will like this book.

Reading Level 710L

Suggested Age Range: 14 and up (Kirkus reviews)

Something cool/quirky/interesting about the book or author: S. Jae-Jones is a voracious and indiscriminate reader, a cuddler of baby harp seals, avid traveler and not so secret goth.