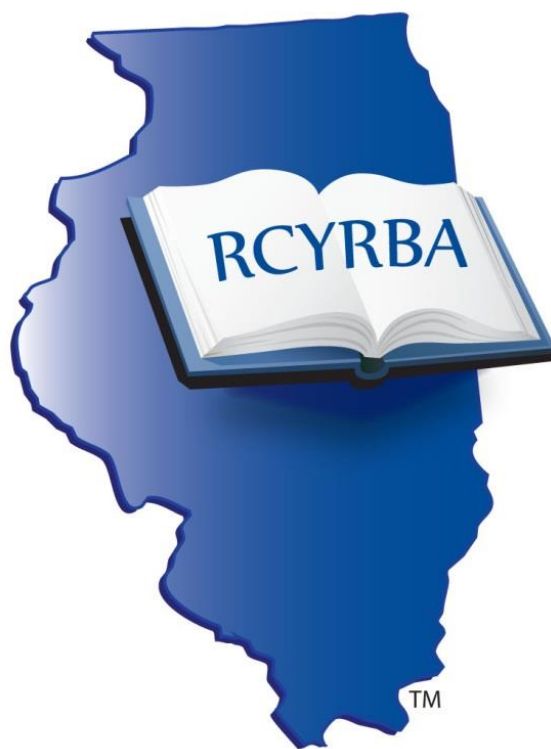


LET'S TALK ABOUT BOOKS

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award List 2017

Suggestions for Use



Edited by Ellen Popit

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Contributors to 2017 Let's Talk About Books

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Introduction

The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (RCYRBA) is now celebrating its twenty-ninth 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 2017. 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 2017 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.

Interest Levels: Interest levels are 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.

Book Trailers: Online “commercials” for books on this list have been added when available.

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 September 13, 2016 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!

Alexander, Kwame. *The Crossover*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

SUMMARY:

Josh is nicknamed Filthy McNasty after a jazz piece by his dad, basketball legend Chuck, “da man” Bell. With his twin Jordan, known as JD, the brothers rule the basketball court on their junior high school team. Their Dad never went pro because of an injury, but has coached his boys to greatness. Unfortunately, he doesn’t take such good care of himself. When JD’s new girlfriend comes between them and Josh can’t get a break, he retaliates on the court. His mother, who is also the assistant principal, benches him and Filthy is out of the game, out of friends, and out of a brother. Divided into four quarters plus overtime, the story of how this family endures the challenge of the boy’s riff and their Dad’s heart attack is gripping, but it is the hip-hop novel in verse and the game that keep the story dynamic: “SWOOP in / to the finish with a fierce finger roll / Straight in the hole: / Swooooooooooooosh.”

QUESTIONS:

Why does Josh take the bet with his brother?
Why won’t the twins’ dad, Chuck “Da Man” Bell go to the doctor?
Is the assistant principal (their mom) unfair?
Why does Josh get in more trouble than JD?
Why is everyone mad at Josh?
Will Josh and JD ever be friends again?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

When Sweet Tea stole my brother, I ...
It wasn’t fair when ...

ACTIVITIES:

Look up the name of Josh & Jordan’s school (Reggie Lewis Junior High) and find out more about the athlete it is named for.
Create a list of nicknames that would be appropriate for kids like Josh & Jordan.
Listen to some of the rappers Josh names: Lil Wayne, Chainz, and Wale, compare them to his dad’s music, especially Horace Silver’s song “Filthy McNasty.”
Write a rap or concrete poem about your favorite subject.
Read “Dear Jordan” page 159 in two voices; create your own.
List out the 10 basketball rules from the book and discuss how these relate to the story.
Examine how dividing this novel into four quarters plus overtime organizes the story.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4 - 8

BOOK TRAILERS:

The Crossover Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BONWz5Ao82E>

BOOKTALK:

“Josh Bell / is my name. / But *Filthy McNasty* is my claim to fame. / Folks call me that / ‘cause my game’s acclaimed, / so downright dirty, it’ll put you to shame.” Filthy is one of the twins in this hip-hop story of star basketball players, brothers. JD: “He’s a / backcourt baller / on the break, / a running gunning / shooting star / flying fast.” JD only liked betting more than basketball until he met Alexis “Sweet Tea.” Brothers aren’t like brothers when one is mad and fouls the other on the court. Filthy gets benched from the game and has to make it up to JD, but JD isn’t so easy, “Tell him that I saw the look in his eyes, and it wasn’t a mistake.” It’s even more challenging when their dad, a basketball legend, denies his health is bad until he collapses on the court. Benched, brotherless, and unable to save his dad, can Filthy fix any of this?

READ-ALIKES:

Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem. *Sasquatch in the Paint*. Disney-Hyperion Books, 2013.
Alexander, Kwame. *Booked*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016.
Booth, Coe. *Kinda Like Brothers*. Scholastic, 2014.
Glenn, Mel. *Jump Ball: A Basketball Season in Poems*. Lodestar Books/Dutton, 1997.
Grimes, Nikki. *Planet Middle School*. Bloomsbury, 2011.
Mack, W. C. *Athlete Vs. Mathlete*. Bloomsbury, 2013.
Smith, Charles R. *Short Takes: Fast-break Basketball Poetry*. Dutton, 2001.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Kwame Alexander’s website: <http://kwamealexander.com/>
Ohio State Library Cultures & Connections Book Kit: https://library.ohio.gov/wp-content/uploads/Crossover_book_kit.pdf
Poetry for Children Guide for The Crossover:
<http://poetryforchildren.blogspot.com/2014/08/guide-crossover-by-kwame-alexander.html>
Rules for Junior High Basketball:
http://assets.ngin.com/attachments/document/0067/0074/Rules_for_JHS_basketball.pdf
Horace Silver performing “Filthy McNasty”:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTYtZa2XrDQ>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (March 15, 2014): 74
Horn Book Magazine (May 1, 2014): 789
School Library Journal (March 1, 2014): 132

Auxier, Jonathan. *The Night Gardener*. Abrams. 2014

SUMMARY:

The Night Gardener is the tale of two orphaned children and the Windsor family. Molly and Kip, along with their parents, are forced to leave Ireland for England. On their journey, the children are separated from their parents. Molly, only 14 years old, is now the caretaker of her younger brother Kip. The two children must find room and board.

They find work at the Windsor Manor but are warned to stay away from the house. The children have no choice but to venture to Windsor Manor where they soon learn that there are strange and evil things happening in the house. They meet the night gardener who leaves muddy tracks in the house every night and the tree which feeds on the souls of whoever asks it to grant it a wish. This is a ghost story and fable introducing the dilemma of greed along with the power of storytelling.

QUESTIONS:

The wagon that Molly and Kip use to get the Windsor Manor has only the letters S, C, O, P left on the side of the wagon, spelling “scop”. How is this significant to the story?

Why do you think Kip’s crutch is named “Courage”?

When Molly is touring the Manor with Mistress Windsor, she sees a portrait of the family which hardly resembles the way they currently look. They now have very pale skin and dark hair. What is the cause of the change in their appearance? Does Molly begin to suffer from the same illness? Why?

What role does the stranger who visits the family every night play? Why is he important to the story?

How does the Windsor family finally overcome the spell of the tree?

How do Molly and Kip help the family escape from Windsor manor?

- Note: Reader’s Guide Discussion Questions and Suggested Activities created by J. Michael Hutchinson at the end of the paperback version could be helpful.

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Molly tells her brother stories to protect him from the truth. Write a story you might tell to protect someone from the truth?

The tree knows your heart’s desires. What would the tree grant you and why?

ACTIVITIES:

Research the Irish Potato Famine.

Study the history of storytelling.

Discuss the power of greed.

Discuss the saying, “Curiosity killed the cat” and how it relates to this story.
Invite a storyteller to your classroom.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5---8

BOOK TRAILER:

Texas Bluebonnet Award: www.teachertube.com/video/thenightgardenerbooktrailer391126

BOOKTALK:

Do you like to read spine tingling, hair raising tales? Then this book is for you. Molly and Kip, orphaned and all alone must find a place to live. They find work at the Windsor Manor where they soon find out that things are not as they seem. There is a stranger who lurks in the darkness and leaves muddy footprints in the house every night and a tree which grants wishes at a very high price...the cost of your soul. The family members who occupy the manor are slowly dying and don't know how to escape. Will Molly and Kip be their salvation? Or will they be sent to their graves? Read *The Night Gardener* to find out!

READALIKES:

Avi. *The Seer of Shadows*. HarperCollins, 2009

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*. HarperCollins, 2012

Oppel, Kenneth. *The Nest*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2015

Priestley, Chris. *Dead of Winter*. Bloomsbury USA, 2012

Stroud, Jonathan. *The Screaming Staircase* (Lockwood & Co.). DisneyHyperion, 2014

RELATED WEB SITES:

Jonathan Auxier: www.thescop.com

Texas Bluebonnet Award: texasbluebonnetaward2016.wordpress.com/the-night-gardener/

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/CBEC/BookAwards/DCF/DCFBookReviewsQuestions15-16.pdf>

Great Famine: www.historylearningsite.co.uk/ireland-1845-to-1922/the-great-famine-of-1845

REVIEWS:

Booklist (June 1, 2014): 95

Horn Book Magazine (May 1, 2014): 79

School Library Journal (April 1, 2014) 138

Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *The War That Saved My Life*. Dial Books, 2015

SUMMARY:

Ten-year-old Ada does not know what normal life is; she doesn't know what it is like to go to school, to have friends and be out in the world. Ada also doesn't know the feeling of a loving parent. Born with a deformed foot, her mother's embarrassment turns to abuse, both physically and emotionally. When Ada thinks she will never escape, World War II comes to her aide. She and her brother are sent with thousands of children on the orphan trains to the English countryside, fleeing the German bombings of London and their mother. What they find is a reluctant foster mother, Susan Smith, who is also escaping emotional turmoil. By supporting each other, all three find solace in what it truly means to be a family.

QUESTIONS:

Discuss the multiple reasons Ada's mother treats her so differently from her brother Jamie. Compare and contrast how Jamie and Ada are feeling on the train to the countryside versus many of the other children on the journey.

How is Ada brave?

Discuss how the theme of loss is used throughout the novel.

JOURNAL STARTERS:

You are riding your pony around the meadow. Using all five senses, describe how you feel. Your mother has just shown up to take you home to London! Write a letter to convince the Children's Welfare Counsel how your life has changed with Susan Smith and that you should stay.

ACTIVITIES:

Show students the photographs of children being evacuated in 1939. Have the group discuss what they see in the pictures. Break down into team of two to make a list of **only 10 items** you would be able to take on the journey. What would you take and WHY? Check http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/world_war2/evacuation for photos.

Listen to the audio recording of children discussing what it is like in their new town. Have students pretend they are one of these children and write a letter home about their new experience. (Top tab with sounds: Evacuees of from Manchester Interviewed)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/world_war2/evacuation/

Research different times and places in history when children were evacuated from their hometowns. For example, have students research Kindertransport

(<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005260>) or Orphan Trains

(<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/orphan/>)

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTRAILER:

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAmfyTzSyX0>

Booktrailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=to0dScB3VBA>

BOOKTALK:

Close your eyes. Stand straight and tall. Take your left foot and turn it in towards your body as far as you can. Feel how hard it would be to walk with a foot that doesn't work like the other one. Now open your eyes.

This is what 10-year-old Ada feels every time she looks down and sees her deformed foot. But that doesn't stop her from learning how to walk all on her own. And where does she walk when she is strong and ready? She runs away with her younger brother Jamie to join the thousands of children escaping London and World War II on trains to the countryside. Not only do they escape the destruction of the German bombings, they escape their abusive mother and find the love they have both been looking for in Susan Smith. With emotional highs and lows, and one gut wrenching plotline twist, Ada sees how World War II will be the defining moment in her life, but for very different reasons.

READ-ALIKES:

Golabek, Mona. *The Children of Willesden Lane*. Grand Central Publishing, 2002.

Hartnett, Sonya. *The Children of the King*. Candlewick Press, 2014.

Magorian, Michelle. *Good night, Mr. Tom*. Harper & Row, 1981.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley: <http://www.kimberlybrubakerbradley.com/>

Penguin Educator's Guide: http://www.penguin.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/WarThatSavedMyLife_Guide_15_4p_LR.pdf

Operation Pied Piper: <http://www.defensemianetwork.com/stories/operation-pied-piper-the-evacuation-of-english-children-during-world-war-ii/>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (December 1, 2014): 56

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (February 1, 2015): 307

Horn Book Magazine (January 1, 2015): 79

School Library Journal: 60(November 1, 2014): 92

Draper, Sharon. *Stella by Starlight*. Atheneum Books, 2015

SUMMARY:

It is 1932 in Bumblebee, North Carolina and segregation is rearing its ugly head. Stella Mills is a happy child in a loving family, but life is not fair. Because of the color of her skin she cannot go to the good school or visit the library. Her father must take a test to be allowed to vote and the fire department won't help their community when there is an emergency. To many African-Americans, that's just the way things are, but when the Ku Klux Klan becomes active, things get dangerous. Stella, her family and her community courageously stand up to the ugly face of discrimination and come out the true heroes of this novel.

QUESTIONS:

- What is the significance of the title of this book?
- What made Mrs. Cathy Cooper the “nicest white lady in bumblebee?”
- What were the differences between Mountainview School and Riverside School?
- Why did Stella practice her writing at night?
- Why didn't the women join their husbands in registering to vote?
- Why wouldn't the fire department come when the Spencer's house was burning?
- What did the white people who showed up to help fight the Spencer's fire prove?
- What was the importance of Pastor Patton's sermon on the morning after the fire?
- What factors contributed to the improvement of Stella's writing?
- What did Stella learn about Dr. Packard from Paulette?

JOURNAL STARTER:

I believe the worst discrimination we fight today is....

ACTIVITIES:

- For a period of several weeks, clip and save interesting articles from the newspaper.
- Do some research on voting rights in the south.
- Find examples in your area in which neighbors have reached out to help others in trouble.
- Find examples of and discuss groups of people who are discriminated against in today's society.
- Listen to some of the American Spirituals included in this book.
- Invite an election judge to talk to your group about the rule surrounding voting.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-7

BOOK TRAILER:

Stella by Starlight: <https://www.powtoon.com/embed/f58oWiq23r/>

BOOKTALK:

Stella is scared. She and her brother have seen the Ku Klux Klan burn a cross not far from their home. Stella knows what it is to be an African-American in North Carolina in 1932. She's used to being discriminated against and she knows the white children have all the advantages. Her world begins to change when several of the men, including her father, decide they will take advantage of their right to vote. The Klan doesn't like that and violence follows. This time, more than a cross is burned. It is frightening, but Stella just keeps being brave and putting one foot in front of the other. She learns from a loving family and a supportive community how to stand up for herself and what is really important.

READ-ALIKES:

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *They Called Themselves the KKK*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010.

Hamilton, Virginia. *The People Could Fly*. Knopf, 1985

Hesse, Karen. *Witness*. Scholastic Press, 2001.

Levine, Kristin. *The Best Bad Luck I Ever Had*. Perfection Learning, 2010

Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Dial Press, 1976

RELATED WEB SITES:

Sharon Draper: <http://sharondraper.com>

Sharon Draper on Stella by Starlight: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbFLI3dzVBg>

Curriculum Guide:

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/DCFBookReviewsQuestions16-17.pdf>

Common Core Curriculum Guide:

http://d28hgpr18am2if.cloudfront.net/tagged_assets/15387/stella%20by%20starlight_cg.pdf

Ku Klux Klan: http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/ku/Ku_Klux_Klan

Eddie "Midnight Express" Tolan: http://www.aaregistry.org/historic_events/view/eddie-tolan-midnight-express

A History of Voting Rights: <https://www.aclu.org/timelines/history-voting-rights-act>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (December 1, 2014): 56

Horn Book Magazine (January 1, 2015): 79

School Library Journal (January 1, 2015): 92

Hoffman, Alice. *Nightbird*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2015

SUMMARY:

Twig Fowler lives in Sidwell, MA with her mother and a secret. A secret that keeps them isolated from others. Their lives focus on their apple orchard which produces Pink apples and their pies that provide them with a livelihood. A 200-year-old curse has touched their lives and there doesn't seem to be a way out. But neighbors move into Mourning Dove, a house that was once home to the witch who began the curse. Twig becomes friends with the girls in the family and once Twig's secret is discovered by the girls, they become determined to reverse the curse and allow Twig's family to live a normal life.

QUESTIONS:

Why is Twig's mother always alone?
How did Twig get her name?
Define the term "magical realism." Does *Nightbird* fit this genre?
Why did Agnes Early put a curse on the Fowler men and what was it?
Was being able to fly a gift? Why or why not?
Why did Twig's mother refuse the cure for James?
Why did James start to become reckless?
Why was Montgomery Woods important to the town of Sidwell?
Who was your favorite character? Why?

JOURNAL STARTER:

"People should be careful about the stories they tell" because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Sample various types of apples. Determine which variety is the group favorite.
Read or listen to the story of Icarus.
Try out the recipe for pink apple pie that's included at the end of the book.
Make a list of witches that have been characters in books that you've read.
Create drawings of the Sidwell Monster and Agnes Early.
Explore whether there are any rumors or legends associated with your town or your school? If so, share them with your group.
Visit an apple orchard and sample some cider.
Cite examples of things that happened in Sidwell that did not happen other places.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTRAILER:

5th Grade Book Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtBuxsiCmDU>

BOOKTALK:

Every family has secrets, but a brother who can fly? Twig's brother can, because of a curse that was placed on the men in their family 200 years ago. For his own protection, James is hidden in the attic of their home, but as he gets older, the attic become too small and he flies more and more frequently. He's found out by the two sisters who now live in the home of Agnes Early, the witch who placed the original curse. What happens next? Read *Nightbird* and discover how a curse can be reversed, a family made whole and the true story behind Agnes Early.

READ-ALIKES:

Almond, David. *Skellig*. Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2009
Dowell, Frances O'Roark. *The Second Life of Abigail Walker*. Atheneum, 2012
Forester, Victoria. *The Girl Who Could Fly*. Feiwel & Friends, 2008
Law, Ingrid. *Savvy*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2008
Yolen, Jane. *Centaur Rising*. Henry Holt, 2014

RELATED WEB SITES:

Alice Hoffman: <http://www.alicehoffman.com>
Educator's Guide: https://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Nightbird_EG.pdf
Apples and More: <https://extension.illinois.edu/apples/intro.cfm>
The Myth of Icarus and Daedalus:
<http://www.island-ikaria.com/about-ikaria/Ikaros-Myth>
The Berkshires: <http://the-berkshires.com>
Saw-Whet Owl: <http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/northern-saw-whet-owl>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (January 1, 2015): 102
Horn Book Magazine (May 1, 2015): 110
Publishers Weekly (January 19, 2015): 262
School Library Journal (January 1, 2015): 94

Holczer, Tracy. THE SECRET HUM OF A DAISY. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2014

SUMMARY:

Grace's mother has died and Grace is sent to live with a grandmother she has never met. A grandmother that she believed had sent her mother away when she became pregnant. Grace has no intention at all of staying. She not only has a get-away plan, but also a Plan B. But neither plan works, Grace's grandmother is an intelligent woman who wants to build a relationship with Grace, but Grace wants no part of that. As unhappy as she is with her new home, Grace begins to unravel the mystery of her mother's past and to figure out the relationships among her family members and what that will mean for her.

QUESTIONS:

What did Grace do at the end of her mother's funeral? Why?
Why did Grace want to stay in Grandpa's shed?
What part did Mrs. Greene and Lacey play in Grace's life?
What part do cranes play in this story?
What is the significance of Bear River Park to the people of Auburn Park?
What did you learn from this book about the power of artistic expression?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

The piece of poetry that is most meaningful to me is....., because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Make a daisy chain.
Invite an artist to demonstrate junk art or to help your group create some.
Read some poetry from *A Boy's Will* by Robert Frost.
Learn to make origami birds.
Create and participate in a treasure hunt.
Locate the Bear River and Sacramento River on a map of California.
Use a medium of your choice, except photography, to create a self-portrait.
Create a list of all the places in the book where Grace found a crane.
Try to find someone with a spoon collection they might like to share with your group.
Draw Bear River Park.
Ask an experienced "birder" to take your group on a bird-watching walk.
Make a collage box for your class.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOK TRAILER:

Susannah Hogan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8r2rv9UPLo>

BOOKTALK:

You never knew your dad, your mother has just died and this is your fourteenth school! And to top it all off, you've been sent to live with a grandmother you've never met! Based on everything you've been told in the past, this is a difficult woman. But that's not who she turned out to be. She turned out to be smart and strong. So, where does the truth lie?

Grace works hard to learn the real story of the past her mother and grandmother shared, and what that will mean for her future! Her path to unravel it all turns out to be the biggest treasure hunt of all.

READ-ALIKES:

Benjamin, Ali. *The Thing About Jellyfish*. Little, Brown and Company, 2015

Coerr, Eleanor. *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. Putnam, 1977

Giff, Patricia Reilly. *Pictures of Hollis Woods*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2002

Lord, Cynthia. *Touch Blue*. Scholastic Press, 2010

Pennypacker, Sara. *Summer of the Gypsy Moths*. Balzer + Bray, 2012

Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7s*. Dial Books, 2012

RELATED WEBSITES:

Tracy Holczer: <http://www.tracyholczer.com>

Common Core Curriculum Guide:

<http://www.penguin.com/static/images/yr/pdf/HolczerTheSecretHumofaDaisy.pdf>

Origami Fun: <http://www.origami-fun.com>

Recycled Art: <http://www.hongkiat.com/blog/recycled-art-masterpiece-made-from-junks>

REVIEWS:

School Library Journal (May 1, 2014): 111

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (July 1, 2014): 578

Horn Book Magazine (July 1, 2014): 95

Holm, Jennifer L. *The Fourteenth Goldfish*. Random House, 2014

SUMMARY:

Eleven-year-old Ellie thinks she has a lot to deal with adjusting to school and a change in friends when her life is totally disrupted by the arrival of a strange young boy who claims to be her grandfather. Did he finally discover the secret to eternal youth? This is a humorous book that encourages the scientist in all of us as, well as making us think about life and growing older.

QUESTIONS:

Why do Ellie's mother and grandfather not get along?
What was Grandpa's big discovery? How did he do it?
What did Ellie's Grandpa think was the most powerful tool of a scientist?
Why does Ellie's Grandpa need to break into his lab?
What is the significance of the title: *The Fourteenth Goldfish*?
Why comes in the way of the friendship between Ellie and Brianna?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I would/would not like to live forever, because.....
The scientific discovery that I would like to make would be....., because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Define senescence.
Research a scientist that is mentioned in the book.
Draw Ellie and her grandfather.
Find examples of instances when science did change the world.
Interview a senior citizen about what their life was like when they were your age. If you were kids together, what would you like to share with them?
As a group, perform some science experiments.
Create an illustration of a jellyfish. Label the parts accurately.
Define eternal youth. Compare it to the term immortality.
Predict what will happen in the sequel to this book. Or, write the about the jellyfish at the end of the story as if it was real.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-7

BOOKTRAILER:

Random House Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91FeXVF-56E>

BOOKTALK:

Prop suggestion – small vial of colored water

Scientists have made an amazing discovery! One sip of this serum will reverse the aging process and turn an eighty-year old man back into a middle schooler. Unbelievable, right? Well, that is the premise of the novel – *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer L. Holm. In this story, Ellie is starting 6th grade and not liking it. Her best friend is drifting away from her and she wishes she was back in 5th grade. Unfortunately, life does not get better when a strange boy shows up claiming to be her grandfather. In fact, life is about to get very interesting.

READ-ALIKES:

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting*. Square Fish/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1975.

Scott, Michael. *The Alchemyst*. Delacorte Press, 2007.

Springstubb, Tricia. *Moonpenny Island*. Balzer + Bray, 2015

RELATED WEB SITES:

Jennifer Holm: <http://www.jenniferholm.com>

Random House Educators Guide: https://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/JenniHolm_ASK_EducatorsGd_WEB.pdf

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book Award:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/CBEC/BookAwards/DCF/DCFBookReviewsQuestions15-16.pdf>

Young Hoosiers Book Award:

http://c.ycmdn.com/sites/www.ilfonline.org/resource/resmgr/2016-17_Intermediate_Book_Resources/The14thGoldfish_final.pdf

Healthy Aging: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/healthy-aging/in-depth/aging/art-20046070>

Jellyfish: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/jellyfish/#jellyfish-tentacles.jpg>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (July 2, 2014): 68

Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books (September 1, 2014): 31

School Library Journal (June 1, 2014): 103

K.A. Holt. *Rhyme Schemer*. Chronicle Books, 2014

SUMMARY:

Kevin has 4 brothers and his parents are both doctors. He feels like no one notices that he exists at home. Kevin begins to bully classmates to get attention. He logs his daily thoughts and activities in a journal. When the journal is lost and then found by a fellow student, things begin to change at school. Kevin then feels what it is like to the victim instead of the bully. Kevin uses poetry and words as his outlet, albeit sometimes through vandalizing books. The librarian sees Kevin's talent with poetry and helps him to channel it onto a positive path and a way to be seen.

QUESTIONS:

How does Kevin's family treat him?
How does Kevin seek attention at school?
Describe what other students at school might think of Kevin?
What do you think Kevin is good at?
How does the bullying change after the notebook is found?
How do you think Kevin feels when the librarian "sees" him?
Why do you think Kelly helps Kevin?
What do you wish Kevin's parents would do?
If there was just one more chapter, what do you think Kevin would do next?
What does it mean to be "King of the School"?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I found Kevin's journal I would...?
If I saw someone being bullied, I could...?

ACTIVITIES:

Discuss what bullying is and isn't with your teacher and/or counselor.
Design an anti-bullying poster for your classroom/hallways.
Find old books (rummage sale/goodwill) to use pages from- create your own messages using a page of text.
From old books, use the text on the page to create anti-bullying messages.
Do a daily journal for a week- logging in details of the days.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOK TRAILER:

Cindy Beaudry's Book Trailer: <https://youtu.be/9pdAAkDTSRs>

BOOKTALK:

Everyone just wants to be seen. Kevin feels like no one at home even notices he is there. He says he will turn to stone so that he won't feel. Kevin uses poetry and words so that people will "see" him. With his journal he can write down his feelings and what he thinks of others, along with poetry. When one of his bully victims gets ahold of the journal, Kevin then becomes the victim. He has to work in the library for punishment, but he enjoys it there and it's a place he can hide. The librarian sees Kevin and his talent. She begins leaving him notes among the books. She is channeling his talent onto a positive track so that school won't feel like such a hard place to be. Kevin's family is surprised to learn of his talent and interests. They may still be busy, but they do begin to see him and his words.

READALIKES:

Alexander, Kwame. *The Crossover*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

Grimes, Nikki. *Words with Wings*. WordSong, 2013.

Rivers, Karen. *The Girl in the Well is Me*. Algonquin Young Readers, 2016.

Telgemeier, Raina. *Smile*. Graphix. 2010.

RELATED WEBSITES:

K.A. Holt: <http://kaholt.com/books/rhyme-schemer/>

Discussion Guide: http://kaholt.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/rhyme_schemer_discussionguide-1.pdf

Stopbullying.gov: <http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/>

National Bully Prevention Center: <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/info-facts.asp>

Stop Bullying Now: <http://stopbullyingnow.com/>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (October 1, 2014) 85

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (November 1, 2014): 158

School Library Journal (September 1, 2014); 123

Hopkinson, Deborah. *The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel*. Knopf, 2013

SUMMARY:

Eel is a street urchin, living in London in 1854. He works as a messenger and at other odd jobs to support himself and to earn an additional four shillings that much be paid out on a weekly basis. When he is falsely accused of stealing, Eel loses his job and must work as a mudlark to make whatever money he can to meet his obligations. He's being hunted down by Fisheye Taylor, so he has to be extremely cautious.

But, when the cholera epidemic hits the area around the Broad Street pump, Eel is willing to do whatever it takes to help those who have become his friends and family. He does this with the help of Dr. John Snow, a scientist who has become known for his work with chloroform and pain relief, but who also has a great interest in the origins of cholera. Eel and Dr. Snow work hard to solve the mystery and end the epidemic.

Note: Though fiction, this novel has extensive support materials at the end of the book.

QUESTIONS:

What is a mudlark?

How did Eel get his nickname?

Why was cholera called "The Blue Death?"

What is the miasma theory?

What qualities make Dr. John Snow a good scientist?

What secret was Eel protecting and why was he hiding from Fisheye Bill?

What did people do at that time to try to prevent the Blue Death?

What was Florrie's greatest contribution to solving the mystery and why was it important?

JOURNAL STARTER:

If I had to keep a secret safe, I would.....

ACTIVITIES:

Create Illustrations for some of the characters in this book.

Make-up nicknames for the kids in your group.

Have a small fundraiser that will allow your group to donate to a clean water charity.

Explore a contemporary topic using the four Ws that Dr. Snow uses to examine an issue.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTRAILER:

Great Book Trouble Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6e0iM7Uq9Q>

BOOKTALK:

Eel has lots to hide! His name, his family history and why he needs four shillings a week. When he loses his job at the Lion Inn, his ability to make those four shillings is in jeopardy. Things get even more threatening when a cholera epidemic hits the area of the Broad Street pump. Eel knows that Dr. John Snow can help, but is surprised at the kind of help Dr. Snow brings. He's not able to help those who are ill, he wants to find out where the disease is starting. What is called the "Great Trouble" becomes the challenge of a lifetime for Dr. Snow and Eel as they fight time to discover the source and save lives. The "boy called Eel" who hoped to make a difference, did exactly that.

READ-ALIKES:

Anderson, Laurie. *Fever, 1793*. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2000
Hannigan, Kate. *The Detective's Assistant*. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2015
Murphy, Jim. *An American Plague*. Clarion, 2013
Peters, Marilee. *Patient Zero*. Annick Press, 2014

RELATED WEB SITES:

Deborah Hopkinson: <http://deborahhopkinson.com>

Random House Educator's Guide: https://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GreatTrouble_EG_WEB.pdf

CDC Cholera: <http://www.cdc.gov/cholera/general>

John Snow and the Broad Street Pump:

<http://www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow/snowcricketarticle.html>

The River Thames: <http://www.visitthames.co.uk/about-the-river>

REVIEW CITATIONS:

Booklist (October 15, 2013): 51

Bulletin of Center for Children's Books (November 1, 2013): 157

Horn Book Magazine (November 1, 2013): 94

School Library Journal (October 1, 2013): 104

Hunt, Lynda Mullaly. *Fish in a Tree*. Nancy Paulsen Books, 2015.

SUMMARY:

Since she started school, Ally has felt like a misfit. She loves drawing and numbers, but words always trip her up. She's done a great job covering that up, but the cover up can't last forever. More and more often she gets in trouble or is viewed as being lazy because she pushes back at assignments that involve reading or writing. But when a new teacher begins to really get to know Ally, things begin to change---all for the good.

QUESTIONS:

Why is Ally sent to the principal's office during Mrs. Hall's baby shower?

Why did Ally like the book *Alice in Wonderland*?

What's the difference between a Silver Dollar Day and a Wooden Nickel Day?

Why does Ally create "mind movies" and how does she use them?

Why do you think Mr. Daniels refers to his class as "Fantasticos"?

Albert, Ally and Keisha are described as misfits---is that accurate? What did Albert have to say about that?

What were the signs that Mr. Daniels saw that told him Ally had a reading problem?

Do great minds think alike?

What's the difference between an older brother and a big brother?

How are Ally and Albert brave? How is Travis brave?

What important action does Mrs. Silver take at the end of the story?

JOURNAL STARTER:

The difference between being alone and lonely is.....

ACTIVITIES:

Create your own "Sketchbook of Impossible Things."

Invite a reading specialist to talk with your group about Ally and her reading challenges.

Ask a coin collector to develop a display for your group. Look up pictures of the coins described in the book.

Ask an adult to prepare a mystery box game for your group and play it!

Make a list of all the qualities that make Mr. Daniels a great teacher.

Make and share some friendship bracelets.

Play chess.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-6

BOOKTRAILERS:

Lynda Mullaly Hunt's Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVhWzVsVVIY>

Trailer by Cherie Jackson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrPWhRmaZM>

BOOKTALK:

Ally can't read, but she doesn't let on. Not to her mother, her brother or anyone at school. She endures being called "dumb," "slow," and loser by some very mean classmates. And, she's at a point of believing most of those things about herself. But, when Mr. Daniels steps into the classroom and Ally teams up with Keisha (incredible cupcake baker) and Albert (incredible thinker), things begin to change.

READ-ALIKES:

Bauer, Joan. *Close to Famous*. Viking Children's Books, 2011

Buyea, Rob. *Because of Mr. Terupt*. Delacorte, 2010

Giff, Patricia Riley. *Eleven*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2008

Polacco, Patricia. *Thank You Mr. Falker*. Philomel Books, 1998

Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7s*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 2012

Winkler, Henry. *Hank Zipzer* Series. Penguin Books, 2004-2008

RELATED WEB SITES:

Lynda Mullaly Hunt: <http://www.lyndamullalyhunt.com>

Penguin Study Guide:

http://www.penguin.com/static/images/yr/pdf/FishInATree_lessonplans_Final_LR.pdf

Between Us Parents: <http://www.chicagonow.com/between-us-parents/2015/08/fish-in-a-tree-discussion-guide>

Explaining Dyslexia:

http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/sites/default/files/page_content/Explaining%20dyslexia%20to%20children.pdf

Coin Collecting for Beginners: <http://coins.about.com/od/caringforcoins/fl/Introduction-to-Coin-Collecting.htm>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (December 15, 2014): 56

Horn Book Magazine (March 1, 2015): 98

School Library Journal (January 1, 2015): 95

**Johnston, E.K. *The Story of Owen: Dragon Slayer of Trondheim.*
Carolrhoda, 2014**

SUMMARY:

In Trondheim, a small town in alternate modern-day Canada, Owen Thorskard starts his first day of school. Everyone is excited that a family of dragon slayers has moved to their town, as they will be much safer from the dragons that have plagued people throughout human history. On Owen's first day, he meets Siobhan McQuaid, a talented musician who treats Owen like a real guy rather than a rock star. The two become close friends when Siobhan starts tutoring him in Algebra, and Siobhan eventually agrees to be Owen's bard, creating story-songs about his adventures. When dragon attacks increase exponentially, Owen, Siobhan, and friends Sadie and Emily, try to discover why and create the Guard, a group of teenage volunteers who train to help the dragon slayers keep their community safe.

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think Owen and Siobhan become such good friends?

The author tells lots of side stories about how people have dealt with dragons throughout human history. Which is your favorite and why?

Why were Owen and Siobhan forbidden by their parents to go to the library?

When dragon-slayers-in-training finish high school, they must join and serve in the Oil Watch, which is very much like the military. Do you think this service should be mandatory or should people have a choice?

When Siobhan tells the story of Owen's adventures, she sometimes lies or stretches the truth to serve a certain purpose. Is this OK? Why or why not? Do you think it would sometimes be OK for news reporters to do the same? Why or why not?

Explain this phrase which is used several times throughout the book: "It takes a village..."

There is a sequel to this book, *Prairie Fire*. Predict what you think might happen in that book.

JOURNAL STARTERS:

Siobhan sometimes alters the truth when she describes Owen's deeds. I altered the truth when....., because.....

If dragons truly existed, my life would be different because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Which type of the dragon from the book would be most likely to live where you live? Can you create, by describing or drawing, a sub-species of that dragon?

Siobhan makes up songs and stories about Owen's dragon slaying. Write your own poem or song about an event in this book.

Find a map of Canada and figure out where Trondheim, Saltrock, and Manitoulin would be if they were real places.

Watch a video of people doing Tai Chi.
Research how blacksmiths created (and still create) swords in a forge.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 7-8

BOOK TRAILERS:

From HHS Librarian (You Tube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPAuUPbZNP0>
From dmccandlessrdg (You Tube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5Lp22a0HDY>

BOOKTALK:

Imagine a world that is the same as ours...except dragons exist! In fact, they have always existed, and there have always been dragon slayers to help protect people. When teenager Owen and his family move to a small Canadian town, everyone is thrilled that they will be now be safer. As Owen trains for his future career, he must also try to pass Algebra, and he's not doing a very good job of it. A friend he met on the first day of school, Siobhan McQuaid, starts to tutor him, and, because she is a gifted musician, Owen's family asks her to become his bard--and tell story-songs of his adventures. The two face mighty dragons, and high school, together and try to solve the mystery of why recently dragon attacks in their area have been getting worse. If you love fantasy, adventures, and friends working together to conquer all, this is the book for you!

READ-ALIKES:

Fforde, Jasper. *The Last Dragonslayer*. HMH Books for Young Readers. 2012.
Hartman, Rachel. *Seraphina*. Random House Books for Young Readers. 2012.

RELATED WEB SITES:

E. K. Johnston: <http://ekjohnston.ca>

A YALSA interview with E.K. Johnston: <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2015/01/28/2015-morris-award-an-interview-with-finalist-e-k-johnston/>

Lerner Publishing Group discussion guide:

<https://www.lernerbooks.com/digitalassets/Assets/Title%20Assets/13011/9781467710664/Discussion%20Guide.pdf>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (March 1, 2014): 69
Horn Book Magazine (March 1, 2014): 122
School Library Journal (July 1, 2014): 105

Korman, Gordon. *Masterminds*. Balzer + Bray, 2015

SUMMARY:

Eli Freedman lives in the peaceful town of Serenity, New Mexico. Everything in his town is perfect. Perfect lawns, school, and parents...or are they? Eli has never left the town; he has never needed to. Is the honest town of Serenity as honest as it seems?

One day, Eli travels with his best friend, Randy, to the edge of town. He falls suddenly ill. This illness sparks some disturbing coincidences. Eli enlists the help of some friends to discover the truth behind their town. What they discover is a secret science experiment of which they are the main focus. Eli and his friends have been cloned from the DNA of some of the worst Criminal Masterminds in the world. They are being raised in the town of Serenity with fake parents, a fake internet, a fake school, and a fake police force to test the idea of Nature versus Nurture.

What is waiting for Eli and his friends if they leave Serenity?

QUESTIONS:

Should cloning be illegal?

Serenity is a perfect town. Everything there is created to give the impression of harmony and safety; no one lies or commits crimes. Discuss the irony of Eli and the others discovering they were all part of a science experiment and have been lied to their entire lives?

Evaluate the decision to leave Serenity. What are the pros and cons of this choice?

Each character has a unique relationship with their parents. Analyze these relationships as to how they are affected and how they react to the information about being a clone.

What are the differences and similarities between Randy and Eli?

Each chapter is told in a different character's perspective. How does that change the events of the story?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

I would/would not like to live in Serenity because....

Mr. Friedman, I have the following questions about Project Osiris.....

ACTIVITIES:

Research cloning and DNA.

Participate in some nature versus nurture activities.

In Serenity, access to information is restricted. Hold a debate on the advantages and disadvantages of doing this.

Map the location of Serenity and surrounding areas.

Hold a debate on the value of an experiment versus human life.

Predict what happens next in the story.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-7

BOOK TRAILER:

HarperKids: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9epMG_zeYw

BOOK TALK:

Imagine your perfect life. A perfect house, school, town...no crime, no problems, just perfection. This is the life Eli Freedman is living. His town of Serenity, New Mexico teaches the ideals of honesty and integrity. In a town of only 30 kids, there is nothing to ever question or need. You have everything.... or do you?

Eli and his best friend Randy push the rules about leaving the town of Serenity. What started out as an innocent bike ride creates the end of the perfect life as Eli knew it. Randy is being ripped away from him, his father is lying to him, and he becomes ill when he gets too close to the truth. Searching for the answers, he enlists the help of 5 other students, just like him, and what they discover is not-possible.... was their entire life a lie? Are they even human? Follow Eli and his friends as they risk their lives to uncover the truth about themselves and the town of Serenity.

READ-ALIKES:

Choldenko, Gennifer. *Chasing Secrets*. Wendy Lamb Books, 2015.

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner*. Delacorte Books, 2009.

Gibbs, Stuart. *Space Case*. Simon & Schuster, 2014.

Sachar, Louis. *Fuzzy Mud*. Delacorte Books, 2015.

Sanders, Ted. *The Keepers Book 1: The Box and the Dragon Fly*. HaperCollins, 2015.

Various Authors. 39 Clues Series. Scholastic Press

RELATED WEB SITES:

Gordon Korman: <http://gordonkorman.com>

HarperCollins Teacher's Guide:

<http://www.themailbox.com/storage/microsites/images/2015/HarperCollins2015-Masterminds.pdf>

Cloning: <http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/cl/Cloning>

Nature versus Nurture: http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/na/Nature_versus_nurture

REVIEWS:

Booklist (December 15, 2014): 57

New York Times Book Review (May 10, 2015): 22

School Library Journal (November 1, 2014): 102

Levine, Kristin. *The Paper Cowboy*. G.P. Putnam's Sons (Penguin Group), 2014.

SUMMARY:

It's 1953 in the midst of McCarthyism. 12-Year-Old Tommy is living in Downers Grove, Illinois. Tommy's sister is hospitalized with a severely burned leg and his mother's mood swings get worse than ever. Tommy takes over his sister's paper route and becomes involved in the search for the communist who is reported to be nearby. Things take a terrible turn for the worst and Tommy must try to be the good guy who sets things right.

QUESTIONS:

Before reading the book, what do you think the title means? After reading the book, what does the title now mean to you?

How did Tommy's love of cowboys help him overcome his bullying?

How does stereotyping negatively affect a person's outlook?

Why is Downers Grove considered a "community"?

How does Tommy's relationship with Mary Lou change while she is away?

Where are Tommy's defining moments (the point at which a situation starts to change)?

What was dangerous about the McCarthy era?

How does Tommy relate his problems and solutions to that of his cowboy heroes?

How did Mr. McKenzie's attitude toward Tommy change during the course of the novel?

What is the impact of the discovery of the "real" cowboy?

JOURNAL STARTER:

Choose a character from the book and write a journal entry from their perspective.

ACTIVITIES:

Research the history of your hometown in the 1950s or its entire history.

Find an appropriate excerpt or episode from the TV show *Happy Days*. Take notes on life in the 1950s. Compare and contrast to our lives today.

Ask a mental health professional to read the book and discuss Tommy's mother with your group.

Show an excerpt from *High Noon* (Gary Cooper going door to door looking for help or Grace Kelly getting off the train). Discuss similarities and differences to Tommy's recollections of the movie and his own story.

Research the impact that McCarthyism had on America.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5-8

BOOKTALK:

Imagine waking up before the sun, hoping on your bike and delivering newspapers every day before you even get yourself ready for school. This was Tommy's life after his sister's tragic burn accident. He took over her paper route while she was hospitalized. His life was changing faster than he could handle. Before he knew it he was deeply involved in the heart of his community. He is a bully at school, but desperately wants to be a good person. Read *Paper Cowboy* to see if he can overcome his struggles and you will be a changed person as well.

READ-ALIKES:

Avi. *Catch You Later, Traitor*. Algonquin Young Readers, 2015.

Holt, K.A. *Rhyme Schemer*. Chronicle Books, 2014.

Palacio, R.J. *Wonder*. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2012.

Hayles, Marsha. *Breathing Room*. Henry Holt and Company, 2012.

Kehret, Peg. *Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio*. Albert Whitman and Company, 1996.

RELATED WEB SITES:

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

Discussion Questions: <http://www.conversationpieceslearning.org/the-paper-cowboy.html>

McCarthyism Lesson Plan (adapt for middle school):

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/rise-and-fall-joseph-mccarthy#sect-thelesson>

Famous Cowboys and Cowboy Names: <http://www.lingerandlook.com/Names/Cowboys.htm>

REVIEW CITATIONS:

Booklist (November 1, 2014): 55

Horn Book Magazine (January 1, 2015): 84

School Library Journal: 60(November 1, 2014): 103

Lowery, Lynda Blackman. *TURNING 15 ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM: MY STORY OF THE 1965 VOTING RIGHTS MARCH.* DIAL, 2015

SUMMARY:

Lynda Blackmon Lowery tells her story to Elspeth Leacock and Susan Buckley detailing her participation in the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. This telling has become Lowery's memoir of her participation in the march known as The Voting Rights March. Life was difficult for Lowery; she lost her mother at an early age, grew up poor, and lived in a period of time when the Ku Klux Klan, threatened African Americans. After her grandmother took her to hear Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak, she became one of the youngest activists of the Civil Rights Movement. As the march from Selma to Montgomery was being planned, everyone was worried about the safety and welfare of the marchers. They needed strong marchers who would walk, sing freedom songs, and help each other on this difficult journey. At just fourteen years of age, Lynda was selected as one of the people who would walk the entire distance between Selma and Montgomery, Alabama. All Lynda had to do was to persuade her father to let her go. This was a terrifying event for Lynda, but she was determined to be a part of this historic non-violent protest which helped to draw national attention to voting rights of African Americans.

QUESTIONS:

Do you feel strongly enough about a cause that you would participate in a non-violent protest?
Can you explain the difference between segregation and integration?
What recent events have caused demonstrations in St. Louis and Chicago?
Why do you think that singing "Freedom Songs" was important to the Selma marchers?
Do you think that non-violent protests are effective, why or why not?

JOURNAL STARTER:

The national problem that I would like to see corrected is....., because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Reenact the Selma March as you learn about the Civil Rights Movement.
Watch the "I Have a Dream" speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Learn and sing "Freedom Songs," such as the ones in the book.
Research the "Jim Crow" laws.
Watch the movie *Selma* (PG13) with your family.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8

BOOKTRAILER:

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0GuYulYTKo>

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever been told that you could not drink from a water fountain, or sit in any seat you wanted to at a movie theatre, or that you could not go to any restaurant of your choice? That is what life was like for African Americans who lived in the southern part of the United States in the 1960's. Black people did not have the same rights as white people in the south. This was particularly true in Alabama. The Ku Klux Klan threatened and scared black people to stop them from exercising their constitutional rights. Black people began to come together to plan non-violent demonstrations and protests to gain the same rights and privileges that are the right of all Americans. *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom* is the story of Lynda Blackmon Lowery, who walked from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to protest the fact that black people could not vote. It is a story of believing in a cause and doing what it takes to make change happen.

READ-ALIKES:

Aretha, David. *The Story of the Selma Voting Rights March in Photographs*. Enslow, 2014
Freedman, Russell. *Because They Marched*. Holiday House, 2014.
Lewis, John. *March* (Books 1-3). Top Shelf Productions, 2013-2016.
Patridge, Elizabeth. *Marching for Freedom Walk Together, Children, and Don't Grow Weary*. Viking Books for Young Readers, 2009.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Lynda Blackmon Lowery Interview: <http://www.npr.org/2015/01/17/377197156/new-memoir-recalls-marching-in-selma-at-just-15>

Selma's Youngest Marcher: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V94wFrTx3K0>

Selma to Montgomery March: <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/selma-montgomery-march>

Selma, Alabama (Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965): <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/bloody-sunday-selma-alabama-march-7-1965>

We Shall Overcome: Selma-to-Montgomery March:
<https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/al4.htm>

REVIEW CITATIONS

Booklist (February 1, 2015): 39

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (February 1, 2015): 319

School Library Journal (January 1, 2015): 132

Martin, Ann M. *Rain Reign*. Feiwel and Friends. 2014

SUMMARY:

Rose (Rows) Howard is obsessed with homonyms, prime numbers, and her dog Rain (Reign, Rein). Not everyone understands or appreciates this and the other rules she applies to her life. Rose also deals with an absent mother and alcoholic father. During a storm, Rose's father lets Rain out without her collar, giving Rose a new obsession: finding her best friend.

QUESTIONS:

How is Rose different from her classmates? How does she deal with being different? Describe a time when you felt different from everyone around you.

Why are homonyms so important to the story?

How does Rose change during the course of the story?

What is your opinion of Rose's father?

Did you find *Rain Reign* to be a fast read? Why or why not?

Do you think people should give pets as gifts? Why or why not?

What's next for Rose? Describe what would happen in the next chapter or a sequel.

JOURNAL STARTERS:

The difference between making a mistake and breaking a rule is.....

ACTIVITIES:

Make your own book of homonyms, following Rose's rules. (p. 17)

On page 32, Rose explains how to assign numbers to letters, such as 23 for W since it's the 23rd letter in the alphabet. What does your name add up to? Who has the most valuable name in your class? Is anyone's name a prime number?

Research another superstorm, such as Hurricane Katrina or Superstorm Sandy.

If you were to lose your dog, consider Rose's plan as described on page 119. Use a phone book or the internet to locate shelters and rescues within the radius you choose.

Pretend you are the newspaper writer, Sheila Perlman (p. 181). Write an article about Rose and Rain.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-6

BOOKTRAILERS:

Fork Shoals Library: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1ixz0z6W4A>

BOOKTALK:

Rose is a girl who is different. She is obsessed with homonyms, prime numbers, and following rules. The other kids in her class don't really understand why these are so important to her. Her father gives her a dog, named Rain (Reign, Rein), and Rain ends up being a great friend and comfort to Rose. During a terrible storm, Rose's father lets Rain out without her collar (on purpose?) and Rose must devise a plan to get her best friend back. Of course, that does not go as well as Rose would hope, and she has to make a brave decision that changes her life.

READ-ALIKES:

Baskin, Nora Raleigh. *Anything but Typical*. Simon & Schuster, 2009.
Dowd, Siobhan. *The London Eye Mystery*. David Fickling Books/Random House, 2007.
Erskine, Kathryn. *Mockingbird*. Philomel Books, 2010.
Lord, Cynthia. *Rules*. Scholastic, 2006.
Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Counting by 7s*. Dial Books, 2013.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Ann M. Martin: <https://www.scholastic.com/annmartin/about>

Autism Speaks: <https://www.autismspeaks.org/>

Rain Reign Discussion Guide:

http://mackidsbooks.com/rainreign/rainreign_discussionguide.pdf

Indiana Library Federation: <https://www.teachingbooks.net/media/pdf/YHBA/RainReign.pdf>

REVIEWS:

Booklist August 1, 2014): 74

Horn Book Magazine (September 1, 2014): 115

School Library Journal: 60(August 1, 2014): 89

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Echo*. Scholastic Press, 2015.

SUMMARY:

A young boy named Otto is lost in the woods and is rescued by three sisters who are imprisoned there by a witch's curse. In return, Otto promises to help break the curse by carrying their spirits out of the forest in a mouth harp and passing the instrument along when the time is right. The story shifts to the 20th century, when the same mouth harp or harmonica becomes the common thread that connects the stories of three children – Friedrich, a disfigured outcast whose story is set during the rise of Nazi Germany; Michael, an impoverished orphan whose story is set during the Great Depression in America; and Ivy, an itinerant farmer's child whose story is set during WWII. Their musical talent and the hand of fate that brings Otto's harmonica into their lives link the children. Each recognizes something unusual about the instrument, not only its sound but also its power to fill them with courage and hope.

QUESTIONS:

Why was Friedrich's father arrested and sent away?
What do Friedrich and his Uncle Gunter do to help save Friedrich's father?
How did Friedrich obtain the harmonica?
Why did their grandmother choose the Bishops Orphanage for Frankie and Michael?
Why did Mrs. Sturbridge have to keep the boys?
Who put the M on the harmonica and what did it stand for?
Why did Ivy's family have to leave La Colonia, California so quickly?
Why did Ivy have to go to Lincoln Annex?
How did Ivy obtain the special harmonica with the M printed on it?
When Ivy's dad took Kenny Yamamoto to the bus station, what did Ivy give him? What was the result of this act of kindness?
How did the harmonica influence and connect the lives of the three main characters?

JOURNAL STARTER:

The character with whom I most closely identify is because.....

ACTIVITIES:

Invite a musician come to talk about the harmonica and play it. Research the harmonica.
Research Albert H. Hoxie's Philadelphia Harmonica Band of Wizards.
Research the Hohner Harmonica Company in Trossingen, Germany.
Study some aspect of WWI and the holocaust, the Great Depression in America or the bombing of Pearl Harbor and WWII.
Make a playlist of the songs that are included in Echo.
Research Carnegie Hall in New York City and some of the famous people who performed there.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5 – 8

BOOKTRAILER:

Bluebonnet Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AE72gZI5rPY>

BOOKTALK:

If you like fantasy, historical fiction about the Holocaust, the Great Depression, WWII and music, you will like *Echo* by Pam Muñoz Ryan. Ryan has told four tales and intertwined them with music, especially using the harmonica. All three characters from three different periods of history have many things in common but mostly their love of music. Ryan has woven a tale of intolerance, poverty and injustice but also love, trust, courage, perseverance, determination and hope. Listen to the story on audio if possible and then you will hear all the music, which adds depth, continuity and power to the story.

READ-ALIKES:

Golabek, Mona. *The Children of Willesden Lane*. Grand Central Publishing, 2002.
Grimm, Jacob and Grimm, Wilhelm. *The Original Folk and Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm: The Complete First Edition*. Princeton University Press, 2014.
Johnston, Tony. *The Harmonica*. Charlesbridge, 2004.
Warren, Andrea. *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story*. Perfection Learning, 1998.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Pam Muñoz Ryan: www.pammunozryan.com

Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award:

<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/DCFBookReviewsQuestions16-17.pdf>

Texas Bluebonnet Award: <https://texasbluebonnetaward2017.wordpress.com/70-2>

Scholastic Guide: <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/discussion-guide-novels-pam-mu%C3%B1oz-ryan>

History of the Harmonica: http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/fall09/nederveld_j/history.html

REVIEWS:

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (March 1, 2015): 368

Horn Book Magazine (March 1, 2015): 108

School Library Journal (December 1, 2014): 126

Sheinkin, Steve. *The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny and the Fight for Civil Rights*. Roaring Brook Press, 2014.

SUMMARY:

On July 17, 1944, 320 servicemen were killed in an ammunition explosion at the Port Chicago Naval Base in California. Prior to this accident, the ammunition had been handled almost exclusively by African American servicemen who had little or no training in munitions handling. Safety measures were practically non-existent. At this point in our history, although African-Americans were able to enlist in the military, their activities were segregated and for the most part, menial.

After the explosion the African American sailors were ordered back to work under the exact same conditions. When 200 refused to return to work it was labeled mutiny. At the end, 50 men “stood up for justice” and faced court-martial. That trial highlighted the prejudice that was part of the WWII military and also showcased champions in the fight for justice. At this writing, all fifty men remain convicted mutineers.

Note: This work contains extensive source notes.

QUESTIONS:

What is the definition of mutiny? Is mutiny always wrong? Why or why not?

Has this story ended? Why or why not?

What impact did the Port Chicago 50 have on racial relations within the military?

Does a Presidential Pardon clear the record of someone convicted of a crime?

How did the trial prove the power of vague and/or specific words?

Do you believe that Joe Small was a ringleader?

JOURNAL STARTER:

To me, standing up for justice means.....

ACTIVITIES:

Make a list of the heroes of this story and identify the actions that would make them heroes.

Try to find some newspaper account of the Port Chicago explosion.

Research the role of African American service men and women during WWII.

Invite a judge or attorney to read the book and discuss what went wrong at the trial with your group.

Conduct a mock court-martial within your group.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOK TRAILER:

Andre Lambert's Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7oNaFasTEI>

BOOKTALK:

Would you agree to do dangerous work, when you had dramatic evidence that it could kill you? African-American sailors were faced with that choice when asked to return to their assigned work of ammunition loading after a munitions explosion at their naval base killed 320 people. 200 men refused to return to work, but once threatened with mutiny charges and court-martial, only 50 remained to face trial. This was 1944 when the military was segregated and African-Americans were more often not assigned to menial positions. Racial prejudice was part of the trial, but so was courage as people stood up for the men who were not afforded their rights.

READ-ALIKES:

Baker, Brynn. *The Tuskegee Airmen: Freed Flyers of WWII*. Capstone Press, 2015.
Myers, Walter Dean and Miles, Bill. *Harlem Hellfighters*. Amisted, 2005.
Stone, Tanya Lee. *Courage Has No Color: The Story of the Triple Nickels, America's First Black Paratroopers*. Candlewick, 2013.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Steve Sheinkin: <http://stevesheinkin.com>

Teacher's Guide: http://stevesheinkin.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/PortChicago50TeachersGuide_6.14.pdf

Port Chicago Disaster: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DaIphGJt5NU>

Racism During WWII: <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/assets/pdfs/african-americans-in-world.pdf>

Naval Ammunitions Depot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgGf5E7y380>

Freddie Meeks: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/06/30/us/freddie-meeks-83-ex-sailor-who-was-pardoned-dies.html>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (February 1, 2014): 58

Horn Book Magazine (March 1, 2014): 146

School Library Journal (February 1, 2014): 128

Stroud, Jonathon. *The Screaming Staircase*. Disney/Hyperion. 2013

SUMMARY:

England has a problem, namely ghosts (also poltergeists, shades, spirits, hazes, lurkers, phantasms, and many others). Ghosts manifest from sundown to sunrise and can move objects, change shapes, and kill people. Adults cannot see, hear or fight ghosts, but children can. Out of options, Lucy Carlyle joins Lockwood & Co., a ghost-hunting agency with a questionable reputation. They rarely do enough research about a new client, sometimes forget equipment, and argue about who ate the last cookie. Regardless, they take their jobs seriously and agree to investigate one of the most haunted houses in the country. The Red Room and the Screaming Staircase are the worst hauntings on an estate full of angry and vengeful ghosts. Lucy, George and Lockwood have one night to find the source of the haunting and neutralize it without dying, unlike all the other agents from more respectable agencies. How can they possibly survive?

QUESTIONS:

Why did the “Problem” begin?

Why don't Lockwood, George or Lucy trust adults?

How is Lockwood & Co. different other agencies, like the Rotwell or Fittes agencies?

Is Lockwood a good leader?

Do you think Lucy was responsible for what happened with her old employer, Mr. Jacobs?

Was Lucy controlled by the ghost of Annabel Ward?

Did Lucy make the right decision when she opened the locket?

Would you hire Lockwood & Co. to investigate ghosts at your house?

Have you read other scary books? How does *The Screaming Staircase* compare to those books?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

If I had a psychic ability, it would be...

If I lived in a world in which children protected adults, my job would be...

ACTIVITIES:

Research psychic abilities; for example, clairvoyance, levitation, telepathy, etc.

Research ghosts and ghost hunters.

Draw a lurker or a haze or a poltergeist.

Draw the head in the jar.

Make a model of Combe Carey Hall.

Adapt the book into a screenplay for a movie.

BOOKTRAILER:

Disney Books: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVq4IYK36IM>

Random House Children's Publisher UK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kR-svyMjxI>

BOOKTALK:

Imagine a world just like ours, but different. It's a world in which adults rely on children to keep them safe. It's a world full of ghosts that only children can see and fight. This is the world that Lucy, George and Lockwood live in. They're a team of ghost-busters who take on difficult jobs that no one else dares to. They're good at their jobs, for the most part, except when they burn down a client's house. Because they've run out of money, they take on a new job to eradicate ghosts from one of the most haunted houses in England. No other ghost-hunter has survived the night in Combe Carey Hall, let alone found the source of the haunting. Can Lucy, George and Lockwood succeed when every other agent has failed? Read to find out...

READ-ALIKES:

Black, Holly. *Doll Bones*. Doubleday Children's, 2013.

Gaiman, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*. HarperCollins, 2008.

Schlitz, Laura Amy. *Splendors and Glooms*. Candlewick, 2012.

Yovanoff, Brenna. *The Replacement*. Razorbill, 2010.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Jonathan Stroud: www.jonathanstroud.com

Lockwood & Co.: www.lockwoodandco.com

REVIEWS:

Booklist (June 1, 2013): 100

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (October 1, 2013): 118

School Library Journal (September 1, 2013): 148

Tingle, Author Tim. *How I Became a Ghost*. Roadrunner Press, 2014.

SUMMARY:

This historic fiction is a Trail of Tears story that focuses on 10-year-old Isaac and his Choctaw family after Treaty Talks cause them to leave their home on a forced march westward. First, their homes are burned to the ground, later they are given disease-infested blankets as they are herded away from their homeland. Isaac knows he will soon become a ghost and struggles with visions in which he sees how others from his tribe will die. Once they are marching, Isaac befriends Joseph, who has discovered the ability to shift into a panther to save himself from soldiers who want to enslave him. He befriends five-year-old Nita and learns of Nita's sister Naomi who is also enslaved by the Nahullo (white) men. Both Nita and Isaac become ghosts but work together with Joseph, the tribal counsel, and the bonekeepers to save Naomi. Their heroism saves the Leader of the soldiers thereby saving the tribe by diverting the soldiers from their wrath.

QUESTIONS:

See discussion questions at the end of this book.

Have you ever seen or experienced a ghost?

Did Isaac's mother seem to know what was going to happen? Can you guess how?

How did Choctaws say "goodbye"?

Define magical realism and discuss how this relates to the character of Joseph.

Why is Naomi against letting the wolf kill the Leader? Did you agree with Naomi?

Who are the heroes in this story?

Where do Native American Choctaw live today?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

When my dad disappeared and a snow monster appeared, I thought ...

To be a ghost, I needed to learn ...

Even though I was dead I had to be brave when ...

Once Naomi was safe and the Leader and soldiers left, the bonepickers ...

ACTIVITIES:

Learn about the "Trail of Tears" map it, find out about Indian Removal of 1830 Act.

Learn about the Choctaw Nation today.

Investigate Bone Pickers.

Dress up as or draw a picture of Isaac or another character in the story.

Choose a Choctaw word from <http://www.choctawschool.com/Home.aspx> Or <http://mowachoctaw.homestead.com/Culture.html> and use it in a sentence.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 5 - 8

BOOKTALK:

Isaac lived with her parents and brother like any boy. He had chores that got in the way of his fun, a dog named Jumper, a brother who could be aggravating...until the day when Treaty Talks meant he would have to leave his home and everything he knew. Why would the Nahullo (white) men burn his town and bring blankets that made everyone sick? Isaac's is one experience of a Choctaw Indian on the historic Trail of Tears. He not only becomes a ghost, but also becomes a hero. Discover how one boy could save two others and speak wisdom that is acknowledged by his entire tribe both the living and ghosts.

READ-ALIKES:

Cooper, Susan, *Ghost Hawk*. Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2013.

Frost, Helen. *Salt: A Story of Friendship in A Time of War*. Frances Foster Books, 2013.

Harrell, Beatrice Orcutt. *Longwalker's Journey: A Novel of the Choctaw Trail of Tears*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1999.

Hoig, Stan. *Night of the Cruel Moon: Cherokee Removal and the Trail of Tears*. Facts on File, 1996.

Other books by Tim Tingle:

Tingle, Tim, *Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship & Freedom*. Cinco Puntos Press, 2006.

- *Walking the Choctaw Road*. Cinco Puntos Press, 2003.
- *Spirits Dark and Light: Supernatural Tales from the Five Civilized Tribes*. August House, 2006.

RELATED WEB SITES:

Tim Tingle: <http://www.timtingle.com>

TeachingBooks.net: <https://www.teachingbooks.net/tb.cgi?tid=37294>

Choctaw: <http://peopleof.oureverydaylife.com/symbols-choctaw-indian-tribe-6344.html>

Choctaw Nation: <https://www.choctawnation.com/>

Choctaw for Kids: http://www.bigorin.org/choctaw_kids.htm

History of the removal of the Choctaw:

<http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/12/mushulatubbee-and-choctaw-removal-chiefs-confront-a-changing-world#topofpage>

REVIEWS:

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books (December 1, 2013): 240

Horn Book Magazine (January 1, 2014): 101

Kirkus Best Middle Grade Books (November 15, 2013): 84

Venkatraman, Padma. *A Time to Dance*. Speak, 2015.

SUMMARY:

Veda is an amazing dancer destined for greatness. She dances Indian bharatanatyam in exquisite style. Since competition is fierce, there are grudges, hard work and broken friendships. Veda lives in a perfect little world of her own until a bus accident changes her life forever. Being an amputee means that she may never dance again. With the odds against her, Veda is determined to dance and reignite the true fire and passion that she has in her heart and soul.

QUESTIONS:

How do Veda, her family, the dancers and her coach deal with her injury and new life?
Who provides the greatest support for Veda at the hospital?
What opportunity does Dr. Jim give to Veda that others in India may not have had available to them?
How would you describe the relationship between Dr. Jim and Veda? Explain both sides.
What could be the reasons that Veda's dance coach doesn't want to continue working with her?
Can you explain the emotional journey that Veda went through to become a dancer again?
How does Veda find a new dance studio?
Who is Govinda? What difference does he make on Veda's life?
Why does Govinda quit dancing?

JOURNAL STARTERS:

To help Veda through this experience, I would.....

ACTIVITIES:

Find and watch some clips that showcase bharatanatyam dance.
Explore traditions in Indian culture and Indian families.
Research prosthetics and recent advances in that field.
Research the person to whom this book is dedicated.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 6-8

BOOKTRAILERS:

YA-World Lit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-w72fz7kk0>

BOOKTALK:

Stand up and walk around the room. Skip, jump, turn around and around. Now, I want you to stand on one leg. Don't put that leg down at all. Walk around the room. If you do put your leg down, you fall to the ground. Imagine that this isn't just a game or exercise. What if you really had one of your legs amputated from the knee down? You couldn't dance, run, skip or walk like normal ever again. Veda has lost all love for life, because all she wants to do is dance, but an accident left her an amputee. How will she overcome her disabilities and get on with her life? Will she ever dance again? Will any dance teacher let her compete with a prosthetic leg? Sometimes, what seems impossible only the beginning of a future with many possibilities.

READ-ALIKES:

Bingham, Kelly. *Shark Girl. Candlewick*, 2007.
Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. Knopf, 2011
Venkatraman, Padma. *Climbing the Stairs*. Putnam, 2008

RELATED WEBSITES:

Padma's Books: <http://padmasbooks.blogspot.com>

Penguin Discussion Guide:

<http://www.penguin.com/static/pages/youngreaders/pdf/ATimeToDance-DG-bw.pdf>

Online Bharatanatyam: <http://onlinebharatanatyam.com>

Cultural India: <http://www.culturalindia.net/indian-dance/classical>

REVIEWS:

Booklist (April 15, 2014): 48

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books: (September 1, 2014): 71

Horn Book Magazine: (July 1, 2014): 108

School Library Journal: (April 1, 2014): 154