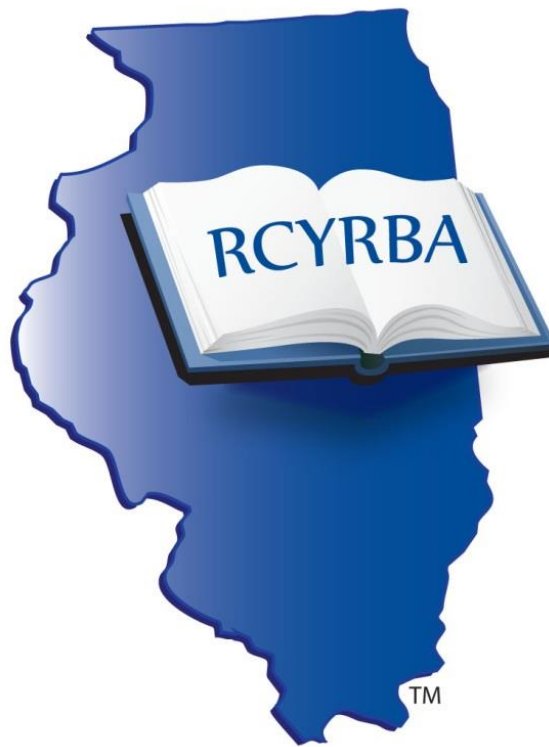


LET'S TALK ABOUT BOOKS

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award List 2014

Suggestions for Use



Edited by Ellen Popit

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Contributors to 2014 Caudill Activities Packet

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Introduction

The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (RCYRBA) is now celebrating its twenty-seventh year! Twenty titles are nominated each year, and any students in grades four through eight in participating Illinois schools and public libraries who have read or heard three books may vote for the most outstanding book in February. The winner is announced in March. Children are encouraged to read the books on this list and share their thoughts and reactions with others, thus making the reading experience more enjoyable.

This packet of materials is meant to be a guide for librarians and teachers to help children enjoy and interpret what they read. It is designed as a beginning step when looking in depth at the books on the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Master List for 2014. It is hoped that the packet will start creative thoughts flowing in librarians, teachers, and children, who are trying to read books enthusiastically and with joy. All the materials developed are meant to be used "with" children and not given to them in isolation.

The following suggestions for the twenty titles on the 2014 RCYRBA Master List were developed by a group of librarians and teachers. Information is provided in nine areas: a summary, questions for students, journal starters, and activities designed to extend the book into other curricular areas, reading recommendations, promotional booktalks, related materials, web sites, and book review citations.

Summary: The summary provides an overview of the book for anyone who has not read a particular title.

Questions: The questions included are primarily open-ended with neither a right nor a wrong answer. Since readers' reactions to stories are different, they should be encouraged to express different points of view. The questions encourage students to relate reading to their everyday lives and are designed to promote more questions and discussion as a result. Questions can be given to students when they begin to read the book so they can think about their responses as they read and focus on the ideas that the author is trying to convey.

Journal Starters: These questions are designed to engage students in the writing process and to encourage them to put themselves in situations presented in the books.

Activities: There are a wide variety of activities included to suit different age and interest levels. Some are designed for groups, others for individuals.

Reading Recommendation: The reading recommendation is included to help librarians and teachers decide whether or not a particular title will be of interest to a group of students or to a particular individual. The recommendation is only made with consideration for grades four through eight, which are the grades included in the award. Occasionally, a caution is listed when a sensitive topic is included that may cause concern in some communities.

Booktalks: Booktalks have been added for the convenience of librarians and teachers who would like a prepared piece to use for book promotion. They are short, sometimes including a passage from the book, since hearing the voice of the author is often important when students are deciding whether or not to read a specific title.

Read-Alikes: A listing of related books that will aid in extending literature activities. Titles were suggested by teachers and librarians who have had experience with them. This list is not exhaustive and materials have not been screened for literary merit. These related books are divided into three general categories: additional books by the same author, topics which are mentioned in the story and books which are similar. Because of their broad appeal throughout the curriculum, picture books are also included in this listing.

Web Sites: Sites were selected as a way to expand the activities and learning of the students. Some sites are for author information and others for organizations, locations or topics related to the book. The sites were checked on October 28, 2013 and were active at that time. If links to .pdf files take a long time to load, it is often easier to copy and paste them into your browser.

Book Review Citations: Book review citations have been included to aid teachers and librarians in case a challenge to any of the books on the list should occur.

This activities packet has been edited with care from materials developed by the contributors. The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Committee would appreciate comments and suggestions concerning the packet. Please direct communications to anyone on the committee or to the editors of the packet.

Developing this packet was a challenging, invigorating experience for the participants. Enjoy!

Atkinson, Elizabeth. *I, Emma Freke*. Carolrhoda, 2010

SUMMARY:

Emma is a skinny and unusually tall twelve year old who doesn't feel that she fits in anywhere. In the course of time, her mother, a nine-year old friend, a "cool" librarian and a family reunion allow Emma to finally feel comfortable in her own skin. At the end of the novel, Emma finds some balance between her new-age mother's lifestyle and the rigid ways of her father's family.

QUESTIONS:

How did homeschooling work out for Emma?
What was Nonno like as a grandfather?
Where do you find your "joylah?"
Would you say that Emma was a Frecky or a Freak?
Find other "interesting" names within the story.
What were the strengths and weaknesses of Emma's mom?
As a friend, how does Penelope support Emma?
Is there a right way to do *everything*?

JOURNAL STARTER:

The positive things that make me different from other people include.....

ACTIVITIES:

Do a craft activity with beads.
Collect photos of family reunions.
Make a list of what is required to be an adult.
Research the legal requirements for homeschooling in Illinois.
Make a list of your five favorite things about this book.
Make a poster of different people who "didn't fit the mold."
Ask someone to speak to your group about appropriate rules for camping.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever felt that you didn't fit in? Have you felt too quiet, too gangly or that your feet were too big? Emma felt that way all the time! At twelve, she is tall and skinny and lives with her mother and grandfather above the family bead shop---she's never known her father. Her mother's plan to have her homeschooled works out for the best, giving her contact with Stevie, a reference librarian who begins to open Emma's eyes. Emma's friend Penelope, although only 9, is full of common sense and helps Emma get some perspective. When an unexpected invitation

arrives to attend a family reunion of her father's side of the family, Emma takes the leap and finds out what she's truly made of. On her own two feet, she fits in just fine.

READ-ALIKES:

Amato, Mary. *The Naked Mole Rat Letters*. Holiday House, 2005.

Cassidy, Cathy. *Scarlett*. Viking, 2006.

Kent, Rose. *Kimchi and Calamari*. HarperCollins, 2007.

Mass, Wendy. *Every Soul a Star*. Little, Brown, 2008.

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Becoming Naomi Leon*. Scholastic, 2004.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Elizabeth Atkinson: <http://elizabethatkinson.com>

I, Emma Freke Discussion Guide:

<https://www.lernerbooks.com/digitalassets/Assets/Title%20Assets/11220/9780761362197/Discussion%20Guide.pdf>

Bead Crafts: <http://craftbits.com/bead-crafts>

Liberia: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13729504>

REVIEWS:

Atkinson, Elizabeth. *I, Emma Freke*. Carolrhoda, 2010.

School Library Journal 57(February 1, 2011): 102

Publishers Weekly 257(October 18, 2010)

Bauer, Joan. *Close to Famous*. Viking, 2011

SUMMARY:

Foster and her mother leave Memphis in a whirl to get away from Mama's abusive boyfriend. They settle in Culpepper, West Virginia, a town that has problems of its own. A prison has been opened, but never brought with it the economic development that had been promised. There is much change in Culpepper and it is difficult for everyone. Given a hand by a local couple, Foster and her mother find their place. Foster begins selling cupcakes and her mother brings new life to a hardware store. But Foster has a challenge bigger than relocation--- she can't read and she's too embarrassed to ask for help.

QUESTIONS:

Foster mentions many sayings. What sayings have people shared with you that are meaningful? Why did Foster struggle with the list Miss Charleena gave her? Why did Macon get upset when Foster asked if she could go back to Miss Charleena's with him? Why do you think Mama didn't want to report Huck the first time she visited the clinic? Why do you think that Miss Charleena came to Culpepper?

JOURNAL STARTER:

A challenge that I had to face was.....

ACTIVITIES:

Host a cupcake exchange.
Hold a bake sale and donate the proceeds to a local women's shelter.
Collect "Cook's Tips" from people in your family and share with the rest of your group.
Ask someone to speak to your group about the reading differences many of us experience.
Look into support groups in your area for prisoners and their families.
Watch some YouTube clips of Elvis Presley.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Foster and her mother made it out of Memphis by the skin of their teeth in their effort to get away from Huck, an Elvis Impersonator, who abuses Mama. They land in Culpepper, West Virginia but have a lot to learn about the town and its inhabitants. Foster's first love is baking and her cupcakes and muffins make a difference throughout the town. Mama's is able to help the hardware store move into the 21st century. All good things, but they each have challenges they have to face. Mama has to sever ties with Huck and Foster needs to face an issue that has shamed her throughout her life. Surprisingly, it is the reclusive Hollywood star that first breaks

though to Foster and encourages her to move ahead. And Foster is able to "...make the world better. One cupcake at a time."

READ-ALIKES:

Bauer, Joan. *Hope Was Here*. Putnam, 2000.
Codell, Esme. *Sahara Special*. Hyperion, 2003.
Weeks, Sarah. *Pie*. Scholastic, 2011.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Joan Bauer: <http://www.joanbauer.com>

Close to Famous Discussion Guide: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/discussion-guide/printable/69693.html>

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award Discussion Guide:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/cbec/DCFBookReviews%26Questions12-13.pdf>

Cupcake Recipes: http://www.joanbauer.com/close_to_famous.html#recipes

Most Popular Cupcake Recipes: <http://dessert.food.com/recipes/cupcakes/popular>

Children and Relationship Abuse: <http://stoprelationshipabuse.org/educated/children-and-relationship-abuse/>

REVIEWS:

Bauer, Joan. *Close to Famous*. Viking, 2011.

Booklist 107(January 1, 2011): 104

School Library Journal 57(March 1, 2011): 154

Publisher's Weekly 257(December 13, 2010)

Bragg, Georgia. *How They Croaked: The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous.* Walker, 2011

SUMMARY:

From King Tut, to Pocahontas to Albert Einstein, this book tells the story of the deaths of nineteen historical figures. Each section contains biographical information about the subject as well as detailed information about the actual death. In addition, there are boxes of trivia throughout the book ranging from Cremation 101 to Boneyard Words. Extensive resources are cited.

QUESTIONS:

What makes “The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous” an interesting topic?

What pieces of trivia in this book did you find intriguing?

What medical fact shared in this book was most surprising?

JOURNAL STARTER:

I found the most interesting person in this book to be _____, because

ACTIVITIES:

Arrange for a visit by a coroner or a medical examiner.

Research the death of someone not in this book.

Make a list of new words you encountered when reading this book.

Map the locations of each of the people written about.

Create a timeline of each of the people written about.

Create a poster with images of each of the people covered in this book.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

“Warning! If you do not have the guts for gore, do not read this book.” The first words say it all! Did you know that Henry VIII weighed as much as 244 regulation basketballs and that Charles Darwin had a hard time keeping his food down? How about the fact that Robert Todd Lincoln (President Lincoln’s son) had a connection to three of our country’s four presidential assassinations? Poufs (the hairpieces worn by Marie Antoinette and the French court) were havens for spiders, mice and bugs. Really, if you like to be grossed out, this is a book for you!

READ-ALIKES:

Miller, Kathleen. *Last Laughs: Funny Tombstone Quotes and Famous Last Words*. Sterling First Edition, 2006

Robinson, Ray. *Famous Last Words, Fond Farewells, Deathbed Diatribes, and Exclamations Upon Expiration*. Workman Publishing, 2003.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Georgia Bragg: <http://georgiabragg.com>

South Carolina Junior Book Award: <http://studysc.org/junior-sc-book-awards/2013-2014-sc-junior-book-award-nominees>

Famous Deaths on this Day in History: <http://www.historyorb.com>

REVIEWS:

Bragg, Georgia. *How They Croaked: The Awful Ends of the Awfully Famous*. Walker, 2011.

School Library Journal 57(April 1, 2011): 189

Kirkus: (February 1, 2011)

Erskine, Kathryn. Mockingbird (Mok'ing-bûrd). Philomel, 2010

SUMMARY:

Caitlin is a ten-year old who has Asperger's Syndrome. Her brother Devon, who had the ability to connect her to the rest of the world, has recently died in a school shooting. Caitlin's father is a widower who is trying to put one foot in front of the other. A school counselor provides support. However, the key to recovery is Caitlin's discovery of the word "closure." Caitlin realizes that closure will move the family forward.

QUESTIONS:

- What part does art play in Caitlin's life?
- What challenges does Caitlin have in social situations?
- When Devon was alive, what support did he provide for Caitlin?
- Why does Mrs. Brook go to recess with Caitlin?
- How do Michael and Caitlin become friends? What's the basis for the friendship?
- What is Devon's nickname for Caitlin? Where does it come from?
- Why was Josh chosen to be Michael's reading buddy?
- How does Caitlin speak to people? What effect does that have on them?
- What is Caitlin's plan for closure?
- Why do you think Emma and Mia react to Caitlin in the way they do?
- How is Caitlin able to help her father?
- What does this book teach the reader about closure?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

- In dealing with a major loss in my life, I would.....
- Talking difficult things out help because.....
- You shouldn't get in someone's Personal Space because.....

ACTIVITIES:

- Ask a grief counselor to talk with your group about the grieving process.
- Invite an Eagle Scout to talk about scouting.
- Have an educator talk about Asperger's Syndrome and what can be involved.
- Do a simple carpentry project.
- Get a poster of the heart and identify all the parts.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Caitlin knows about "The Day the World Fell Apart." That's the day her brother Devon was killed in a school shooting. What Caitlin doesn't know is how to move forward. The challenge

of Asperger's syndrome makes the world and people very confusing for Caitlin and nothing is simple for her. But she discovers the word closure and knows that this is what is needed for her family. Closure comes in the form of finishing the chest that Devon was working on with their father as part of his Eagle Scout project. Can Caitlin and her dad move through the grief to complete the project and honor Devon. It's going to take courage and stamina!

READ-ALIKES:

Erskine, Kathryn. *Mockingbird (Mok'ing-bûrd)*. Philomel, 2010

Birkby, Robert. *Eagle Scouts: A Centennial History*. DK Adult, 2012

Hoopman, Cathy. *All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome*. Jessica Kingsley Publication, 2006.

Lord, Cynthia. *Rules*. Scholastic, 2006.

Strasser, Todd. *Give a Boy A Gun*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Kathryn Erskine: http://www.kathrynerskine.com/Kathryn_Erskine/Home.html

Questions and Answers with Kathryn Erskine:

<http://www.usborne.com/downloads/Mockingbird-reading-notes.pdf>

Sweet on Books: <http://www.sweetonbooks.com/all-titles/520-mockingbird.html>

Six Trait Gurus: <http://sixtraitgurus.wordpress.com/2011/01/03/mockingbird-by-kathryn-erskine>

Usborne Discussion Guide: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/literature-guide/printable/72042.html>

What is Asperger's Syndrome? <http://www.webmd.com/brain/autism/mental-health-aspergers-syndrome>

Eagle Scouts: <http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/EagleScouts.aspx>

REVIEWS:

Booklist 106(February 15, 2010):

Publishers Weekly 257(March 8, 2010): 57

School Library Journal 56(April 1, 2010): 154

Flanagan, John. *The Outcasts*. Philomel, 2011

SUMMARY:

The Skandians are a very Viking-like people. The men are sailors and warriors--The Skandians are a very Viking-like people. The men are sailors and warriors--plunderers, really--who sail to new lands, storm the banks, and take what they will from the villages they find there. Hal, is a teenage boy who barely knew his father, a great Skandian warrior who died in battle when Hal was quite young. Hal's mother is an Araluen--captured by the Skandians during one of their pillaging raids. Thus, being a half-breed, Hal never quite fits in and is often ignored and, worse, bullied, by the other young men of the village.

The Skandians employ Brotherband training to ready their young men to become warriors like their fathers before them. There is skill-training both with weapons and on ships and tests of endurance and strength. Boys are divided into teams, which compete with one another daily on all the things they are learning. Think of it as *Survivor* but with Vikings. The young men themselves, choose a few among them as captains, who are then allowed to pick their own teams. Of course, there are always the guys no one wants, and Hal is not only one of them but becomes the leader of them as well. As you can guess, the story becomes reminiscent of *The Bad News Bears* or *The Mighty Ducks*--with the rag-tag team of outcasts showing up the teams made up of young men with important fathers and cocky attitudes and winning it all.

QUESTIONS:

Why is Hal mistreated by other Skandian boys his age? What do you think about their behavior toward him?

What role does Thorn play in Hal's life and his brotherband training?

How does each member of Hal's team contribute to their success?

When did you start to suspect that Hal's team would be victorious? What were the clues?

How much at fault are Hal and his team for the loss of the Andomal?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

A time when I felt most discouraged but was able to "triumph" in the end was...

I had to summon up a lot of courage and strength when...

I found out that hard work and perseverance paid off when...

ACTIVITIES:

Do some research about Vikings and describe how the Skandians are like them

Before you read Book Two, *The Invaders*, write your own short story about what happens when Hal and his band go searching for the Andomal.

Create a drawing of what you think Hal's shio, *The Heron* looked like.

Create a brotherband-style competition (minus weapons, of course) for your school's recess, park day, or P.E. class.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Welcome one and all to Survivor: Skandia! Watch as, Hal, the bullied and rejected half-blood of the village, and his rag-tag band of outcasts, The Herons, go up against The Wolves and The Sharks, brotherband teams made up of the most successful and popular young men in all of Skandia. Will this group of misfits excel at shipbuilding, seamanship, sword-wielding, and feats of strength and endurance? Will they have what it takes to become the champion brotherband and win the honor of guarding the traditional symbol of Skandia, the Andomal? Tune in to John Flanagan's *The Outcasts* to find out!

READ-ALIKES:

Cowell, Cressida. *How to Train Your Dragon*. Little, Brown, 2003.

Farmer, Nancy. *Sea of Trolls*. Atheneum, 2004.

Flanagan, John, *Ruins of Gorlan*. Philomel, 2005. (and other books in Ranger's Apprentice series)

Lupica, Mike. *Travel Team*. Philomel, 2004.

Roberts, Judson. *Viking Warrior*. Harper Collins, 2006.

Stroud, Jonathan. *Heroes of the Valley*. Disney/Hyperion, 2009.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Books 4 Boys: John Flanagan

http://www.us.penguinroup.com/static/packages/us/yreaders/books4boys/author_johnflanagan.php

Teaching Support Kit: http://www.randomhouse.com.au/content/teachers/tsk_brotherband.pdf

The Brotherband Chronicles: <http://www.brotherbandchronicles.com>

John Flanagan talks about his new series, The Brotherband Chronicles (YouTube video):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLOlbUAgwv4>

John Flanagan answers fan questions about *The Brotherband Chronicles* (YouTube video)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPe2W_nEW24

***The Brotherband Chronicles* Wiki** (fan-created):

http://brotherband.wikia.com/wiki/The_Brotherband_Chronicles_Wiki

REVIEWS:

Flanagan, John. *The Outcasts*. Philomel, 2011

Booklist 108(November 15, 2011): 49

Publishers Weekly 258(October 24, 2011): 54

School Library Journal 57(February 1, 2012): 118

Gidwitz, Adam. A Tale Dark and Grimm. Dutton, 2010.

SUMMARY:

The WHOLE story of Hansel and Gretel from the author’s viewpoint. Readers are treated to the back story of how Hansel and Gretel’s parents met and married and how Hansel and Gretel were really driven away from home. Once they leave home, they travel through their own traditional story as well as many other “Grimm” tales woven together throughout the novel. The guts and gore of original fairy tale tellings can be found in this book, as well as a very droll sense of humor.

QUESTIONS:

- Why do you think the author addresses the reader directly throughout the book? Is it effective?
- What is the definition of “under-standing” in this tale?
- The author inserts “The End” very frequently. Why?
- Gretel asks: “Are there no good grown-ups anywhere?” Were there? If so, who?
- What does a reader learn about good and evil from this book?
- How did Hansel and Gretel learn to forgive their parents?
- What did the author mean when he wrote: “Sometimes, coming home is the hardest thing of all.”
- Why do you think people were willing to fight with Hansel and Gretel?
- What was the result of the battle with the dragon?
- Who were Wilhelm and Jacob?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

My favorite character in this book is _____ because.....
If I were Hansel or Gretel I would have.....

ACTIVITIES:

- Watch some “Fractured Fairy Tales” from the Rocky and Bullwinkle Show on YouTube.
- Select and share some fractured fairy tales from the library.
- Play a fairy tale version of Mad Libs.
- Read the more commonly told versions of the fairy tales included in this book.
- Create a visual representation of how the fairy tales in this book connect.
- Try to illustrate some characters or scenes from this book.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Note: Use the introduction to the book liberally in any booktalk. “Once upon a time, fairy tales were awesome” (Introduction). It can take a long time to get to happily ever after. After their parents meet and marry, Hansel and Gretel are run away from home and their path is not quite a straightforward as the story we’ve heard. There is an oven and a baker that is interested in eating them, but there is so much more! Ravens, devils and dragons all play a part in this often violent and regularly funny retelling of the familiar fairy tale. Hansel and Gretel struggle together and separately to find that happy ending, an ending that deals much more with family and forgiveness than simple security.

READ-ALIKES:

Gidwitz, Adam. *A Tale Dark and Grimm*. Dutton, 2010

Gidwitz, Adam. *In A Glass Grimly*. Dutton, 2012

Gidwitz, Adam. *The Grimm Conclusion*. Dutton, 2013

Shulman, Polly. *The Grimm Legacy*. Putnam, 2010

RELATED WEB SITES:

Adam Gidwitz: <http://www.adamgidwitz.com>

Dutton Discussion Guide: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/discussion-guide/printable/71423.html>

Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/grimm/index2.html>

Fractured Fairy Tales and Fables:

http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/fractured_fairy.htm

REVIEWS:

School Library Journal 56(November 1, 2010): 114

Publishers Weekly 257(October 18, 2010)

Kirkus Reviews (October 15, 2010)

Levine, Kristin. *The Lions of Little Rock*. Putnam Juvenile, 2012.

SUMMARY:

In 1958 Little Rock, Arkansas, painfully shy Marlee Nesbitt finds a true friend in the new 7th grader, Liz Dalton. But a month after her arrival Liz literally disappears from school with rumors that she is a Negro trying to pass as white. Then the political again becomes the personal when the governor of Arkansas, defying a government order to integrate, refuses to open the Little Rock High Schools. Marlee's older sister is sent away to live with grandma in order to continue her education. Lonely and frightened, but mostly angry, Marlee contacts Liz and resumes their friendship. Marlee's and Liz's actions will impact not only themselves and their families, but also their entire communities.

QUESTIONS:

What draws Marlee to Liz the first time they meet? Why do you think their friendship is able to grow in spite of all the challenges?

Why was it risky for Liz to pass as white? Reread Betty Jean's explanation of "passing" on pages 68-69.

What motivates Marlee to contact Liz after her father forbids it? Why do the girls agree to resume their relationship?

Why does Marlee agree to help JT with his math homework? Why does she continue even though she knows she is being used?

In a discussion about integration, Marlee's father tells her, "These issues are for grownups to deal with, not children." Do you agree?

What prompts Marlee to join the WEC?

Cite some examples of Marlee's courage in the novel.

How does Marlee's relationship with the following people change throughout the novel: Liz, Judy, Betty Jean, JT, her parents?

Each chapter in this novel is headed by an illustrated design. What is the significance of the lion, soda bottle, feather, airplane, elephant and diamond pattern in Marlee's life?

JOURNAL STARTER:

My first airplane ride was... (If you have never flown in an airplane before, imagine what it would be like).

ACTIVITIES:

Learn more about the Quapaw Indians in Arkansas. Explore some images of them.

Try creating your own magic square.

Pretend you are Marlee and write a letter to Betty Jean explaining the influence she has had on your life.

Choose a compelling scene in the book and rewrite it as Readers Theater. Perform it in front of an audience.

Research the civil rights movement from the mid 1950's on. (The bibliography following the AUTHOR'S NOTES in the book has a lot of material about Little Rock, Arkansas.)

Write a description of Marlee and Liz's relationship from Liz's point of view.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Here's how 12 year old Marlee Nesbitt sums up her situation: "Parents were not supposed to cry. They weren't supposed to fight, either. And sisters weren't supposed to be sent away. And if your friend was white, she should stay white, and not suddenly turn out to be a Negro." (p. 89-90) Painfully shy all of her life, Marlee finds herself thrust into the turmoil of school integration in 1958 Little Rock, Arkansas. Marlee knows she must take a stand, even disobey her parents, to do what she believes is right. But how will she find the courage?

READ-ALIKES:

Bridges, Ruby. *Through My Eyes*. Scholastic, 1999.

Crowe, Chris. *Getting Away With Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2003.

McKissack, Patricia. *A Friendship For Today*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

McWhortner, Diane. *A Dream of Freedom: The Civil Rights Movement from 1956 to 1968*. Scholastic Nonfiction, 2004.

Rodman, Mary Ann. *Yankee Girl*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2004.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Kristin Levine: <http://www.kristinlevine.com>

Complete Teacher's Guide: <http://erinmfry.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/The-Lions-of-Little-Rock-Teachers-Guide.pdf>

The Lions of Little Rock Teacher's Guide:

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/tv/printables/penguin/tl-guide-lions-of-little-rock.pdf>

Fourth Musketeer Author Interview – Kristin Levine:

<http://fourthmusketeer.blogspot.com/2012/01/author-interview-kristin-levine-author.html>

The Lost Year: <http://www.thelostyear.com/>

Little Rock Nine: http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112391/little_rock_nine.htm

Making Magic Squares: <http://www.math.hmc.edu/funfacts/ffiles/10001.4-8.shtml>

The Quapaw Indians:

<http://arkarcheology.uark.edu/indiansofarkansas/index.html?pageName=The%20Quapaw%20Indians>

REVIEWS:

Levine, Kristin. *The Lions of Little Rock*. Putnam Juvenile, 2012.

Booklist 108 (Jan. 1, 2012): 118

Kirkus Reviews 79 (Nov. 15, 2011): 2128

Publishers Weekly 258 (Nov. 21, 2011): 48-50

Common Sense Media: <http://www.common sense media.org/book-reviews/the-lions-of-little-rock>

Meloy, Maile. *The Apothecary*. G. P. Putnam Sons, 2011.

SUMMARY:

Janie Scott is the daughter of Hollywood screen writers when the country is gripped by the Red Scare and Senator Joseph McCarthy identifies various people as communists. Janie's parents are accused and must leave the country before their passports are revoked. They move to post WWII London, where rations and bombed out buildings are still part of the landscape seven years after the Great War has ended. Janie becomes interested in the boy who refuses to cooperate during an air-raid drill. Benjamin whom she learns is the Apothecary's son invites her only to use her as a cover for his own spying on adults whom he believes are spies. When he witnesses his father passing a note to his suspect, the game plan changes and suddenly Benjamin and Janie are participants in a plot to stop a nuclear bomb. Murder and mayhem force them to try the Apothecary's potions to transform into birds and become invisible. The magical realism continues as we see the teens try to help the adults and save the world at the same time.

QUESTIONS:

Have you ever felt like you were being followed? What would you do if you were Janie when she saw the limo following her?

Is the apothecary magic are scientific? Is the Pharmacopoeia a book of spells?

Why doesn't Benjamin want to be an apothecary? Does his opinion change?

Why does Sarah help Benjamin and Janie?

Who is Katharine Hepburn and how did she walk?

What is magical realism and how does this story reflect this genre?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Changing schools in the middle of the year is a problem because

When we found the gardener stabbed by the sundial my first thought was

When I read my diary but no longer remembered the events I had described, I

ACTIVITIES:

Examine an atlas to find where the *Anniken* traveled in the North Sea to stop the explosion. Find London and Beverly Hills as well.

Compare and contrast London and Beverly Hills. How would the weather, transportation, schools, even food be different?

Find out facts about the Cold War.

Investigate truth serum. Is it imaginary or real?

Think about the literary references in the story: Janie explains the character of Pip in Dickens' *Great Expectations* to a pickpocket named Pip they meet in jail (p 155). Mr. Danby compares Janie to a Henry James character, either Isabel Archer or Daisy Miller. (p. 24) explaining she is definitely not a Jane Austen type as she is American. Mr. Danby says he is betraying his country

because he read *Anna Karenina* when he was 15 (p 252). Find out a little more about these books from reviews or summaries to see if the references make sense.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6 - 8

BOOKTALK:

Janie, 14, is a regular girl who likes to walk like movie star Katharine Hepburn. She should know how as a resident of Beverly Hills and the daughter of screen writers. But when her parents are accused of being communists, she must move immediately to post-war London, still shell-shocked from the devastation of WWII. It is 1952, seven years after the war ended, but still there are rations and bombed out buildings. In addition there is a Cold War going on between the Russians and the Americans. It is the apothecary's son who interests Janie, but his spying on adults leads to genuine peril when his father entrusts him with his book of notes before he disappears. Benjamin and Janie have to figure out whom to trust while they become embroiled in the mystery of the Apothecary's disappearance and the significance of his book, the *Pharmacopoeia*. Murder and mayhem lead them to try out the recipes (or spells) in the book and try to save the world from disaster at the same time.

READ-ALIKES:

Almond, David. *The Fire-Eaters*. Delacorte Press, 2004.

Barrett, Tony. *The Hundred-Year-Old Secret*. Henry Holt, 2008.

Klages, Ellen. *The Green Glass Sea*. Viking, 2006.

Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Zen and the Art of Faking It*. Scholastic Press, 2007.

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *Sammy Keyes* Mystery Series

RELATED WEB SITES:

Maile Meloy: <http://www.mailemeloy.com/mailemeloy/Home.html>

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award Discussion Guide:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/cbec/DCFBookReviews%26Questions12-13.pdf>

Text Publishing, Teacher's Resource Kit:

http://textpublishing.com.au/static/files/assets/fffb5315/Apothecary_TeachersResource.pdf

The Cold War Museum: <http://www.coldwar.org/index.asp>

Tracked in America: http://www.trackedinamerica.org/timeline/mccarthy_era/intro/

Truth Serum: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Truth_serum

REVIEWS:

Meloy, Maile. *The Apothecary*. G. P. Putnam Sons, 2011.

Booklist 108(September 9, 2011): 114

Publishers Weekly 258(September 05, 2011)

School Library Journal 57(December 1, 2011): 125

Morton-Shaw, Christine. *The Hunt for the Seventh*. HarperCollins, 2008

SUMMARY:

After Jim's mother dies, his father takes a job as Head Gardener at an estate known as Minerva Hall. Jim, his sister Sally, and their father are given rooms in the south turret, and old Mr. Minerva makes it quite clear that he does not want them wandering through his home or the grounds of his estate. Not soon after the family moves in, Jim begins to feel that someone has died somewhere in the huge gardens of the estate. He hears voices calling to him, and sees children running through the gardens, which draws him outside, making Lord Minerva angry. Jim meets the ghosts of six Minerva children who have all indeed died mysteriously on the estate. Each ghost urges Jim to "find the seventh" and leaves cryptic messages for Jim, who realizes that he has stumbled into the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy that only he can stop. Jim meets a young autistic boy, named Einstein, who speaks in riddles, who he hopes can help him put all the clues together and stop innocent people from being hurt or possibly die.

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think that the ghosts believe that Jim, not Sally, can help them?
Do you believe that Lord Minerva has the right to have camera surveillance on his own property?
Can you find examples of the special significance of plants and animals to ancient cultures?
What ancient curses have you heard of?
In what year do you think the book is set?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I do or do not believe in ghosts...
Sevenstone and Stonehenge are similar because...
The map is essential to the Minerva estate because...

ACTIVITIES:

Visit an old cemetery and do rubbings of some of the oldest headstones.
Count how far back you can trace your family heritage? Make a timeline for your family.
Create your own riddles and share them with your friends.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Do you believe in ghosts? Have you ever heard of an ancient curse? Jim Brown finds himself in-deep with both when he, his sister Sal, and their father move to Minerva Hall, where his father has taken a job as the Head Gardener. Jim encounters the ghosts of the Minerva children who have died tragic deaths and through their riddles tries to "Find the Seventh."

READ-ALIKES:

Cassedy, Sylvia. *Behind the Attic Wall*. T.Y. Crowell. 1983.
Cooper, Susan. *Over Sea, Under Stone*. Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc. 1965.
Hahn, Mary Downing. *All the Lovely Bad Ones*. Clarion Books, 2008.
Ibbotson, Eva. *Dial-a-Ghost*. Dutton Children's Books. 1996.
La Fevers, R.L. *Theodosia and the Serpents of Chaos*. Houghton Mifflin. 2007.
McAllister, Margaret. *Ghost at the Window*. Dutton Children's Books. 2002.

RELATED WEB SITES:**Christine Morton Shaw:**

http://www.harpercollins.com/authors/27785/Christine_MortonShaw/index.aspx?authorID=27785

ATPE Book of the Month Club:

<http://www.atpe.org/resources/educators/bookclubfiles/201102FebGrade6-8Questions.pdf>

History of Ghost Stories:

<http://www.history.com/topics/historical-ghost-stories>

REVIEWS:

Morton-Shaw, Christine. *The Hunt for the Seventh*. HarperCollins, 2008

Booklist 105 (January 1, 2009): 82

Kirkus (September 15, 2008)

School Library Journal 55(May 1, 2009): 116

Neri, G. *GHETTO COWBOY*. Candlewick, August 9, 2011

SUMMARY:

Twelve-year-old Cole is too much for his mom to handle, so she drives him from Detroit to Philadelphia so he can live with his father Harper, a man he does not remember ever having met. There he meets a community of black men who man stables in the heart of the inner city and call themselves cowboys. Initially, this clash of culture is almost more than Cole can stand, but as he begins to know the neighborhood and its inhabitants and both witnesses and absorbs the Cowboy Code, he becomes one of the forces that fight to maintain this unusual lifestyle from extinction. The book is inspired by the real inner city horseman of South Philadelphia PA and Brooklyn NY.

QUESTIONS:

Why does Cole's mother take him to Philadelphia? Describe the situation. What is Cole's reaction to this?

Why does Harper call Cole Coltrane? What does Cole learn about his name?

What makes Chester Avenue different from the surrounding area?

Where does Cole get \$20? Why does he want this money?

Explain the origin of the term COWBOY, according to Tex.

What is the Ritz-Carlton? Why is this an odd name for this place?

Where do the horses on Chester Avenue come from?

Why does Cole name his horse Boo? What "bling" does he give his horse?

Describe the Speedway. What happens there?

How does the relationship between Harper and Cole start to change? Why is this happening?

What does the city of Philadelphia want to do about the horses? Why?

How does the Cowboy community stand up to the city? What role does Cole play in this?

How have Cole's life and living arrangements changed at the end of the book?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If the only belongings you could keep for yourself had to fit into two large black trash bags, what would you choose?

Explain a relationship you have had with a pet or other animal. Was it significant to you? What made it so?

ACTIVITIES:

Research the Federation of Black Cowboys. Make a list of things that Neri uses in his book that are authentic to this information.

Write a poem expressing the Cowboy Code.

Investigate organizations in your area that rescue animals. What kinds of animals are rescued?

Why and how is this accomplished?

Research the jazz musician John Coltrane. Listen to some of his music. Share your findings with your class.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

Seventh grader Cole has disappointed his mother for the last time. When she finds out that he has been ditching school for the last four weeks, she picks him up at the principal's office and then keeps driving all the way from Detroit to Philadelphia. There he is dumped on his father's doorstep with all of his belongings in back garbage bags. He doesn't ever remember having met this man named Harper and is not one bit interested in getting to know about him and his unusual way of life as an inner-city cowboy!

READ-ALIKES:

Holm, Jennifer L., *Turtle in Paradise*. Random House, 2010
Neri, G., *Chess Rumble*. Lee & Low Books Inc., 2007
Schmidt, Gary D., *Okay for Now*. Clarion, 2011
Strasser, Todd, *If I Grow Up*. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2009
Williams-Garcia, *One Crazy Summer*. Harper Collins, 2010

RELATED WEB SITES:

G. Neri: www.gregneri.com

Candlewick Press Teacher's Guide:

http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763649228.btg.1.pdf

Book Trailer www.vimeo.com/26771823

Horses in North Philly: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xcEMghqjcg>

John Coltrane: <http://www.johncoltrane.com>

REVIEWS:

Neri, G. *GHETTO COWBOY*. Candlewick, August 9, 2011

Booklist 108(September 15, 2011): 66

Kirkus Reviews: (July 15, 2011)

School Library Journal 57(October 1, 2011): 143

Nicholls, Sally. *Ways to Live Forever*. Scholastic, 2008

SUMMARY:

The friendship of two boys, Felix and Sam, begins in a hospital as they both battle cancer. They are home schooled together as they each face a terminal diagnosis. They each have a list of “Things They Want to Do” and ponder “The Questions Nobody Answers.” They cross items off their To-Do list and find some answers. Sam chronicles their adventures in his book and even makes provisions for the ending.

QUESTIONS:

What are five questions that nobody answers?

Same uses writing as a therapy. What activities are therapeutic for you?

Why do you think Felix did not want his mother there when he died?

Where do you think the boys got the courage to try the things on their “To-Do” list?

Can you explain the expression, “A Happy Death”?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Five things that I would like to do in the next ten years include...

ACTIVITIES:

Have afternoon tea.

Find some specifically English terms in this book and define them.

Ask a physician or a hospice worker to read this book and then discuss the aspects of death and dying with your group.

Most of us have lost someone close to us through death. Write a list of ten special things about that person.

Participate in some volunteer activity that supports childhood cancers.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

“My name is Sam. I am eleven years old. I collect stories and fantastic facts. I have leukemia. By the time you read this I will probably be dead.” (page 1). If you knew you were going to die--- how would you want that to play out? Sam and Felix have the opportunity to have some control of that. Their friendship is based on shared hospitalizations and home schooling and is full of banter, mischievousness and support. They make lists of what they want to do and more importantly, tackle the questions that “No One Wants to Ask”---like: What does it feel like to die” or “Will the world still be here when I am gone?” While the boys are processing this journey together, their families and friends are right there, going through their own struggles and

trying to be the support that Sam and Felix need. Sam writes it all down in his book and you owe him a good read!

READ-ALIKES:

Coerr, Eleanor. *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. Putnam, 1977
Kadohata, Cynthia. *Kira-Kira*. Atheneum, 2004
Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*. HarperCollins, 1977
Park, Barbara. *Mick Harte Was Here*. Knopf, 1995
Wiles, Barbara. *Each Little Bird That Sings*, Harcourt, 2005.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Sally Nicholls: <http://www.sallynicholls.com>

Scholastic Discussion Guide:

http://www.scholastic.com/motherdaughterbookclub/pdf/Scholastic_MDBC_LiveForever.pdf

Teacher's Booklet:

<https://www.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/Secondary/Literature/Plays/NewWindmillsFiction/Resources/U-Z/WaystoLiveForever.pdf>

Childhood Cancer: Leukemia:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/cancer/cancer_leukemia.html

Talking to Children About Death:

http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/patient_education/pepubs/childeath.pdf

REVIEWS:

Nicholls, Sally. *Ways to Live Forever*. Scholastic, 2008

Booklist 105(November 15, 2008): 60

Publishers Weekly 255(September 15, 2008): 67

School Library Journal 54(November 1, 2008): 134

Palacio, R.J. *Wonder*. Knopf, 2012

SUMMARY:

Auggie is a ten year old who was born with severe facial abnormalities. Although home-schooled, he is used to the stares of people when they encounter him for the first time. However, nothing quite prepares him for entry into “real” school and daily interaction with the middle school population. The story is told from multiple points-of-view, including Auggie, his sister and several of the students with whom he forms relationships.

Auggie’s challenges bring out the worst in many of his middle school classmates, but the best in others and it is the guidance of the their teacher and the principal who help them make sense of it all.

QUESTIONS:

Who was the first person at school to truly befriend August?

Why do you think the principal asked Jack and Charlotte to meet August before school started?

Was he right or wrong?

Put yourself in Via’s place. What does that feel like?

What was the secret that Grans shared with Val? Why was it important?

Why and how was Miranda different when the school year began?

How did Mrs. Pullman get split between being “Via’s Mom” and “August’s Mom”?

Why did Auggie feel different on Halloween?

What was “The Plague”? What is your opinion of the game?

Did Auggie belong at Beecher Prep?

Which characters demonstrated bravery in this story? How?

Why did Via not want her parents to attend the high school play?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

A precept by which I try to live is:

ACTIVITIES:

Research how the author got the idea for this story

Make a list of three precepts that are important to you.

Watch a recording of Natalie Merchant singing “Wonder.”

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TZ-v5BW-pQ>)

Find pictures of the Star Wars characters that are mentioned in the book.

Arrange a presentation for the group on genetics and gene mutation.

Ask a counselor to guide a discussion on bullying and mean behavior.

Document over a period of time, how you can “choose kind.”

Read sections of *Our Town*.

Talk with an administrator at your school about Mr. Tushman’s graduation address.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

We all know it's not easy being different, but Auggie was different in MAJOR ways! He was born with dramatic facial abnormalities that caused those with whom he comes in contact to do (at the very least) a double take. Halloween is his favorite holiday because that's when he can hide behind a mask and be just like everyone else. He's been home-schooled all of his life and has lived in a relatively controlled environment, but when he enrolls in "real" school, the challenges begin. Up close and personal we see full out nasty kids, kids who put up a façade and kids, who by their very nature, can be nothing other than genuinely good. While the kids in this book make plenty of mistakes, lots of kids get to know Auggie and learn the value of choosing kind.

READ-ALIKES:

Abbott, Tony. *Firegirl*. Little, Brown, 2006
Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum, 2010.
Graff, Lisa. *The Thing About Georgie*. HarperCollins, 2006.
Lord, Cynthia. *Rules*. Scholastic, 2006.
Philbrick, Rodman. *Freak the Mighty*. Scholastic, 1993.
Sonnenblick, Jordan. *Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie*. Scholastic, 2004.

RELATED WEB SITES:

R.J. Palacio: <http://rjpalacio.com>
Random House Study Guide: http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Wonder_EG_WEB.pdf
Interview with R.J. Palacio: <http://www.npr.org/2013/09/12/221005752/how-one-unkind-moment-gave-way-to-wonder>
Help Readers Love Reading: <http://www.helpreaderslovereading.com/2012/03/wonder-by-r-j-palacio.html>
Choose Kind: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/28/choose-kind-rj-palacio-chip-kidd_n_1706056.html
Basic Genetics: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swXg3FJhYoY>
Characteristics of Middle School Students: <http://www.mnps.org/Page49120.aspx>

REVIEWS:

Palacio, R.J. *Wonder*. Knopf, 2012.
Booklist 108(February 1, 2012): 77
Publishers Weekly 259(February 20, 2012):
School Library Journal 57(February 1, 2012): 130
Kirkus, December 15, 2011

Perkins, Mitali. *Bamboo People*. Charlesbridge, 2010

SUMMARY:

The story of two boys, Chiko and Tu Reh---both struggling to survive in Burma. Chiko's father is taken away by soldiers and he is taken to be a soldier as he tries to apply for a teaching position. Chiko's experience with the soldiers is brutal and violent. One Chiko's brains and the street smarts of his new friend Tai allow him to survive in the training camp. Eventually, he is sent out on a mission to look for a stash of weapons. The explosion of land mines take that mission to an undesired conclusion. We also meet Tu Reh, the son of a Karenni resistance fighter. Tu Reh lives in a refugee camp and is filled with anger towards the Burmese people. When Tu Reh and his father discover the wounded Chiko, choices have to be made that will change them all.

QUESTIONS:

Why does the author refer to the country as Burma, rather than Myanmar?

What is the significance of the title: *Bamboo People*?

What skills do you think Tai developed by living on the street?

What responsibilities were Tai and Chiko given because of their individual skills?

What strategy does Chiko use to get information about his father?

As Chiko improves in kick-boxing, he warns himself: "*Careful, Chiko, ... You might start to like this.*" What did he mean?

What is a mine clearer?

What does Peh's statement: "One decision leads to another." mean?

Do you believe that goodness and beauty can come from anything?

Who are the wisdom characters in this story?

Why do most of the villagers scorn Tu Reh?

JOURNAL STARTER:

The photograph that is most meaningful to me is

ACTIVITIES:

Track this story on a map.

Compare the survival skills of Tai and Chiko and Tu Reh.

Invite a literacy tutor to discuss the process of teaching reading and writing to older students.

Display some bamboo and discuss the uses of this plant.

Listen to a recording of "Turn! Turn! Turn!" (Seeger)

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

It's all about the decision. Chiko decides to apply for a teaching position, only to be stolen by the Burmese soldiers for their training camp. Barely surviving the brutality of the camp, he decides to give the office position that would have sent him home to his friend Tai and instead accepts a position in a crew searching for weapons in the jungle---a decision that ultimately costs him his leg. Tu Reh also makes decisions. His father instructs him to decide what to do with the wounded Burmese soldier----mercy killing would have been an option. Instead, Tu Reh brings him to the healer's hut and eventually back to his village. It was a dangerous choice and a choice that led to Tu Reh being shunned by most of the village. Both boys made decisions that changed their lives and the lives of those around them. Travel with them through Burma and determine what decisions you might have made.

READ-ALIKES:

Hobbs, Will. *Crossing the Wire*. HarperCollins, 2006.
McCormick, Patricia. *Never Fall Down*. Balzar + Bray, 2012 (Note: Older Audience)
Park, Linda Sue. *A Long Walk to Water*. Clarion, 2010.
Sheth, Kashmira. *Boys Without Names*. Balzar + Bray, 2010
Smith, Roland. *Elephant Run*. Hyperion, 2007.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Mitali Perkins: <http://www.mitaliperkins.com>
Bamboo People Discussion Guide: <http://www.bamboopeople.org/p/discussion-guide.html>
Child Soldiers International: http://www.child-soldiers.org/country_reader.php?id=4
Myanmar Profile: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-12990563>

REVIEWS:

Perkins, Mitali. *Bamboo People*. Charlesbridge, 2010

Booklist 106(May 15, 2010): 38
Publishers Weekly 257(June 14, 2010):
School Library Journal 56(November 1, 2010): 124
Kirkus Reviews, June 15, 2010

Reedy, Trent. Words in the Dust. Scholastic, 2011

SUMMARY:

Zulaikha is an Afghan girl born with a cleft palate. This facial deformity causes her no end of unkindness and pity from the community in which she lives, including family members who tease and worry about her ability to find a suitable husband. She also has a spirit that yearns for education and more freedom than Afghan women are afforded. Zulaikha is given two wonderful opportunities. One is from the American soldiers and medical personnel who try to arrange corrective surgery for her. The second is in the form of a former professor (now seamstress) who offers to teach her to read and write. Once promising, these opportunities are thwarted every step of the way by the pride of others and long ingrained customs and traditions. But Zulaikha is perseverant

QUESTIONS:

To what does the title, *Words in the Dust*, refer?
Why did Trent Reedy write this book?
Why does Anwar call Zulaikha, Donkeyface?
What events bring about Zulaikha's desire to learn to read?
Why was Zulaikha frightened when she learned that the Americans were looking for her?
What were some reasons that Zulaikha had trouble interacting with the Americans?
What went wrong when Zulaikha and her father went to Farah to meet the helicopter?
What do we learn about Malehkah by the end of the book?

JOURNAL STARTER:

Women should be treatedbecause.....

ACTIVITIES:

Create a list of Afghani words and their meanings. Discuss Zeynab within those parameters. Listen to Malala Yousafzai's Address to the U.N.:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SCImL43dTo>
Invite a medical professional to speak to your group about the treatment Zulaikha would have received to repair her cleft palate.
Find and read some Afghan folktales and poetry?
Define and discuss corporal punishment. Is it ever appropriate?

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 7-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine that you're a girl in a society where girls and women are not valued. Then imagine you're a girl with a facial deformity. There's not a lot of hope and not a lot of opportunity for this Afghan child. Zulaika is teased by others and worked hard by her stepmother. But life

presents her with opportunities for corrective surgery, as well as a woman who is willing to teach her to read---two circumstances that will totally change her life. Her life does change, but not without heartache and the realization of all that she values in life.

READ-ALIKES:

Abbott, Tony. *Firegirl*. Little, Brown, 2007.
Ellis, Deborah. *The Breadwinner*. Douglas & MacIntyre, 2000.
Ellis, Deborah. *Mud City*. Groundwood Books, 2004.
Ellis, Deborah. *Parvana's Journey*. Groundwood Books, 2003.
Staples, Suzanne. *Under the Persimmon Tree*. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2005.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Trent Reedy: <http://www.trentreedy.com> m
Trent Reedy Interview: <http://goo.gl/0oYTGk>
Historical Timeline of Afghanistan:
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/asia/afghanistan/timeline
Women's Rights in Afghanistan: <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=12150>
Cleft Palate: <http://www.cleftline.org/parents-individuals>
Afghan Wedding Traditions: <http://www.onislam.net/english/culture-and-entertainment/traditions/411646-afghan-muslim-wedding.html>

REVIEWS:

Booklist 107(January 1, 2011): 111
Publishers Weekly 257(November, 29, 2010)
School Library Journal 57(February 1, 2011): 118
Kirkus Reviews (December 1, 2010)

Schmidt, Gary. *Okay for Now*. Clarion Books, 2011.

SUMMARY: Doug (rhymes with thug) is the youngest of the three Swieteck brothers. After his father loses his job, he moves the family to Marysville, NY for a position at another papermill. One brother finds the bad kids to hang with right away, the oldest is in Vietnam, and Doug discovers the library where there is an entire book of Audubon's illustrated birds. While he doesn't read, or draw, Doug comes to do both due to the persistent efforts of a town that is keeping one boy, and therefore his entire family, from falling through the cracks.

QUESTIONS:

Doug talks to you as you read. For example on page 75 he says, "...in case you weren't paying attention...did you catch what Mr. Powell called me? 'Young artist.' I bet you missed that."

How did that affect you as you read?

Why was Doug's mother so patient and silent about what was happening?

Why do you think Mr. Ballard was nice to Doug?

How did Doug help the playwright, Mrs. Windermere? How did she help him?

What made Doug think he could restore the prints to Audubon's Book of Birds? Was that even a reasonable goal?

What did Lil Spicer see in Doug? What kind of friends were they?

Did Doug's father change? What about his brothers Randy & Lucas? Are they any different at the end of the book? Which characters do change?

Why did the gym teacher give Lucas a job? Do you think he'll be any good at it?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

When everyone thought it was my fault, they treated me like....

I know my _____ teacher doesn't like me because....

A special person who makes a difference in my life is

I didn't think I was good at _____ until

ACTIVITIES:

Look at images of Audubon's birds and try to copy one first using pencil, then outlining with marker and finally painting with watercolors on good watercolor paper.

Try a library database to learn some facts about the Vietnam War, the Apollo space missions, or baseball stars such as Babe Ruth & Joe Pepitone.

Learn the official rules to the game of horseshoes and try playing.

Make a list of trivia questions for your favorite sport, and then hold a contest to see who can answer the most.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 7-8

BOOKTALK:

It seems like everything is going against Doug Swieteck, from the oppressive summer heat to the new town where he has just moved. Perhaps motivated by the air conditioning, Doug tries the library where he discovers the most amazing picture in a giant book on birds. Audubon's Arctic Tern is about to crash and maybe Doug is too. But the town isn't so willing to let this skinny thug to fall through the cracks. Although it seems like he and his family are bad news all around, there are people he meets that might make a difference. From the librarian who understands art to the playwright who needs inspiration; from the completely unfair gym teacher, to the company owner who plays horseshoes; from the science teacher who figures out he can't read, to a girl who teaches him how to drink a cold can of Coke, perhaps there is also hope for a kid who can't seem to get a break.

READ-ALIKES:

Gantos, Jack. *Dead End in Norvelt*. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2011.
Lai, Thanhha. *Inside Out & Back Again*. Harper, 2011.
Schmidt, Gary. *The Wednesday Wars*. Clarion Books, 2007.
Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. Ember, 2012.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Gary Schmidt's university website: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/engl/faculty/schmidt>
On Alcoholism:

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/alcohol_abuse_alcoholism_signs_effects_treatment.htm

Digital Images of Audubon Prints: <http://www.npr.org/2013/02/28/172877128/with-audubons-help-beat-up-kid-is-okay-for-now>
<http://digital.library.pitt.edu/a/audubon/>

NPR interview with Gary Schmidt: <http://www.npr.org/2013/02/28/172877128/with-audubons-help-beat-up-kid-is-okay-for-now>

BOOK REVIEW CITATIONS:

Schmidt, Gary. *Okay for Now*. Clarion Books, 2011.

Booklist (April 15, 2011)

Publishers Weekly 258(February 21, 2011)

School Library Journal 57(April 01, 2011): 184

Kashmira, Sheth. *Boys Without Names*. Balzer + Bray, 2010

SUMMARY:

Poverty and hunger force eleven year old Gopal and his family to leave their village and travel to their uncle's home outside of Mumbai. However, everything goes wrong. Gopal's father leaves the family in Mumbai to find the uncle, but he doesn't return, forcing the family to find their uncle, Jama, on their own. The disappearance of their father causes grief and stress for the four remaining family members and Gopal wants more than anything to care for his family. When the prospect of a factory job appears, Gopal determines this will work for them. That job prospect was a sham. Gopal was drugged and sold to a brutal sweatshop owner. Gopal's single focus is to find a way to escape and find a way back to his family.

QUESTIONS:

- To whom does the title of this book refer?
- Why did Gopal's family need to leave their village?
- How does Gopal try to make money for his family?
- What do you think happened to Baba on his way to Jama's?
- How was Gopal enticed to come and work in the factory?
- How would you describe Scar?
- Why did Scar not allow any names to be used?
- What stands in the way of Gopal trying to escape?
- Why were the stories that Gopal told so important?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

A story that has had an impact on me is _____ because
If my family was in dire need, I would....

ACTIVITIES:

- Collect food or volunteer at agency that feeds the poor.
- If you can, find someone who can help you prepare an Indian meal.
- Read some Indian folktales.
- Compare today's sweatshops to those in the past. Has anything improved?
- Study a map of India---what cities do you recognize?
- Do some research on current child labor laws.
- Make a beaded frame.
- Research the holiday of Diwali

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Lost and alone---that's how Gopal and his family feels when their father doesn't return after leaving them in Mumbai to find an uncle. Gopal is desperate to help his family and when a factory job is promised he snaps it up. But this is no factory, it's a sweatshop. Gopal and his five co-workers, "boys without names," spend hour after hour attaching beads to frames with little food and little rest. Even worse, they are brutalized by the sweatshop owner, a man they refer to as Scar. Can Gopal find a way out? Pick up *Boys Without Names* and see!

READ-ALIKES:

Fletcher, Susan. *Shadow Spinner*. Atheneum, 1998
McCaughrean, Geraldine. *The Kite Rider*. HarperCollins, 2002
Venkatraman, Padma. *Climbing the Stairs*. Putnam, 2008

RELATED WEB SITES:

Kashmira Sheth: <http://kashmirasheth.com>

Junior Library Guild Discussion Guide:

http://www.juniorlibraryguild.com/images/9781936129195/StudyguideTeacher/BoysWoutNames_TE_JLGuide.pdf

Harper Collins Discussion Guide:

<http://files.harpercollins.com/PDF/ReadingGuides/0061857602.pdf>

Mumbai: National Geographic Guide: <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/city-guides/mumbai-india>

History of Mumbai: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/india/mumbai-bombay/history>

11 Facts About Sweatshops: <http://www.dosomething.org/tipsandtools/11-facts-about-sweatshops>

REVIEWS:

Kashmira, Sheth. *Boys Without Names*. Balzer + Bray, 2010

Publishers Weekly 256(December 21, 2009): 61

School Library Journal 56(January 1, 2010): 113

Kirkus Reviews (November 15, 2009)

Tunnell, Michael O. *Candy Bomber: The Story of the Berlin Airlift's "Chocolate Pilot."* Charlesbridge, 2010.

SUMMARY:

Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen was a pilot participating in the Berlin Airlift in 1948. When he gave two sticks of gum to children waiting by the fence at Tempelhof Air Base, he decided that he could do more. He created parachutes from handkerchiefs and filled them with gum and candy. He included his creations in the drops from his plane and the joy and popularity of these “candy bombs” exploded. From a one man operation, this grew to a multinational effort. For sixteen months, the children of West Berlin received an ongoing demonstration of care and a cause for hope.

QUESTIONS:

What difference did two sticks of gum make in Gail Halvorsen’s life?
Why was Lieutenant Halvorsen known as “Uncle Wiggly Wings”?
What was the official Air Force name for the candy drop?
Photographs are used throughout this book. What difference do they make in telling the story?
Can you give examples from recent history when people have joined together to do good for a specific group of people?
More than the deliciousness of the candy, what did the candy drop represent to the people in West Berlin?
How did Lieutenant propose to his future wife?
What were some of the unexpected outcomes of Operation Little Vittles?

JOURNAL STARTER:

Gail Halvorsen learned the following phrase from his parents: “From little things come big things.” Big things that have come from little things in my life include.....

ACTIVITIES:

Have a bubble gum blowing competition.
Collect candy and donate it to a children’s shelter.
Try and enact the candy drop with your group, substituting an upstairs window for the plane.
Think of someone who has been very kind to you and write a thank you note.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

All he did was give two sticks of gum to kids waiting by the fence at Tempelhof Air Base in Germany. But when he saw the reaction of those kids---wanting to share the gum and making the experience last as long as possible, he knew that he had to do more.

Lieutenant Gail Halvorsen was in Germany to drop food as part of the Berlin Airlift---providing sustenance for people in West Germany, where a blockade had been set up by the Russians. Lt. Halvorsen determined that a little candy could be placed in a parachute fashioned from a handkerchief and dropped from the plane. After that first drop in 1948, the rest was history! Those “Candy Bombs” dropped over West Berlin, gave the residents of that war-ravaged city far more than a sugar-rush!

READ-ALIKES:

Fleming, Candace. *Boxes for Katje*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003

Halvorsen, Gail S. *The Berlin Candy Bomber*. Horizon Publishers, 2002.

Raven, Margot Theis. *Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot*. Sleeping Bear Press, 2012.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Michael O. Tunnell: <http://www.michaelotunnell.com>

Discussion and Study Guide:

http://www.charlesbridge.com/client/client_pdfs/downloadables/CandyBomber_ActivityDiscussion_Guide.pdf

The Candy Bomber Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-4vE6DCLeU>

Uncle Wiggly Wings:

http://www.capmembers.com/media/cms/Uncle_Wiggly_Halvorsen_Story_LR_E5143D25300A3.pdf

Douglas C-54: http://www.militaryfactory.com/aircraft/detail.asp?aircraft_id=110

REVIEWS:

Tunnell, Michael O. *Candy Bomber: The Story of the Berlin Airlift's "Chocolate Pilot."* Charlesbridge, 2010.

Booklist: 106(June 1, 2010): 99

Horn Book: 86(September/October, 2010): 107-108

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. Knopf, 2011.

SUMMARY:

Jessica is a sixteen year old runner who has just lost her leg in a school bus accident. She begins to process the trauma during her hospital stay and starts to move ahead with life as her recuperation begins. She knows she will stand and she will walk, but the question of whether or not she will run is what is most important to her. While her family supports her rehabilitation and struggles to pay the bills, her teammates work hard to realize the dream of buying Jessica a running leg.

QUESTIONS:

What is Rigor Mortis Bend?

What are the various ways in which Jessica's friends react to her accident?

What is phantom pain?

What was Jessica's experience with pain medication?

How and when does hope begin to return to Jessica's life?

What are Jessica's struggles while interacting with her team mates?

How is Rosa able to help Jessica?

Does Jessica help Rosa?

What are the financial implications of this accident for Jessica's family?

What is the impact of telling the story in the first person?

JOURNAL STARTER:

If I could change one thing, it would be.....

ACTIVITIES:

Watch Oscar Pistorius run: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IxmUMALSxE>

Invite a medical professional to talk with your group about amputation and prosthetics.

Create and participate in a running event of some type.

Arrange for disability sensitivity training.

Participate in a fund raiser of importance to your group.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTALK:

Begin by reading Chapter 2 of the book. The meet was a success and they were headed home when.... When an uninsured driver hit the school bus and one student was killed and sixteen year old Jessica lost her leg. She experiences every emotion in the world as she deals with the trauma---grief, anger, doubt...the whole nine yards. Her friends aren't really sure how to show their support and the adults don't really know how to proceed. Running again is Jessica's dream,

but how can that happen? It might take a lot of money, the best medical technology, courage and determination, but pick up *Running Dream* and see how Jessica and all her supporters make it happen!

READ-ALIKES:

Bingham, Kelly. *Shark Girl*. Candlewick, 2007.
Draper, Sharon. *Out of My Mind*. Atheneum, 2010.
Voight, Cynthia. *Izzy-Willy-Nilly*. Atheneum, 1986.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Wendelin Van Draanen: <http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/vandraanen>

Wendelin's Blog: <http://etrtr.blogspot.com>

Book Rags Study Questions: <http://www.bookrags.com/studyguide-the-running-dream/topicsfordiscussion.html>

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/cbec/DCFBookReviews%26Questions12-13.pdf>

Louisiana Young Readers Choice Study Guide: <http://www.state.lib.la.us/literacy-and-reading/louisiana-young-readers-choice/2014-lyrc-6-8th-grade-study-guides->

Running On My Last Leg: <http://runningonmylastleg.com>

Terry Fox: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry_Fox

REVIEWS:

Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. Knopf, 2011.

Kirkus 78(December 15, 2010): 1274.

California Reader 44(Summer, 2011): 49.

Walker, Sally M. *Blizzard of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917*. Henry Holt and Company, 2011.

SUMMARY:

This non-fiction piece takes place in 1917 when on December 6, two ships, the Imo and the Mont-Blanc, collided in Halifax Harbor in Nova Scotia, Canada. One of the ships was loaded with munitions for the troops fighting in Europe; the other was preparing to collect medical supplies for the war's victims.

The resulting disaster was the largest man-made explosion until the detonation of the atomic bomb in 1945. The blast, which killed nearly 2,000 people, flattened large areas of Halifax and the town across the harbor, Dartmouth. As if that wasn't devastating enough, a blizzard hit the next day, dumping more than a foot of snow on the area and slowing much needed relief efforts.

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think that the ships, Imo and the Mont-Blanc were in the Halifax Harbor at the same time? What could have been done to keep these two ships from colliding?

Why do you think that Sally Walker titled her book, Blizzard of Glass?

Describe a tsunami. How did this collision cause one?

Who did the survivors blame for this catastrophe and why?

What did the city of Halifax do to recover and how did residents cope with the reconstruction of their town?

Quote – “Yet the only time a story or a life completely disappears is when it is no longer shared.”

What does this mean to this story and can this have some meaning in your life through experiences you have had?

How did the crew know or suspect that the Mont-Blanc was being loaded with explosives?

Why did the ship go to Halifax from New York instead of going to Europe after being loaded?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I had been a survivor of this disaster I would have. . .

To help people remember this tragedy I would. . .

ACTIVITIES:

Research a tsunami- what is a tsunami; how does a tsunami begin and how damaging are they.

Research how Halifax recovered and how they rebuilt the town. What is Halifax like today?

Compare this collision of two ships with the Titanic colliding with an iceberg. How were the situation similar and how were they different?

Research Halifax, Nova Scotia in Canada.

Compare the blast in Halifax Harbor with the Atomic Bomb blast in Japan in 1945.

Research the Tufts Cove Mi'kmaq Settlement.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

The time is December 6, 1917. The place is the Halifax Harbor in Nova Scotia, Canada. Two ships, one carrying 2,925 tons of explosive munitions for war torn Europe and the other carrying medical supplies, collide. The resulting explosion is devastating. The towns of Halifax and Dartmouth are nearly flattened – over 2000 people were killed. The explosion created a tsunami and the next day a snow blizzard hit the area with more than a foot of snow. How could the survivors manage? If you like non-fiction, stories of tragedy and survival, you will like Sally M. Walker's *Blizzard of Glass*.

READ-ALIKES:

Sally Walker has an extensive bibliography in her book.

Adams, Simon. *Titanic*. DK Publishing, Inc., 1999.

Armstrong, Jennifer. *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*. Crown, 1998.

Ballard, Robert D. *Exploring the Titanic*. A Scholastic/Madison Press Book, 1988.

Ballard, Robert D. *The Lost Wreck of the Isis*. A Hodder & Stoughton/Madison Press Book, 1990

Brewster, Hugh. *8821/2 Amazing Answers to your Questions about the Titanic*. A Scholastic/Madison Press Books, 1998.

Falls, Kat. *Dark Life*. Scholastic, 2010.

Herlong, M.H. *The Great Wide Sea*. Viking, 2008.

McKernan, Victoria. *Shackleton's Stowaway*. Knopf, 2005.

Mone, Gregory. *Dangerous Waters: An Adventure on the Titanic*. Scholastic, 2012.

Spence, David and Susan. *Shipwrecks*. Barron's, 1999.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Sally M. Walker: www.sallymwalker.com

Young Hoosier Discussion Guide:

<http://www.ilfonline.org/clientuploads/2013%20YHBA%20Middle%20Grade%20Resources/Blizzard%20of%20Glass.pdf>

Halifax Explosion: <http://www.cbc.ca/halifaxexplosion>

The Halifax Explosion: In the Blink of an Eye: <http://www.halifaxexplosion.org/intro.html>

REVIEWS:

Walker, Sally M. *Blizzard of Glass: The Halifax Explosion of 1917*. Henry Holt and Company, 2011.

Booklist 108(November 1, 2011): 50

Horn Book 87(November/December 2011): 130-131

Kirkus 79(October 1, 2011): 1829-1830

Yelchin, Eugene, *BREAKING STALIN'S NOSE*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2011.

SUMMARY:

“Last night, my dad said, ‘Tomorrow’s a big day’. He was right. It was a big day. It changed my life forever.” Ten-year-old Sasha lives in the Soviet Union with his dad who works for the State Security. Sasha’s dream is to become a Young Pioneer and a devoted Communist like his father. Now that the time had come, Sasha is not so sure. That night Sasha’s father is arrested and taken to prison. Everything that Sasha knows is now turned upside down. He is evicted from his home, sleeps in the basement, and arrives late to school, not knowing what has happened to his father. As he prepares and practices for the celebration of his enrollment into the Young Pioneers where his father is supposed to tie the young Pioneer scarves around each boy’s neck, Sasha accidentally breaks off the nose of a statue of Stalin. He thinks he is not seen, but a boy from his class sees the incident and threatens to expose Sasha. After a series of manipulative, cruel, and scary mind-games initiated by adults and other students, Sasha is told to denounce his father. He will then be worthy to be a Young Pioneer. In this desperate situation what is Sasha to do?

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think Sasha is so excited to be a Young Pioneer?
Do you think Sasha understands what being a Young Pioneer really means?
Why do you think Sasha’s father was arrested?
Why do you think Sasha’s aunt will not care for him after his father is arrested?
Would you behave as Sasha’s classmates did when the teacher was attacked? Why?
Would you accept the request of the lieutenant and denounce your father as Sasha is asked to do? Why?
Do you agree with Sasha’s decision at the end of the story? Why or why not?
What do you think will happen to the woman who takes Sasha in? Are either one of them safe? Why or why not?
Who is Sasha’s mother?
What is a “mind game”? What can it do?
What does it mean to be a Communist?
What makes you trust and believe in someone?
Would you always do what your parents or someone in authority told you to do? Why or why not?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I had a difficult choice to make when....

ACTIVITIES:

Discuss the illustrations. What is going on? What can you tell from the faces of the people?
Research what a map of the old SSR looked like. Compare with present day Russia

Define a Young Pioneer.

Research Stalin's Life and compare him as a ruler to the present day ruler of Russia

Read a biography of Stalin and write how he came into power.

Research the flags of Russia how many have there been? Draw them

Research and draw the uniforms of the various units in the government offices as well as the Young Pioneers uniform.

Research Communism, show pros and cons of the philosophy.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTALK:

If you were a ten-year-old boy and your greatest dream was coming true, you would be very excited. Sasha Zaichik is so excited, he can hardly wait. He has known the laws of the Young Pioneers since he was six. On the eve of his induction, his father is arrested and sent to prison. Is everything he thought about his beloved Soviet a lie?

READ-ALIKES:

Bartoletti Susan Campbell. *The Boy Who Dared*. Scholastic, 2008.

Sepetys, Ruta. *Between Shades of Gray*. Philomel, 2011.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Eugene Velchin: <http://www.eugeneyelchinbooks.com>

Macmillan Discussion Guide:

<http://media.us.macmillan.com/discussionguides/9780805092165DG.pdf>

Young Pioneers:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Pioneer_Organization_of_the_Soviet_Union

Historic Figures: Joseph Stalin:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/stalin_joseph.shtml

REVIEWS:

Yelchin, Eugene, *BREAKING STALIN'S NOSE*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2011.

Booklist 108(October 15, 2011): 56

Publishers Weekly: 28(August 1, 2011)

School Library Journal 57(August 1, 2011): 125