

2016 Best Fiction for Young Adults

This year's list features 64 titles.

The members of the Best Fiction for Young Adults Committee are Laurie Bartz, Hedberg Public Library, Janesville, Wisconsin; Elizabeth Bast, Starbuck Middle School, Racine WI; Julia Casas, Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, CA; Shelley M. Diaz, Senior Editor, Reviews, School Library Journal, New York, NY; Rachel Fryd, Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA; Thea Hashagen, Chair, San Francisco, CA; Adele Lamphier, Toronto Public Library, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Kefira Philippe, Nichols Middle School, Evanston, IL; Edwin Rodarte, Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles, CA; Jessi Schulte-Honstad, Senior Library Manager, Washington County Library, Minnesota; Audrey Sumser, Kent State University Tuscarawas, New Philadelphia, OH; Kelly Trowbridge, Union County Public Library, Monroe, NC; Marney (Marina) Welmers, Tucson, Arizona, Retired middle school librarian, Tortolita Middle School, Marans USD; C. Ellen Wickham, Raytown South High School, Raytown, Missouri; Whitney Winn, King County Library System, Auburn, Washington; and Daniel Kraus, Booklist Consultant, Chicago.

* denotes the title was selected as a [top ten](#).

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Ahdieh, Renée. *The Wrath and The Dawn*. Putnam. 2015. 416p. ISBN: 9780399171611.
A romantic, sumptuous re-imagining of the legend of Scheherazade and the Arabian Nights.

* **Albertalli, Becky. *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*. Harper/Balzer and Bray. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780062348678.** Simon is falling in love for the first time. Over email, if that's even possible.

Almond, David. *A Song for Ella Grey*. Delacorte. 2015. 272p. ISBN: 9780553533590.
Claire poetically narrates the epic love story of her best friend Ella Grey and the mysterious Orpheus as romance, death, and mythology swirl together in a modern retelling of the classic story of Orpheus and Eurydice.

* **Bardugo, Leigh. *Six of Crows*. Holt. 2015. 480p. ISBN: 9781627792127.** Presented an offer too lucrative to refuse, gang leader Kaz Brekker and his team of convicts, runaways, and thieves set out to smuggle an imprisoned scientist from an impenetrable Fjerdan fortress, only to face treachery and betrayal along the way.

Black, Holly. *The Darkest Part of the Forest*. Little, Brown. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780316213073. Siblings Hazel and Ben try to save their town from the faerie folk they thought were friendly.

* **Brooks, Kevin. *The Bunker Diary*. Lerner/Carolrhoda Lab. 2015. 264p. ISBN: 9781467754200.** Sixteen-year-old Linus Weems is kidnapped and transported to an underground bunker, where he is joined by five other kidnapping victims. Where are they? Why have they been taken? And can they survive?

Cameron, Sharon. *Rook*. Scholastic. 2015. 464p. ISBN: 9780545675994. In the distant future after a polar shift has destroyed all technology, Sophia has been helping political prisoners escape their executions by working as the Red Rook. But to save her family from ruin, she must marry wealthy Rene—who has secrets of his own.

Carson, Rae. *Walk On Earth a Stranger*. Greenwillow. 2015. 448p. ISBN: 9780062242914. Leah Westfall, a girl with the ability to sense gold, disguises herself as a boy to make the dangerous journey to California in 1849.

*** Crowder, Melanie. *Audacity*. Philomel. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780399168994.** This novel-in-verse fictionalizes the teen years of Clara Lemlich Shavelson, the leader of the New York shirtwaist strike of 1909. Fleeing from anti-Semitic Russia, the teen and her family struggle to adapt to their new home.

Crowe, Chris. *Death Coming up the Hill*. HMH. 2014. 208p. ISBN: 9780544302159. In 1968, Ashe Douglas, 17, lives in a turbulent world—the conflict between his authoritarian father and peace-loving mother, the political and social unrest in the nation, and the Vietnam War itself. Afraid of being drafted, he has to make life-changing decisions.

Demetrios, Heather. *I'll Meet You There*. Holt. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780805097955. Skylar is determined to escape her dead-end town for art school, but a new love interest and her mother's issues threaten to derail her plans.

Dessen, Sarah. *Saint Anything*. Viking. 2015. 432p. ISBN: 9780451474704. Sydney lives in the shadow of her older brother—everyone's favorite. When he makes a terrible choice that lands him in jail, everything changes. Sydney might be able to escape to a new school and new romance, but she can't escape her family's problems.

Donnelly, Jennifer. *These Shallow Graves*. Delacorte. 2015. 496p. ISBN: 9780385737654. As she digs deep for answers about her father's untimely death, Jo Montfort discovers all is not what it seems in her upper-class environs of nineteenth-century New York City.

Fowley-Doyle, Moira. *The Accident Season*. Penguin/Kathy Dawson. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9780525429487. Every October, Cara's family is plagued with slips, cuts, and fatal falls during "The Accident Season." On the eve of this year's season, the Irish teen notices that her childhood friend, Ellie, appears in every photo Cara's ever taken, prompting Cara to question the family curse.

Frank, E.R. *Dime*. Atheneum. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9781481431606. Dime is a teenage girl enslaved by prostitution and a man called "Daddy." Books and fictional worlds are her only refuge. Ultimately, she takes inspiration from them to make a bold move and achieve some form of salvation.

Gilbert, Kelly Loy. *Conviction*. Disney/Hyperion. 2015. 352p. ISBN: 9781423197386. Braden is the only witness to a car accident that killed a police officer, and his father, a Christian radio personality, was driving. When his long-lost older brother returns, Braden must battle with doubts about God, his dad, himself, and the truth about what happened.

Graudin, Ryan. *Wolf by Wolf*. Little, Brown. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780316405126. In a world where the Axis powers won the war, Yael uses a unique ability to compete against 19 other teenagers in a motorcycle race from Germany to Japan.

Hand, Cynthia. *The Last Time We Say Goodbye*. HarperTeen. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780062318473. After her younger brother, Tyler, commits suicide, Lex struggles with the

grief, a family that has fallen apart, the sudden distance between her and her friends, and memories of Tyler that still feel all too real.

Hautman, Pete. *Eden West*. Candlewick. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780763674182. Jacob, a member of the Grace, starts questioning his deeply held faith when he meets Lynna, a girl from the World, and Tobias, a new member of the Grace.

Hellisen, Cat. *Beastkeeper*. Holt. 2015. 208p. ISBN: 9780805099805. Sarah's mother abandons her family, and her father begins to transform into a monster. Fearing for her safety, he leaves her with her grandparents in a castle in the woods. Surrounded by magic, she must find a way to unravel her family's curse.

Heppermann, Christine. *Poisoned Apples: Poems for You, My Pretty*. Greenwillow. 2014. 128p. ISBN: 9780062289575. In 50 poems, this book explores how girls are taught to think of themselves, their bodies, and their friends as consumers, objects, and competitors.

Hunt, Leo. *13 Days of Midnight*. Candlewick. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780763678654. When Luke Manchett's estranged father passes away, he inherits a dangerous host of ghosts that threaten everyone he holds dear. He must figure out how to banish or control them before they reach the height of their power in 13 days—Halloween night.

Jensen, Cordelia. *Skyscraping*. Philomel. 2015. 352p. ISBN: 9780399167713. High school senior Mira must come to terms with discovering that her father is gay and living with HIV.

Juby, Susan. *The Truth Commission*. Illustrated by Trevor Cooper. Viking. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780451468772. As a nonfiction project, Normandy Pale chronicles the work of the truth commission, through which she and her two best friends ask classmates and faculty about various open secrets, while Norm's famous sister reveals unsettling truths of her own.

Kaufman, Amie and Kristoff, Jay. *Illuminae: The Illuminae Files_01*. Knopf. 2015. 608p. ISBN: 9780553499117. Told in the form of a report compiling emails, IMs, and security footage, this chronicles the journeys of the survivors after an interstellar catastrophe. Part *Battlestar Gallactica*, part zombie story, and part *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Kern, Peggy. *Little Peach*. Harper/Balzer and Bray. 2015. 208p. ISBN: 978006266958. In a desperate attempt to find a place and family to call home, Michelle becomes a victim of human trafficking.

Konigsberg, Bill. *The Porcupine of Truth*. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780545648936. Carson Smith moves to Montana for the summer to spend time with his dying, estranged father. On his first day he meets Aisha, a girl who's been kicked out for being a lesbian. Together, they make a discovery that sets them off on a journey across multiple states.

Kornher-Stace, Nicole. *Archivist Wasp*. Big Mouth. 2015. 256p. ISBN: 9781618730978. Wasp is a ghost-hunter in a strange and brutal world, who must kill to keep her job. When the ghost of a soldier from the distant past asks for her help, she embarks on a dangerous journey that makes her question everything she knows.

Larbalestier, Justine. *Razorhurst*. Soho Teen. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9781616955441. Set in a gritty town in 1932 Sydney, Australia, this tale follows two female orphans as they survive murders, gang wars, and ghosts over the course of one weekend.

Leavitt, Martine. *Calvin. Farrar. 2015. 192p. ISBN: 9780374380731.* As a child, Calvin played with the toy Hobbes. Now Calvin is a schizophrenic teenager, and Hobbes is back—a delusion he can't control. If he can convince Bill Watterson to draw one final *Calvin & Hobbes* comic strip with a normal teenaged Calvin, will he be cured?

Lee, Stacey. *Under a Painted Sky. Putnam. 2015. 384p. ISBN: 9780399168031.* Samantha and Annamae are thrown together when they are forced to hide from the law and pose as boys as they travel the Oregon Trail in 1849.

Maas, Sarah J. *A Court of Thorns and Roses. Bloomsbury. 2015. 432p. ISBN: 9781619634442.* In exchange for the life of the faerie she killed, 19-year-old Feyre returns to Prythia with the shapeshifter Tamlin to discover she must save the faerie lands from a blight that threatens both the Fae and human realms.

Mackler, Carolyn. *Infinite in Between. HarperTeen. 2015. 480p. ISBN: 9780061731075.* Five teens meet at freshman orientation and promise to meet up again at graduation.

McLemore, Anna-Marie. *The Weight of Feathers. St. Martin's/Thomas Dunne. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9781250058652.* The Palomas and Corbeaus are rival performing troupes, each with its own set of mysteries. In this books of forbidden love—and with a hint of magic—Lace and Cluck develop a relationship first fueled by superstition, but then by so much more.

Murphy, Julie. *Dumplin'. Harper/Balzer and Bray. 2015. 384p. ISBN: 9780062327185.* Willowdean is the heavysset daughter of a former beauty queen, a Dolly Parton enthusiast, and small town Texas girl. While dealing with feelings for a coworker, she and her fellow outcasts decide to enter the beauty pageant run by Willowdean's mother.

Ness, Patrick. *The Rest of Us Just Live Here. HarperTeen. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780062403162.* With prom and graduation weeks away, Mikey and his friends just want to enjoy their final days together, but another story is unfolding, one that involves their classmates, a mysterious blue light, and the end of the world.

Niven, Jennifer. *All the Bright Places. Knopf. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780385755887.* Theodore Finch and Violet Markey have never met before, but the day they meet on the ledge of their school's bell tower, their lives become linked forever.

Oakes, Stephanie. *The Sacred Lies of Minnow Bly. Dial. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780803740709.* While languishing in a juvenile detention center following an assault conviction, 17-year-old Minnow Bly relives the events that led to her imprisonment, including the mystery surrounding her cult leader's death and the loss of her hands.

*** Older, Daniel José. *Shadowshaper. Scholastic/Arthur A. Levine Books. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9780545591614.*** Sierra Santiago was amped on her summer of painting murals and hanging with friends, before noticing the murals were fading faster than normal. Another street artist named Robbie is the only one who can help her to unlock this mystery.

Pérez, Ashley Hope. *Out of Darkness. Lerner/Carolrhoda Lab. 2015. 408p. ISBN: 9781467742023.* The real-life tragedy of the 1937 explosion at a school in East Texas is the backdrop for this gut-wrenching story of inspiring love and vicious racism.

Quintero, Sofia. *Show and Prove. Knopf. 2015. 352p. ISBN: 9780375847073.* In the summer of 1983, Smiles and Nike experience the pains of growing up in the South Bronx.

Rabb, Margo. *Kissing in America*. HarperCollins. 2015. 400p. ISBN: 9780062322371. After the boy Eva falls in love with moves to Los Angeles, she finagles a way for her and her best friend Anna to take a bus trip from New York City to California to visit him.

Reid, Raziel. *When Everything Feels Like the Movies*. Perseus/Arsenal Pulp. 2015. 176p. ISBN: 9781551525747. To Jude/Judy, school is like a film set: outside of school, Jude/Judy is the reviled star who attracts all of the paparazzi. Jude/Judy doesn't and doesn't want to—and those stars always attract attention.

*** Reynolds, Jason. *The Boy in the Black Suit*. Atheneum. 2015. 272p. ISBN: 9781442459502.** To deal with his mother's passing, Matt accepts a job at the local funeral home. Matt meets Lovey at her grandmother's funeral. The two of them share a bond that will help them both to move past their own respective losses.

Ritter, William. *Beastly Bones: A Jackaby Novel*. Algonquin. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9781616203542. Abigail Rook and her boss, R.F. Jackaby, are once again recruited to solve a potential supernatural case involving mysterious dinosaur bones, a murder, a thief, and cuddly kittens.

Rowell, Rainbow. *Carry On*. St. Martin's Griffin. 2015. 528p. ISBN: 9781250049551. Simon Snow may be the chosen one, but he would prefer to just enjoy his last year at the Watford School of Magicks and figure out why his roommate and nemesis, Baz, is missing.

Rubin, Lance. *Denton Little's Deathdate*. Knopf. 2015. 352p. ISBN: 9780553496963. For as long as Denton could remember, he knew the day that he was going to die—and it's happening in 24 hours. However, the closer Denton gets to midnight, the more he hopes that he just might live to see another day.

*** Ruby, Laura. *Bone Gap*. Harper/Balzer and Bray. 2015. 368p. ISBN: 9780062317605.** In a small town full of strange happenings, Finn is determined to uncover the mystery of Roza's disappearance.

Schlitz, Laura. *The Hired Girl*. Candlewick. 400p. ISBN: 9780763678180. Joan runs away from her family farm where she cooks and cleans all day for her brusque father and brothers. In Baltimore she is brought on as a hired girl for the Jewish family, the Rosenbachs. During the time spent under their roof she learns about herself, religion, and love.

*** Shabazz, Ilyasah and Kekla Magoon. *X: A Novel*. Candlewick. 2015. 384p. ISBN: 9780763669676.** This fictionalized account of Malcolm X's teen years poignantly presents the young man's struggles with identity, racism, and crime.

*** Shusterman, Neal. *Challenger Deep*. HarperTeen. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780061134111.** As Caden descends into mental illness, his visions of a descent into the deep waters of a trench take over.

*** Silvera, Adam. *More Happy than Not*. Soho Teen. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9781616955601.** After enduring his father's suicide, his own suicide attempt, broken friendships, and more in the Bronx projects, Aaron Soto, 16, is already considering the Leteo Institute's memory-alteration procedure when his new friendship with Thomas turns to unrequited love.

Smith, Andrew. *The Alex Crow*. Dutton. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780525426530. Ariel, Leonard Fountain, and the Alex Crow never knew their paths were destined to converge in the woods of Camp Merrie-Seymour for Boys—a strange adventure indeed.

Spalding, Amy. *Kissing Ted Callahan (and Other Guys)*. Poppy. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780316371520. Riley makes a pact with her friend to add some romance to their lives and documents the whole thing in a secret notebook.

Stead, Rebecca. *Goodbye Stranger*. Random/Wendy Lamb. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9780385743174. Bridge survived a bad accident, wears cat's ears, and has made a rule with her friends: no fighting. To make seventh grade more complicated, her story intersects with that of both a new friend and a mysterious teenager, who is dealing with a betrayal.

Suma, Nova Ren. *The Walls Around Us*. Algonquin. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9781616203726. Ori and Vee have been inseparable since they met in ballet class as little girls, but a horrible crime tears them apart. Amber has visions of a new inmate who will change the fate of everyone in her correctional facility. The two narratives alternate in this ghostly tale of magical realism.

Summers, Courtney. *All the Rage*. St. Martin's Griffin. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9781250021915. Ever since Romy Grey accused the sheriff's son of sexual assault, she's been branded as a slut and liar from the wrong side of the tracks. When the golden girl goes missing, Romy might hold the key to finding her, but the search raises questions people would rather remain hidden.

Tahir, Sabaa. *An Ember in the Ashes*. Razorbill. 2015. 464 p. ISBN: 978-1-595-14803-2. Surrounded by unspeakable brutality, Laia, a slave, and Elias, a soldier, discover their destinies are intertwined as they struggle to find freedom from the tyranny around them.

Toten, Teresa. *The Unlikely Hero of Room 13B*. Delacorte. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9780553507867. A young-adult OCD support group (and falling in love) help Adam deal with his OCD and face the truth about his home life.

Various. *The Great War: Stories Inspired by Objects from the First World War*. III. by Jim Kay. Candlewick. 2015. 304p. ISBN: 9780763675547. Eleven established young-adult authors, including David Almond, Michael Morpurgo, and Marcus Sedgwick, have written short stories based on artifacts recovered from World War I. As varied as the objects themselves—a medal, a butter dish, sheet music—each one masterfully captures an aspect of wartime.

Wagner, Laura Rose. *Hold Tight, Don't Let Go: A Novel of Haiti*. Abrams. 2015. 272p. ISBN: 9781419712043. Devastated by the 2010 Haitian earthquake, 15-year-old Magdalie's world is turned upside down. Despite losing her mother and being separated from her beloved cousin, she finds the strength to survive in a chaotic and dangerous new world.

Wiviott, Meg. *Paper Hearts*. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry Books. 2015. 352p. ISBN: 9781481439831. Based on a true story, this debut novel tells the story of how friendship sustains two girls, Zlatka and Fania, in Auschwitz.

Wynne-Jones, Tim. *The Emperor of Any Place*. Candlewick. 2015. 336p. ISBN: 9780763669737. Evan meets the grandfather he has never known after his father's sudden death. At the same time, he is caught up in a WWII memoir about an unusual island populated by ghosts, monsters, and two enemy castaways. What is the tragic connection between his grandfather and the book?

Yoon, Nicola. *Everything, Everything*. Delacorte. 2015. 320p. ISBN: 9780553496642. Maddy has SCID, which makes her allergic to the world, and she has not left her house since she was a baby. Now 18, she falls in love with the boy next door and is willing to risk everything to be with him.

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