



Young Reader's Choice Awards

YRCA 2021 Book Profiles

Table of Contents

YRCA 2021 Junior Book Profiles	1
Sweep: The Story of a Girl and her Monster by Jonathan Auxier.....	1
Granted by John David Anderson.....	1
Positively Izzy by Terri Libenson.....	2
Small Spaces by Katherine Arden	2
The Serpent's Secret by Sayantani DasGupta.....	3
Wings of Fire, The Graphic Novel Series: The Dragonet Prophecy by Tui Sutherland.....	3
Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire by John August.....	4
Inkling by Kenneth Oppel.....	4
YRCA 2021 Intermediate Book Profiles	5
The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor	5
No Fixed Address by Susin Nielsen.....	5
Impostors by Scott Westerfeld.....	6
City of Ghosts by Victoria Schwab.....	6
TBH, This Is So Awkward by Lisa Greenwald.....	7
Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram.....	7
Ash Princess by Laura Sebastian	8
The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo	8
YRCA 2021 Senior Book Profiles	9
I Am Still Alive by Kate Alice Marshall.....	9
Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi.....	9
Dry by Neal and Jarrod Shusterman.....	10
Sadie by Courtney Summers.....	10
A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi.....	11
Five Feet Apart by Rachael Lippincott	11
The Cruel Prince by Holly Black	12
Dear Evan Hansen by Val Emmich.....	12



Young Reader's Choice Awards

YRCA 2021 Junior Book Profiles

Sweep: The Story of a Girl and her Monster by Jonathan Auxier

What's it about? Eleven-year-old Nan Sparrow is a struggling chimney sweep in Victorian London who has escaped her abusive master with the help of her ash covered monster

Read-alikes: The Invention of Hugo Cabret by Brian Selznick, Wolf Hollow by Lauren Wolk, Liesl & Po by Lauren Oliver, Ophelia and the Marvelous Boy by Karen Foxlee

If you like magic or history, then this is the book for you!

Reading level: 630L

Suggested Age Range: 8-12 (Kirkus reviews, Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author: Jonathan Auxier loves yoyos so much that he has reviews of different models on his website, as well as an instructional video!

Author Video: [Click here to watch the author video](#)

Granted by John David Anderson

What's it about? A fairy ventures into the human world for the first time to grant a very special wish.

Read-alikes: Bob by Rebecca Stead & Wendy Mass, Out of the Wild Night by Blue Balliett, Upside-Down Magic by Sarah Mlynowski, The Night Fairy by Laura Amy Schlitz

If you like adventure, magic, fairies, and overcoming challenges, you will like this book!

Reading Level: 800L

Suggested Age Range: 9-12 (Kirkus Reviews); 8-12 (Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author: John David Anderson likes to make and play his own board games!

Positively Izzy by Terri Libenson

What's it about? On the day of the school talent show, the lives of shy Bri and dreamer Izzy converge to create an event even more dramatic than either could imagine.

Read-alikes: Big Nate: In a Class by Himself by Lincoln Peirce, Click by Kayla Miller, Making Friends by Kristen Gudsruk

If you like comics and graphic novels with awkward, but likeable characters, you'll enjoy this book!

Reading Level: 390L

Suggested Age Range: 9-12 (Kirkus reviews)

Something about the author and book: Terri Libenson says "I'm pescatarian, which means the only meat I eat is fish. BUT I'm a huge foodie and love to eat...a LOT. I like eating all kinds of ethnic food, but my favorite still comes down to french fries. I could eat them all day. I don't. But I would." Positively Izzy is the second book in the Emmie & Friends series.

Book Trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

Small Spaces by Katherine Arden

What's it about? Eleven-year-old Ollie must solve a hundred-year-old mystery to save her classmates from the sinister "smiling man" who sends his servants out at night to claim the living.

Read-alikes: The Graveyard Book and Coraline by Neil Gaiman, The Girl in the Locked Room by Mary Downing Hahn, The Night Gardener by Jonathan Auxier, and Doll Bones by Holly Black

If you like books that are creepy, suspenseful, and fast-paced, then you will like this book!

Reading level: HL570L

Suggested Age Range: 8-13 (Kirkus reviews)

Something about the author: Katherine Arden is fluent in French and Russian and originally wanted to be an interpreter. She started writing her first book while working on a Macadamia nut farm in Hawaii.

The Serpent's Secret by Sayantani DasGupta

What's it about? Twelve-year-old Kiranmala is ripped from her comfortable life in New Jersey on a journey to a faraway kingdom to rescue her parents and discover who she really is.

Read-alikes: The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone by J.K. Rowling, The Savage Fortress by Sarwal Chadda.

If you like fast paced books packed with adventure and mythology, you'll love this book!

Reading Level: 730L

Suggested Age Range: 8-12 (Kirkus Reviews; Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author and book: Sayantani DasGupta's first career was working as a children's doctor where she would often prescribe books for her patients. This is the first book in the Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond series, and two more books have been released.

Book trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

Wings of Fire, The Graphic Novel Series: The Dragonet Prophecy by Tui Sutherland

What's it about? The five Dragonets are born and raised to fulfill the Prophecy together. When one of their own is in danger, they must choose between fate and freedom.

Read-alikes: Warriors, Amulet, Bravelands or The Last Firehawk series

If you like dragons, fantasy, intrigue, and books about friendship and families, you will like this book.

Reading Level: 280L

Suggested Age Range: 7-13 (Kirkus reviews)

Something about the authors and book: This book had four creators! The original Wings of Fire novels were written by Tui Sutherland, and then Barry Deutsch adapted Tui's novel into words for the graphic novels, while Mike Holmes drew the illustrations and Maarta Laiho added the colour! Three graphic novels have been adapted from the five original Dragonet Prophecy books.

Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire by John August

What's it about? Arlo Finch moves to a new town where he joins The Rangers, a group that fights dark magical forces in the wilderness around town.

Read-alikes: Percy Jackson and the Olympians series by Rick Riordan, Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling, The Iron Trial by Holly Black and Cassandra Clare, Jinx by Sage Blackwood

If you like mystery, adventure, fantasy, camping, and survival then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 670L

Suggested Age Range: 8-12 (Kirkus reviews)

Something about the author: John August is screenwriter who worked on the movies Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Frankenweenie, and Corpse Bride. Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire is the first book in a series, with the second book released in 2019 and the third due in 2020!

Inkling by Kenneth Oppel

What's it about? Inkling, a blob of ink that can move, communicate, and draw, escapes from Ethan's father's sketchbook just in time to help Ethan with his school project

Read-alikes: Holes by Louis Sachar, Frindle by Andrew Clements, What I Came to Tell You by Tommy Hays, Waiting for the Magic by Patricia MacLachlan, Far Away by Lisa Graff

If you like family stories, realistic books with a little bit of magic, imaginary friends, or talking animals, you will like this book!

Reading level: 650L

Suggested Age Range: 7-12 (Kirkus Reviews); 8-12 (Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author: Kenneth Oppel started out writing about his favourite things: Star Wars, Dungeons & Dragons, and video games. He wrote his first book when he was in high school, and had it published because Roald Dahl read and liked it!

Book Trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)



Young Reader's Choice Awards

YRCA 2021 Intermediate Book Profiles

The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle by Leslie Connor

What's it about? Mason is a misfit with learning disabilities struggling to survive seventh grade.

Read-alikes: The Whispers by Greg Howard, Lost in the Sun by Lisa Graff, Save Me a Seat by Sarah Weeks, Freak the Mighty by W.R. Philbrick.

If you like character-driven, thoughtful stories, then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 310L

Suggested Age Range: 9-14 (Kirkus Reviews); 8-12 (Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author: Leslie Connor lives in the woods with three rescue dogs

No Fixed Address by Susin Nielsen

What's it about? Felix and his mom are evicted from their apartment and must move into the van her ex left behind. It's tough, but Felix has a plan - he's going to win a game show and get them back on their feet.

Read-alikes: The Exact Location of Home by Kate Messner, I'm OK by Patti Kim, Almost Home by Joan Bauer, Booked by Kwame Alexander, Crenshaw by Katherine Applegate

If you like uplifting and hopeful books, realistic fiction, serious topics, game shows or first-person narratives, then this book is for you!

Reading Level: 620L

Suggested Age Range: 11-14 (Kirkus Reviews)

Something about the author: Before she wrote novels, Susin Nielsen wrote for some of our favorite Canadian TV shows including Degrassi Junior High, Degrassi High, What About Mimi, and Braceface.

Impostors by Scott Westerfeld

What is it about? When Frey poses as her twin sister to negotiate a deal for her father's kingdom, she must decide whether she should keep her cover or fight to establish her identity.

Read-Alikes? *Uglies* by Scott Westerfeld, *Legend* by Marie Lu, *Red Queen* by Victoria Aveyard, *The Rule of One* by Ashley Saunders, *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman.

If you like strong heroines, cool weapons, dystopian settings or fast-paced plots, then this book is for you!

Reading Level: HL640L

Suggested Age Range: 12-18 (Kirkus Reviews); 12+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something about the book: *Impostors* is set in the futuristic world of Scott Westerfeld's "Uglies" books and is the first in a new series. Book two was released in the fall of 2019.

Book trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

City of Ghosts by Victoria Schwab

What is it about? A young girl can see ghosts after having a near-death experience.

Read-alikes: *Passenger* by Alexandra Bracken, *Illuminae Files* by Amie Kaufman, *The Girl From Everywhere* by Heilig, *Heidi What Goes Up* by Katie Kennedy, *The Night Gardener* by Jonathan Auxier, *Doll Bones* by Holly Black, and *The Screaming Staircase* by Jonathan Stroud.

If you like stories about best friends, ghosts, haunted places, and parapsychologists, you will like this book.

Reading Level: 720L

Suggested Age Range: 8-13 (Kirkus Reviews); 8-12 (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the author and book: Victoria Schwab says she lives in 3 places: Nashville, rural France and Edinburgh. This is the first book in the *City of Ghosts* series, and the second book has already been released!

Book Trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

TBH, This Is So Awkward by Lisa Greenwald

What's it about? Cecily, Prianka and Gabby usually keep their texts to their trio but when new girl Victoria is added, things get messy.

Read-alikes: Dork Diaries by Rachel Renée Russell, TTYL by Lauren Myracle, Posted by John David Anderson, Quinny & Hopper by Adriana Schanen, 11 Birthdays by Wendy Mass

If you like texting, friendship and drama, then you will like this book!

Reading Level: 510L

Suggested Age Range: 8-13 (Kirkus Reviews); 8-12 (Publishers Weekly)

Something quirky about the book: This book is written entirely in notes, emails, text messages and LOTS of emojis ;) If you liked this book, there are already four sequels in the series!

Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram

What's it about? A half-Persian teenager deals with fitting in, clinical depression and his relationship with his father, all while on a family trip to Iran to visit his grandparents for the first time, one of whom is dying of a brain tumor.

Read-alikes: Dear Haiti, Love Alaine by Maika Moulite, Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz, More Happy Than Not by Adam Silvera, Highly Illogical by John Corey Whaley

If you like reading about friendship, cultural gaps, or finding your place in the world, then you will like this book.

Reading Level: HL710L

Suggested Age Range: 12+ (Kirkus Reviews; Publishers Weekly)

Something about the author: Adib Khorram loves tea just as much as his character Darius, but instead of playing soccer you can find Adib figure skating. Book two came out in August 2020.

Ash Princess by Laura Sebastian

What's it about? Imprisoned princess Theo plots to take back her throne from the brutal Kalovaxians.

If you like epic fantasy or revenge stories, you will like this book.

Read-alikes: The Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins, The Selection series by Kiera Cass, The Winner's Curse by Marie Rutkoski, Trickster's Choice by Tamora Pierce.

Reading level: 840L

Suggested Age: 14-17 (Kirkus Reviews); 12+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something interesting about the author and book: Laura Sebastian had received 300 rejections in the eight years leading up to *Ash Princess* but is hearing "yes" from agents a lot more these days! This is the first book in The Ash Princess Trilogy and the two sequels have been released.

Book trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

What's it about? A young girl in Harlem discovers slam poetry and uses it to explore her mother's religion, a newfound love, and her own relationship to the world.

If you like beautiful language, stories about growing up, and believe people should not have to apologize for who they are, you will like this book!

Read-alikes: *On the Come Up* by Angie Thomas, *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson, *Pride* by Ibi Zoboi, *Solo* by Kwame Alexander

Reading Level: HL800L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus Reviews), 13+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the author: Elizabeth Acevedo is a National Poetry Slam champion!



Young Reader's Choice Awards

YRCA 2021 Senior Book Profiles

I Am Still Alive by Kate Alice Marshall

What's it about? Jess is alone in the wilderness with no shelter and only her Dad's dog to help her.

Read-alikes: Hatchet by Gary Paulsen, Where the World Ends by Geraldine McCaughrean, Frostbite by Joshua Williamson, Be Not Far From Me by Mindy McGinnis.

If you like thrilling books with twists and turns, that take place in the wilderness with a dog as a companion, you will like this book.

Reading Level: HL690L

Suggested Age Range: 12-17 (Kirkus Reviews); 12+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the author: Kate also works in the video game industry as a writer and occasionally a designer.

Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adeyemi

What's it about? After a zealous king seeks to rid his kingdom of the magical Maji, Zélie alongside her brother and a fugitive princess, embarks upon a quest to restore magic across the land and overthrow the ruthless king.

Read-alikes: The Young Elites by Marie Lu, Kingdom of Souls by Rena Barron, Ninth House by Leigh Bardugo, Shadowshaper by Daniel José Older, A Reaper at the Gates by Sabaa Tahir

If you like fast-paced adventure stories with diverse characters and historical/mythological elements, then you will like this book!

Reading Level HL670L

Suggested Age Range: 14+ (Kirkus Reviews, Publishers Weekly)

Something interesting about the book and author: A film adaptation is already in the works! Tomi Adeyemi was inspired by African history and mythology as well as the Black Lives Matter movement when writing this book. This second in the Legacy of Orisha trilogy came out in late 2019.

Book Trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

Dry by Neal and Jarrod Shusterman

What's it about? California has run out of water. A group of teens come together in their search for survival... a source of water.

Read-alikes: The 5th Wave by Richard Yancey, Not a Drop to Drink by Mindy McGinnis, The Sky So Heavy by Claire Zorn, Life As We Knew It by Susan Beth Pfeffer.

If you like survival stories, post-apocalyptic stories, or speculative fiction, you'll like this book.

Reading Level 790L

Suggested Age Range: 13-17 (Kirkus Reviews); 12+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the book: The book is written by a father-son team!

Book Trailer: [Click here to watch the book trailer](#)

Sadie by Courtney Summers

What's it about? A missing girl on a journey of revenge. A podcast following the clues she's left behind. A mystery that is equal parts harrowing and devastating.

Read-alikes: A Girl Like That by Tanaz Bhathena, If I Go Missing by Brianna Jonnie with Nahanni Shingoose, As Red as Blood by Salla Simukka, Vanishing Girls by Lauren Oliver.

If you like true crime podcasts, murder mysteries, dark and emotional dramas, you will like this book!

Reading Level: HL750L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus Reviews); 13+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something interesting about the book: The podcast that makes up half the story in *Sadie* was produced with a full cast! It's called 'The Girls: Find Sadie'. You can also hear it as part of the audiobook of *Sadie*.

A Very Large Expanse of Sea by Tahereh Mafi

What's it about? Shirin has been stereotyped her whole life for being a hijab-wearing girl, causing her to close herself off from the world. As she discovers breakdancing and falls for the town's golden boy, Ocean, Shirin finally lets her walls down and stands up for herself.

Read-alikes: *Love, Hate & Other Filters* by Samira Ahmed, *On the Come Up* by Angie Thomas, *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo, *If You Come Softly* by Jacqueline Woodson

If you like hard-hitting contemporary novels, stories whose main characters have a creative outlet, semi-autobiographical stories, or books that talk about racism, then you will like this book!

Reading level: No Lexile Level reported. Accelerated Reader is IL: UG, BL: 5, AR Pts: 10.

Suggested Age Range: 12-18 (Kirkus Reviews); 13+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the author: Tahereh Mafi used to breakdance in high school and this hugely inspired her to write this book! Just like the interracial relationship of Shirin and Ocean, Mafi is married to author Ransom Riggs.

Book Trailer: Click to watch the [book trailer](#) and [author intro](#)

Five Feet Apart by Rachael Lippincott

What's it about? Two teenagers with terminal conditions navigate an increasingly intimate relationship while trying to stay physically apart in order to keep each other alive.

Read-alikes: *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green, *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon, *Just Breathe* by Cammie McGovern

If you like romance, character-driven or multiple perspectives, then you will like this book!

Reading Level 780L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus Reviews); 12+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the book: This book was written after the screenplay for the movie and is based on the real story of a couple that both had Cystic Fibrosis.

Movie Trailer: [Click to watch the movie trailer](#)

The Cruel Prince by Holly Black

What's it about? Jude gets tangled in palace intrigues while trying to win a place in the treacherous High Court of Faerie, where she and her sisters have lived for a decade.

Read-alikes: *Caraval* by Stephanie Garber, *Defy* by Sara Larson, *A Court of Thorns and Roses* by Sarah J. Maas, *Wicked Lovely* by Melissa Marr, *The Iron Legends* by Julie Kagawa

If you like court intrigue, faeries, swords and romance then you will like this book!

Reading Level HL760L

Suggested Age Range: 14+ (Kirkus Reviews); 15+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the author and book: Holly lives in New England with her husband, son, and cats, in a house with a secret library. This is the first book in the now complete *Folk of Air* trilogy.

Dear Evan Hansen by Val Emmich

What's it about? Evan has no friends and debilitating anxiety, but after a chance encounter with Connor, he rides a lie to social media stardom and local popularity.

Read-alikes: *It's Kind of a Funny Story* by Ned Vizzini, *Fangirl* by Rainbow Rowell, *Eliza and Her Monsters* by Francesca Zappia, *History Is All You Left Me* by Adam Silvera, *I Have Lost My Way* by Gayle Forman.

If you like coming of age novels, especially ones that tackle heavy topics while powerfully reminding readers that they are never alone, then you will like this book!

Reading Level HL590L

Suggested Age Range: 14-18 (Kirkus Reviews); 14+ (Publishers Weekly)

Something cool about the book: This book was inspired by the six-time Tony Award-winning musical of the same name. You can listen to the entire soundtrack on Hoopla, and actors from the musical reprise their roles in the audiobook recording of this book.

Book Trailer: [Click to watch the book trailer](#)