My personal favorites: Books that have stuck with me.

**The Apple Tart of Hope by Sarah Moore Fitzgerald.** Holiday House, (9780823435616), 2016. Meg's best friend was "lost at sea" after riding his bike off the bridge. The bike was found but Oscar's body wasn't. Meg needs to learn two things. Is Oscar really dead? And what happened to make kind, positive Oscar so depressed? Sadly, there is no recipe for the magical apple tart in this book. **YA, MG.** bullying, manipulation, kindness, friendship

**Armstrong & Charlie by Steven B. Frank.** HMH, (9780544826083), 2017. In 1975, Armstrong “wins” the last seat on the bus to go to school in upper class Hollywood Hills. Charlie’s friends are all going to private school, or using false addresses to avoid the influx of black kids to Wonderland Elementary School. Schoolyard fights, dares, and lies lead to a fast friendship. **MG.** integration, historical fiction, Kirkus starred review

**As Brave As You by Jason Reynolds.** Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, (9781481415903), 2016. As their parents try to repair their marriage, brothers Ernie and Genie uncover family history and the extent of their own bravery, while spending an eye-opening summer with their grandparents in Virginia. **MG.** family, responsibility, mystery Coretta Scott King Honor book

**The Best Man by Richard Peck.** Dial Books, (9780803738393), 2016. This is a wonderful book chronicling a boy's school years, 1st grade through 6th; his friendships; his family; and the two weddings that changed his life. Archer's family is the stuff of greeting cards, some stereotypes but immense amounts of love. **MG.** same sex marriage, friendships, family, acceptance NYT Notable, PW Best Middle Grade

**Beautiful Blue World by Suzanne LaFleur.** Wendy Lamb Books/Penguin (9780385743006) In an imagined war, children 12 and up are offered a chance to help the government. Mathilde is tested, passes and is whisked away to a safe haven where she displays an unexpected talent - for listening. How this helps the “war effort” is the center of this story. **MG.** war, peace, relationships

**The Book Jumper by Mechthild Glaser.** Feiwel & Friends, (9781250086662), 2017. Amy's mother drags Amy from their home in Germany to Scotland where Amy learns that her family, and one other family on their remote island, are book jumpers, tasked with protecting all books. When a book character washes up dead, Amy must find out who is trying to sabotage the world's literature. **YA.** fantasy, mystery

**Booked by Kwame Alexander.** HMH, (9780544570986), 2016. Twelve-year-old Nick excels on the soccer field but struggles to deal with his parents' divorce in this touching yet humorous novel in verse. **MG.** sports, family (2016 Parents' Choice list)

**A Clatter of Jars by Lisa Graff.** Philomel, (9780399174995), 2016. This book is a companion to A Tangle of Knots. Someone is stealing Talents - and memories - from the kids at summer camp. Graff has a light touch with magic, and this book overflows with summer camp loveliness. **MG.** fantasy, self-acceptance

**Creeping Shadow (Lockwood & Co #4) by Jonathan Stroud.** Disney/Hyperion, (9781484709672), 2016. Lucy is a freelance operative and she is assigned to a case with her old firm, Lockwood & Co., to destroy the Source for the Brixton Cannibal. There is some serious grossness and gore in the first third of the book. And the ending? WHAT????? so expect a #5. **YA,** younger for readers with nerves of steel, cannibalism, ghosts, spirits
The Evil Wizard Smallbone by Delia Sherman. Candlewick Press (9780763688059), 2016. Nick is on the run. When he takes refuge in the old bookshop, he comes under the spell of the Evil Wizard Smallbone. But there is an even more sinister power at work in the dark Maine woods. Even the books in the bookstore have personalities. YA, grades 6 and up. fantasy, horror

The Executioner’s Daughter by Jane Hardstaff. Lerner, (9781606845622), 2016. Moss is her father’s basket girl. She catches the heads of the executed and carries them to the wall to be placed on spikes. When she finds a secret tunnel, she travels outside for the first time and almost doesn’t survive the trip. She finds answers in London, to questions she never knew to ask. MG. historical fiction, fantasy

Falling Over Sideways by Jordan Sonnenblick. Scholastic, (9780545863247), 2016. Claire seems to be running in place as her best friends move ahead in dance class, and her “perfect” big brother gets all her parents’ praise. Then, her father falls over right in front of her with a stroke. Claire’s quick action may have saved his life but did she cause the stroke with her sass? Heavy stuff handled by Sonneblick’s sure touch. MG. health, self-acceptance, responsibility, guilt

Five Children on the Western Front by Kate Saunders. Delacorte Books for Young Readers, (9780553497946), 2016. A sequel to Five Children and IT by E. Nesbit, this story brings the prehistoric sand fairy to the beginning of WWI. The Psammead - or IT - is old and his magic is unstable. This leads to some awesome adventures and to some heart-rending incidents. YA. historical fiction, fantasy

Framed! (T.O.A.S.T. #1) by James Ponti. Aladdin, 9781481436304), 2016. Florian Bates is new in DC. His neighbor, Margaret, loves Florian’s Theory Of All Small Things, a method Florian uses to figure things out. Very Sherlockian, actually. When an art theft occurs in the National Gallery - where Florian’s father works - Florian (and Margaret) end up helping the FBI. So much fun! MG. mystery

Full of Beans by Jennifer L. Holm. Random House, (9780553510393), 2016. It’s the Great Depression in Key West, Florida, and Beans has big plans for himself and his gang. He takes a job running errands for a local wise guy. He keeps an eye on the crazy guy from the Government who wants everyone to paint their houses, and he and his friends babysit. Holm is good at period details that are right on the money with her readers. MG. historical fiction, responsibility,


Ghost by Jason Reynolds. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy, (9781481450157), 2016. Ghost wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle-school track team, but his past slows him down. MG. domestic abuse, self-control, responsibility, sports

Ghostly Echoes (Jackaby #3) by William Ritter. Algonquin, (9781616205799), 2016. Jenny Cavanaugh, the ghostly owner of Jackaby’s office building, has asked Abigail and Jackaby to solve her own murder. Ghostly possession, spirits and paranormal phenomenon, along with new murders that mirror Jenny’s own, all put Abigail in horrendous danger. YA. ghosts, horror, mystery
Ghosts by Raina Telgemaier. Scholastic, (9780545540612), 2016. Catrina’s family moves to the seacoast so that her little sister, Maya, can get some relief from her cystic fibrosis. Maya is desperate to meet one of the ghosts that fill the new town. Catrina takes a chance to be herself and not just the girl with the sick sister. This graphic novel has just the right amount of middle school angst. MG. change, death and dying

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill. Algonquin Books, (9781616205676), 2016. NEWBERY AWARD winner. Every year, the villagers offer the youngest baby to the witch in the woods. Every year, the confused witch takes that child to the other side of the woods where adoptive parents wait. One year, the witch keeps a child. The little girl’s magic wakes up slumbering powers and leads everyone on an adventure. MG. fantasy, power, curiosity

The Inquisitor’s Tale: or the Three Holy Children and Their Holy Dog by Adam Gidwitz. Dutton, (9780525426165), 2016. Travelers at an inn in France in 1242, share stories about three miracle-working children, a young oblate, a Jewish boy who survived the razing of his town, and Jeanne, a peasant girl traveling with her death-defying dog. Among the travelers at the inn is an Inquisitor, intent on finding these heretics. MG+. historical fiction, fantasy, legends, faith (Newbery Honor Book)

The Kidnap Plot (The Extraordinary Journeys of Clockwork Charlie) by Dave Butler. Knopf Books for Young Readers, (9780553512960), 2016. Charlie’s father is kidnapped. And then, two thieves try to steal an invention they hired Charlie’s father to make. And THEN, someone trashes the workshop. AND THEN, Charlie learns something amazing about himself. AND THEN, ... Can’t wait for the second book. MG. steampunk, adventure, fantasy

The Lie Tree by Frances Hardinge. Abrams/Amulet, 9781419718953), 2106. In Victorian Britain, Faith Sunderly investigates the mysterious murder of her father, discovering a tree that feeds upon lies and gives visions to those who eat its fruit. YA. fantasy, historical fiction, natural history

Lucky Strikes by Louis Bayard. Henry Holt and Co., (9781627793902), 2016. During the Great Depression, a teen girl must keep her family and her family’s gas station afloat by enlisting the help of a drifter. A rival gas station owner uses some nasty tricks to get her to sell the station. YA. historical fiction, family

Mayday by Karen Harrington. Little Brown Books for Young Readers, (9780316298018), 2106. Wayne survives the plane crash after his uncle’s funeral. His vocal cords are damaged and he can’t talk. His grandfather moves in to help care for him and his mother. The old man treats Wayne like a loser and a malingerer. And Wayne can’t tell him off. One of those old grandfather/grandson novels with a touching ending. YA. healing, grief, self-acceptance

Ms. Bixby’s Last Day by John David Anderson. Walden Pond Press, (9780062338174), 2016. When she has to retire for health reasons, three boys plan to give their favorite teacher the best last day ever. Each boy has his own challenges and his own reasons for the rule breaking livepage.apple.com adventures on the way to showing their teacher their love. MG but older for discussion. Compassion, kindness, grief, illness.

The Passion of Dolssa by Julie Berry. Viking Books for Young Readers, (9780451469922), 2016. In thirteenth-century Provence, Dolssa, branded a heretic after claiming to speak with God, flees her hometown. YA. historical fiction, Inquisition, faith
Raymie Nightingale by Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick, (9780763681173), 2016. DiCamillo’s writing sparkles with humor and hope as new friends Raymie, Beverly, and Louisiana endeavor to find their places in the world. MG. family, friends, (National Book Award Finalist)

Ratpunzel by Ursula Vernon. Dial Books, (9780803739857), 2016. Harriet, the Hamster princess, has to rescue a rat princess locked in a tower. This quick chapter book has a lot of middle-school age humor and the taste of a graphic novel. MG. fantasy, comedy, graphics

Save me a Seat by Sara Weeks and Gita Varadarajan. Scholastic. (9780545846608), 2016. When Ravi moves to America from India, he expects to be the star student he was at home. A run-in with the class bully, forces him to sit with Joe, a boy with focus issues. They are the outcasts and they find a way to help each other. MG. bullying, adapting to change

School of the Dead by Avi. HaperCollins, (9780061740855), 2016. Uncle Charlie is all about ghosts. Right before Uncle Charlie dies, Tony gets into Uncle Charlie’s alma mater the Penda School. But that school was founded for only one purpose and that purpose is as creepy as it gets. MG. ghosts, horror, mystery

Scythe by Neal Shusterman. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, (9781442472426), 2016. In a distant future in which humanity has practically conquered death, the population is controlled by Scythes, the only beings capable of causing death. YA - sci-fi, far future, violence,

The Secret Keepers by Trent Stewart. Little Brown Books for Young Readers, (9780316389563), 2016. An antique watch-like object, with strange powers, leads Reuben on a quest. Stewart offers a nefarious foe, the lure of power and the fight between what is right and what is profitable. MG readers with stamina. Fantasy, mystery, adventure

The Secret of Dreadwillow Carse by Brian Farrey. Algonquin, (9781616205058), 2016. A peasant girl and a princess share a fascination with the Dreadwillow Carse, a gloomy swamp like forest at the center of the kingdom. When the peasant girl disappear in the Carse, the princess must save her - even though she might destroy the kingdom at the same time. The price of happiness is the subject of this thought-provoking book. MG. fantasy, responsibility.

Snow White: a Graphic Novel by Matt Phelan. Candlewick, (9780763672331), 2016. This almost wordless retelling is set in New York City during the Great Depression. Wow! MG+. Graphic Novels, fairy tales, historical fiction

A Study in Charlotte by Brittany Cavallaro. Katherine Tegen Books, (9780062398901), 2106.- When a student at their school is murdered in a manner that copies one of Charlotte’s great-great-great-grandfather’s cases, Jamie Watson and Charlotte Holmes become reluctant partners in solving the murder. A VERY worthy addition to the lexicon of Holmes spinoffs. Second book, The Last of August came out in February and looks AWESOME!! YA. Mystery

The Sun is Also a Star by Nicola Yoon. Delacorte Press, (9780553496680), 2016. Daniel decides to let fate dictate his life and NaTasha doesn't believe in fate. But today, NaTasha will believe in anything if it allows her to avoid deportation. YA, immigration, romance (CBC Best of 2016)
The Warden's Daughter by Jerry Spinelli. Alfred A. Knopf, (9780375831997), 2017. Cammie never knew her mother who died when Cammie was a baby. The summer before her thirteenth birthday, Cammie decides she will make the new trustee who cares for her into her mother. That summer, Cammie runs wild and only Eloda, the trustee, seems to know what Cammie needs. MG. Grief, anger, responsibility

When Friendship Followed Me Home by Paul Griffin. Dial Books, (9780803738164), 2016. Add this to the genre of "Poor kid suffers tragedy and then suffers more tragedy and then another blow...but somehow it ends up ok." Ben finally makes a friend with a girl at school. He brings a scruffy dog home and his adoptive mother lets him it. Then, suddenly, his adoptive mother dies. Yep. Looks bad for Ben and the dog. BUT somehow it ends up ok. MG. Grief, self-acceptance

When the Sea Turned to Silver by Grace Lin. Little Brown, (9780316125925), 2016. Pinmei must depend on her neighbor, the boy, Yishan to save her beloved grandmother, the storyteller. Along the way, Pinmei finds her own voice and the answers to Yishan’s secrets. MG. Folklore, inner strength, peace

Wolf Hollow. By Lauren Wolk. Dutton, (9781101994825), 2016. In this coming-of-age story, spunky and courageous Annabelle defends a veteran who has become the target of local bullying attacks. Middle Grade (Newberry Honor Book), bullying

Non-Fiction: (most from Booklist 2016 Best of list)

Blood Brother: Jonathan Daniels and His Sacrifice for Civil Rights by Rich Wallace and Sandra Neil Wallace. Boyds Mills/Calkins Creek, (9781629790947), 2016. When Martin Luther King Jr. asked for help ending racial injustice in the South, Jonathan Daniels, a white northern seminarian, answered. Knowing he was risking his life by wearing a clerical collar and pushing for racial equality, he worked for voting rights until he was jailed, released, and assassinated. Gr. 8–12.

Brown v. Board of Education: A Fight for Simple Justice by Susan Goldman Rubin. Holiday, (9780823436460), 2016. This thorough, large-format account of several monumental courtroom cases is a model of lucidity. Rubin sets a vivid backdrop, introduces memorable personalities, and weaves through complicated proceedings with stunning aplomb. Gr. 8-12. (Booklist Best)

Dive! World War II Stories of Sailors & Submarines in the Pacific: The Incredible Story of U.S. Submarines in WWII by Deborah Hopkinson. Scholastic, (9780545425582), 2016. Hopkinson uses first person accounts, photographs, military dispatches and official documents, and meticulous research to bring WWII in the Pacific to life. Gr. 5+.

Feminism: Reinventing the F-word by Nadia Abushanab Higgins. Lerner/Twenty-First Century, lib. ed., (9781467761475), 2106. After a brief survey of the history of feminism, Higgins allots the majority of her book to a discussion of its present. Intersectionality, criticisms of second- and third-wave feminism, and the importance of grassroots organizations, among other topics, are all cogently explained in this empowering volume. Gr. 8–11.
In the Shadow of Liberty: The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives, by Kenneth C. Davis, Holt, (9781627793117), 2016. Davis’ account of five enslaved people and the U.S. presidents who owned them is not just an incredibly researched piece of history—it’s a fierce wake-up call to anyone who praises their leaders without critical nuance. A devastating and eye-opening investigation. Gr. 7–10.

March: Book Three, by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin. Illus. by Nate Powell. Top Shelf, (9781603094023), 2016. This closing volume of Lewis’ comics memoir highlights the growing violence and tensions among activists during Freedom Summer and culminates in the Voting Rights Act. Cinematic artwork heightens the tension in this timely, accessible account of the civil rights movement and serves as a call to action. Gr. 9–12. (Sibert Winner) (Booklist Best of 2016)

Sachiko: A Nagasaki Bomb Survivor’s Story, by Caren Stelson. Carolrhoda, (9781467789035), 2016. Sachiko Yasui experienced the bombing of Nagasaki firsthand, and her vivid, affecting account of the event and its aftermath comes to life here. Periodic explanations of concepts and events bring helpful, informative context to Sachiko’s narrative as well as her enduring message of peace. Gr. 7–10. (Booklist Best of 2016) (ALSC Best of 2016) (Sibert Honor Book)

Uprooted: The Japanese American Experience during World War II, by Albert Marrin. Knopf, (9780553509366), 2016. In the midst of WWII, 110,000 Japanese Americans were uprooted from their homes and moved to relocation centers. It is Marrin’s well-documented contention that this shameful act of resettlement was rooted in wartime hysteria and enduring racism, a theme that informs this masterful account. Gr. 9–12. (Booklist Best of 2016) (Sibert Honor Book)

Vietnam: A History of the War, by Russell Freedman. Holiday, (9780823436583), 2016. Newbery medalist Freedman’s absorbing, concise narrative lucidly illustrates Vietnam’s road to revolution, escalating U.S. involvement in the region, and how it became one of history’s greatest messes. A thought-provoking and ultimately hopeful glimpse into a pivotal moment in recent history. Gr. 6–9. (Booklist Best of 2016)

We Will Not Be Silent: The White Rose Student Resistance Movement That Defied Adolf Hitler, by Russell Freedman. illus. Clarion, (9780544223790 ), 2016. In this impeccably researched history, drawn from primary sources, readers learn about Hans and Sophie Scholl, former members of the Hitler Youth, who sacrificed their lives to spread the truth about the Nazi regime. (Sibert Honor Book) Gr. 6+. (ALSC Best of 2016) (Sibert Honor Book)

Non-Fiction - Middle Readers

Fannie Never Flinched: One Woman’s Courage in the Struggle for American Labor Union Rights by Mary Cronk Farrell. Abrams, (9781419718847), 2016. Fannie Sellins was working in a sweatshop when she first heard about the United Garment Workers of America. She helped to organize her fellow seamstresses, largely recent immigrants, into Ladies’ Local 67. This volume, richly photo-illustrated and imbued with solid scholarly features, explores her battle. Gr. 5–8. (Booklist Best 2016)

**Hopping Ahead of Climate Change: Snowshoe Hares, Science and Survival** by Sneed B. Collard III. Bucking Horse Books (9780984446087) 2016. Collard approaches climate change through the effects on one species. **Gr. 5+.** NSTA Best Books of 2017

**Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph**; by Roxane Orgill, illus. by Francis Vellajo. Candlewick, (9780763669546), 2016. Orgill’s verse creates a freewheeling, wonderfully entertaining vision of the creation of an iconic photograph of the New York jazz scene. **Gr. 5-8**

**Maker Lab by Jack Challoner**, DK Publishing, (9781465451354), 2016. Maker Lab includes 28 kid-safe projects and crafts that will get young inventors’ wheels turning and make science pure fun. **Gr. 4 - 7.**

**Milestones of Flight** by Tim Grove, National Air and Space Museum, Harry N. Abrams, (9781419720031), 2016. With archival images throughout, Grove gives a sweeping view of aviation in American history. **Gr. 5+.** NSTA Best Books 2017


**Some Writer!: the Story of E. B. White** by Melissa Sweet. HMH, (9780544319592), 2106. Sweet offers such a great biography of E. B. White that I wish I could have known him. She seasons the book with drawings, photos of actual letters and early drafts and photos. **Gr.5+.** (NCTE Award Winner 2017)

**The Tragic Tale of the Great Auk** by Jan Thornhill. Illus. by the author. Groundwood, (9781554988655), 2016. Touching on evolution, ecology, human technological advancement, globalization, and even cultural trends, Thornhill illustrates the many factors, including its own physiology and behavior, that led to the auk’s ultimate demise and the surprising effects its extinction had on modern ideas about conservation. Gr. 2–5.

**Who Built That? Bridges** by Didier Cornille. Princeton Architectural Press, (9781616895167), 2016. Ten of the most iconic bridges in the world are featured in this colorful book. **Gr. 4+.**


**Best of 2016 Booklists for your Edification**

National Science Teachers Association; [http://static.nsta.org/pdfs/2017OSTB.pdf](http://static.nsta.org/pdfs/2017OSTB.pdf) It is the National Science Teachers Association list of the best trade books on science published in 2106. This is a beautiful, printable, full color list.

National Council of Teachers of English; http://www.ncte.org/cbal This list hasn’t made it to the main website yet but it includes notable books not mentioned elsewhere.

CBC Best STEM Books 2017; http://www.cbcbooks.org/2017-best-stem-books/ The Children’s Book Council offers many lists and this is one of the most timely.

CBC Children’s and Teen Choice Awards; http://www.cbcbooks.org/2017-finalists-ccba-teba/ What the kids liked!!!


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