

2023-2024 Book List



Note: This program is designed to entice teens to read. In order to engage their interest and to provide a spur to critical thinking, the book selections include those that involve sensitive issues. The content of some of the titles may be more mature than younger students may have previously encountered. Please recognize that this is a voluntary reading program. Not every book selected will suit every student. In a democratic society, a variety of ideas must find voice. As readers, teens have the choice to read the more mature titles or to close the book.



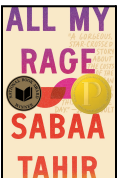
Glasgow, Kathleen and Lawson, Liz. *The Agathas*. Delacorte Press, 2022

A year ago, high school “it-girl” Alice Ogilvie disappeared without a trace after her break-up with her boyfriend, Steve. Now, Alice was back but she wasn’t talking. She never told anyone where she had been, what had happened to her, or really why she had left in the first place. Now, once popular, Alice is an outcast, and watches as her ex-best friend, Brooke, dates her ex-boyfriend Steve. After a party, it is reported that Brooke never made it home. She’s disappeared. Has she pulled an Alice Ogilvie, or is something more sinister at work?



Reynolds, Jason. *Ain't Burned All the Bright*. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2022

This book is a must read. It is a gripping narrative that combines the power held within a few sentences with beautiful and moving images. The story follows a young boy whose family is impacted by Covid 19 and the social justice issues that brought stories of violence and inequality into the spotlight during the lockdown. It can be read in a single sitting, but readers will want to go back again and again to explore the artwork and savor the words.



Tahir, Sabaa. *All My Rage*. Razorbill, 2022

A stunningly beautiful story told through three points of view. Misbah is Salahudin’s mother and her story is one of her immigration and life in the United States told through a series of flashbacks. Salahudin is a high school student trying to save his family’s motel as his personal life spirals out of control, and Noor, Sal’s best friend, is working on trying to escape the small town life and her abusive uncle. A poignant story that will stick with you a long time, Sabaa Tahir creates characters that, while flawed with problems that seem insurmountable, inspire hope and belief in the power of the human spirit. A must read!



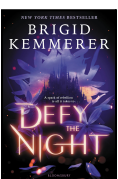
Clayton, Dhonielle, et. al. *Blackout*. Quill Tree Books, 2021

What are six award winning authors to do during COVID-19 lockdown? Well, write a book together of course! Nic Stone, Dhonielle Clayton, Nicola Yoon, Tiffany D. Jackson, and Ashley Woodfolk are amazing on their own; together they are FIRE! This is the story of six couples that get stuck in the middle of a blackout in New York. Will these couples still be couples after the blackout? Will they all still be friends? The breakdown of civilization, no matter how temporary, can bring the best or the worst out of people. After you read Blackout you feel like these couples are your friends, siblings, frenemies or maybe even yourself.



Morris, Brittney. *The Cost of Knowing*. Simon & Schuster Books, 2021

Imagine seeing visions of the future, but not just any future, your future and the future of those around you simply by touching them or an object that belongs to them. Sixteen-year-old Alex Rufus struggles with the death of his parents, visions of his little brother Isaiah’s death, and his girlfriend Talia breaking up with him. While Alex can stop a vision once it starts, he goes through life working at Scoops, an ice cream shop, wondering if the next event will lead to completing his vision. Alex and Isaiah live with their Aunt Mackie and often are at odds. The fear of losing Isaiah causes Alex to make some rash decisions and put both of their lives in danger.



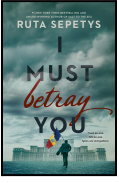
Kemmerer, Brigid. *Defy the Night*. Bloomsbury YA, 2021

The kingdom of Kandala struggles under the curse of a deadly fever. For the rich in the Royal Sector, the moonflower elixir is readily available, but for peasants living outside the luxury of the castle walls in the Wilds, survival is in the hands of Tessa Cade and Weston Lark. As the duo distributes the cure nightly, they dodge the dangers of the sentries and the King’s Justice, Prince Corrick. Capture means certain death, but so does the fever. Can Tessa and Weston defy the royal guards and save their people, or will King Harristan and Prince Corrick destroy the pair, along with everyone else in the Wilds? As the royal brothers hoard the moonflower petals for the royal sector, one can’t help but wonder if there is perhaps more to the story.



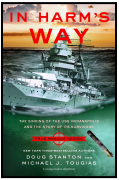
Giles, Lamar. *The Getaway*. Scholastic Press, 2022

Living at the biggest theme park in the world should be a dream! Karloff Country is more than an amusement park; it is a self-contained city with workers and their families living in neighborhoods surrounding the park. Jay's life is great in Karloff Country. He has his family, friends, and an awesome job after school. Sure, the world is facing bigger and bigger problems each day, but living at Karloff Country keeps you inside a safe bubble. But when that bubble begins to pop, Jay's dream deteriorates into a nightmare. When the richest and most powerful people in the world begin moving to Karloff Country as the world falls apart outside, Jay and his friends begin to wonder what exactly is going on. How far will they go to figure out the truth and save the people they love? Warning: Depictions of Violence



Sepetys, Ruta. *I Must Betray You*. Penguin Books, 2022

Cristian Florescu lives in the Romanian dictatorship in 1989. His dream is to become a writer and he hides his thoughts in a notebook so that he won't get caught. He must be careful because there are spies all around willing to turn you in to get ahead. His dreams come crashing down when he is told he must become an informant for the secret police to spy on an American diplomat that his mother cleans houses for. Will he risk lying to his family and possibly losing them, or will he stand up to the regime and help fight to free himself and others so they can follow their dreams?



Stanton, Doug and Tougias, Michael. *In Harm's Way (Young Readers Edition)*. Henry Holt and Company, 2022

The sinking of the Indianapolis is a story that is secret laden. This nonfiction book is about the sinking of the USS Indianapolis at the end of World War II and the story of its survivors. While sailing in the middle of the Philippine Sea, the USS Indianapolis was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. The resulting chaos killed many of the men on board and the rest were left to jump overboard in the middle of the night. This is a story of determination and survival.



Noone, Gabby. *Live, Laugh, Kidnap*. Razorbill, 2022

Genesis, Holly, and Zoe are three teens from Violet, Montana with almost nothing in common, except for their place of residence and their connection to Hope Harvest Ministries. Their experiences with Hope Harvest ministries have caused them to rethink their lives in Montana because of the effects on their families. The girls only see one solution and that is to beat the gimmicky scammers at their own game in order to protect their families. Kidnapping, blackmail, and the Reaps' fortune should do the trick if things go as planned.



Moldavsky, Goldy. *The Mary Shelley Club*. Henry Holt & Company, 2021

Rachel Chavez is the victim of a home invasion that ends with a death. Since the incident, she has moved and changed schools, but is still haunted by that night. To cope, she has taken up watching horror films in the hope of overcoming her fears. Friendless at her new school, she discovers a secret group, The Mary Shelley Club: a strange group of teens fascinated by the dark and macabre. They meet to watch Horror Films and put together elaborate Fear Tests, to scare a chosen victim. Whoever scares their victim the most wins. But, what starts out as mean spirited, but physically harmless, pranks begins to become all too real. Will Rachel be able to discover who is escalating the Fear Tests to real violence before she becomes the next victim?



McWilliams, Kelly. *Mirror Girls*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2022

A set of twins were separated at birth. The twins were born to a Black mother and white father who were killed because of their biracial relationship in the Jim Crow south. One of the sisters, Magnolia, has skin light enough to appear white, while the other, Charlie, is perceived as Black. Charlie was raised in Harlem and is a civil rights activist, while Magnolia was raised to inherit the family plantation in Georgia. When the declining health of their grandmother brings them back together for the first time, they must find a way to break the family curse. This story hauntingly entwines historical fiction with terror and suspense.



Shusterman, Neal and Shusterman, Jarrod. *Roxy*. Simon Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2021

This unique story inspired by the opioid epidemic is the tale of 2 sets of characters: brother and sister Isaac and Ivy Ramey and the personified "gods", lethal and seductive Roxy (Oxycontin) and smart, high-achieving Addison (Adderall). Roxy and Addy place a wager to see who can bring their chosen mortal to "The Party" first. When Isaac fractures his ankle and Ivy needs help concentrating on her studies, Roxy and Addison are there to urge them to try some chemical relief. The siblings head down a path to destruction. From the opening scene, we know one of them dies. The Shustermans' personification of drug "gods" who playfully toy with mortals in this race to the bottom is a powerful cautionary tale. Which sibling will survive and which will be lost to the Party? Warning: Depictions of Drug Use



Kuehn, Stephanie. *We Weren't Looking to Be Found*. Disney Hyperion, 2022

Addiction. Despair. Depression. Self-sabotage. Self-harm. This is what causes the lives of Dani and Cams to intersect at Peach Tree Hills, a residential treatment facility for teen girls where they are assigned as roommates. The facility's mental health professionals hope to bring each of the girls from their lowest of lows to a place of healing and peace. However, their paths to recovery are paved in trials and heartache. Their differences and initial dislike for one another give way to a shared fascination when they uncover a mystery about a former resident. Will the girls be able to overcome their addictions and habits of self-destruction? Warning: Depictions of Mental Health Struggles



Jackson, Tiffany D. *The Weight of Blood*. Katherine Tegen Books, 2022

Did you know that segregated proms were still held in the United States as late as mid 2000's? Decades after the end of segregation in schools, segregated proms were still a thing in America. Tiffany D. Jackson's latest book explores what that is like in the year 2014. The fact that segregation is happening in the 21st century (and justified) is surreal, add to that the homage to Stephen King's classic Carrie and you have yourself a truly scary tale. Maddie's struggles in high school are all too familiar and if you have ever wondered if you fit in at school, in your community, even in your family; Maddie will become an instant friend. Warning: Depictions of Violence