

Best Youth and Teen Books of 2021

Compiled by Northbrook PL Youth Services Staff

Picture Books - suggested ages 0-5



A Small Kindness by Stacy McAnulty, Illustrated by Wendy Leach
Recommended by Sara C.

Simple and poignant book about spreading kindness. The use of color to emphasize the message is magical.

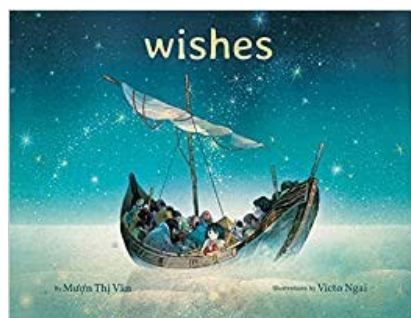
CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK MCANULTY, S.



Bird Boy by Matthew Burgess, Illustrated by Shahrzad Maydani
Recommended by Amanda M.

A wholly imaginative and beautiful story about being the new kid and finding your place.

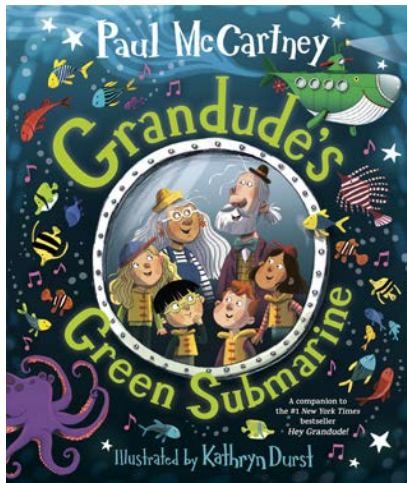
CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK BURGESS, M.



Wishes by Muon Thi Van, illustrated by Victo Ngai
Recommended by Amanda M.

An emotional journey of one family fleeing to a new life told through poetic and simple wishes.

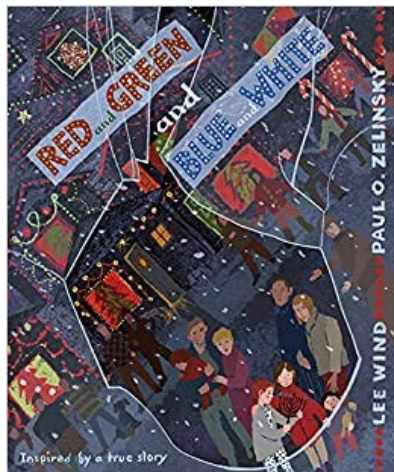
CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK VAN, M.



Grandude's Green Submarine by Paul McCartney,
Illustrated by Kathryn Durst
Recommended by Kim

Fans of Paul McCartney will love introducing their little ones to the rock legend as he takes children on an undersea adventure on his green submarine.

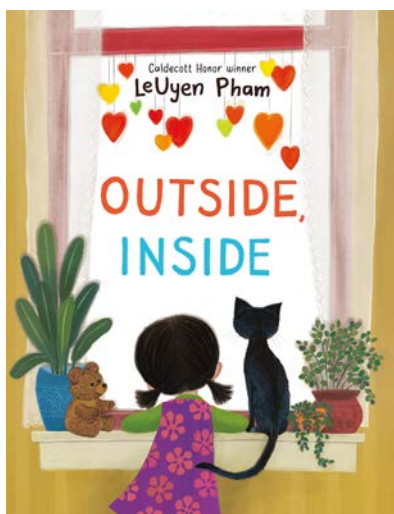
CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK MCCARTNEY, P.



Red and Green and Blue and White by Lee Wind,
Illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky
Recommended by Kim

On Isaac's street, he decorates his house in blue and white for Hannukah while all his neighbors decorate in red and green for Christmas, but after an ugly incident, his neighbors show their support for their Jewish neighbor.

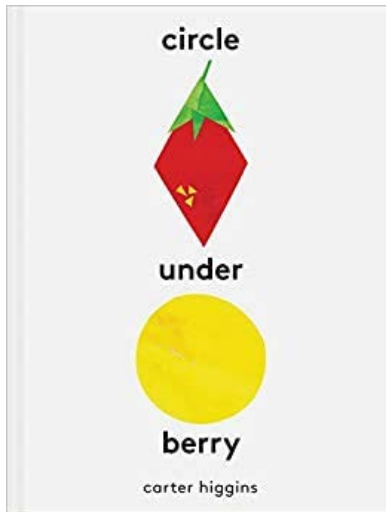
CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK WIND, L.



Outside, Inside by LeUyen Pham
Recommended by Sara C.

Goodreads: From Caldecott honoree LeUyen Pham, *Outside, Inside* is a moving picture book celebrating essential workers and the community coming together to face the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK PHAM, L.



Circle Under Berry by Carter Higgins

Recommended by Amanda L.

A delightfully bright and simple concept book filled with colors, shapes, and objects in relation to one another.

CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK HIGGINS, C.



Little Witch Hazel: A Year in the Forest by Phoebe Wahl

Recommended by Amanda L.

A collection of 4 short stories about a tiny witch and her adventures throughout the seasons.

CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK WAHL, P.



The Midnight Fair by Gideon Sterer, Illustrated by

Mariachiara Di Giorgio

Recommended by Sara C.

A beautiful picture book- without words- that tells the story of a fair after the people have gone home and the "creatures of the forest" take a turn.

CALL NUMBER: PICTURE BOOK STERER, G

READERS - suggested for Grades K-2nd



Geraldine Pu and her Lunchbox, Too! by Maddie Chang
Recommended by Amanda M.

An early reader and graphic novel about what it means to fit in or stick out when something you care about sets you apart.

CALL NUMBER: JUV READER CHANG, M.

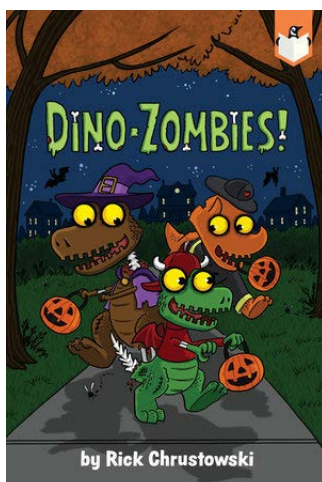


Wild Kratts: Wild Dogs and Canines! by Martin and Chris Kratt

Recommended by Kim

The Kratt brothers explore the habitats and characteristics of various wild dogs and canines.

CALL NUMBER: JUV READER 599.77 KRA



Dino-Zombies! by Rick Chrustowski

Recommended by Kim

A delightful rhyming story of dino-zombies trick or treating on Halloween.

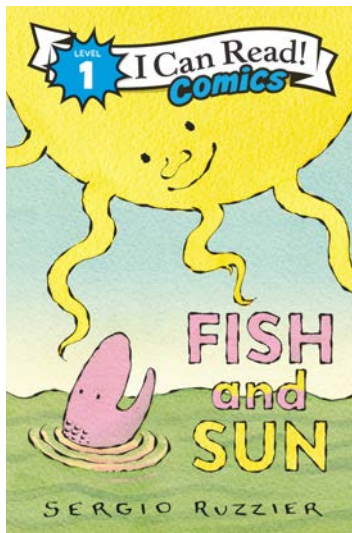
CALL NUMBER: JUV READER CHRUSTOWSKI, R.



Hello Ninja: Hello Stage Fright by N. D. Wilson,
Illustrated by Forrest Dickison
Recommended by Kim

When Wes gets nervous at his music recital, his friends pretend they are ninjas to give him courage. But will they really need to use their ninja skills to save the day?

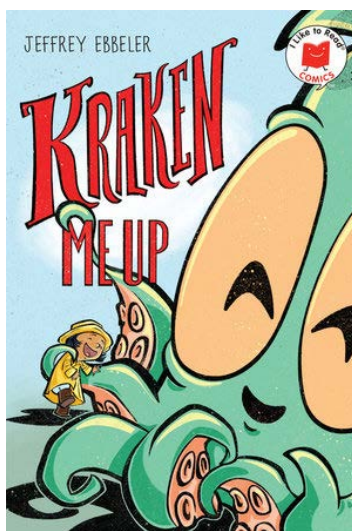
CALL NUMBER: JUV READER WILSON, N.



Fish and Sun by Sergio Ruzzier
Recommended by Amanda M.

Gentle illustrations and a lovely story about friendships that brighten our day, literally.

CALL NUMBER: JUV READER RUZZIER, S.



Kraken Me Up by Jeffrey Ebbeler
Recommended by Amanda M.

Izzie and her shy and not at all scary pet Kraken go to the fair and show everyone just how sweet a sea monster can be.

CALL NUMBER: JUV READER EBBELER, J.

Youth - Suggested for Grades 1st-3rd

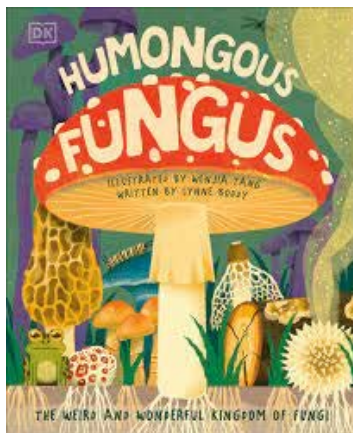


Allergic by Megan Wagner Lloyd

Recommended by Amanda M.

Fans of Smile, the Baby Sitter's Club and Click will love this slice of life story of a girl's search for the perfect, non-allergic pet.

CALL NUMBER: JUV GRAPHIC LLOYD, M.



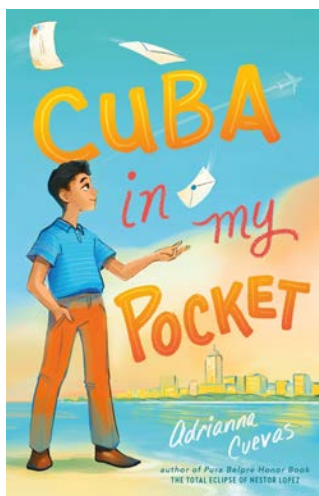
Humongous Fungus: The Weird and Wonderful Kingdom of Fungi by Lynne Boddy, Illustrated by Wenjia Tang

Recommended by Amanda M.

If the title doesn't make you smile, the delightful illustrations and amazing information about one of the most unusual organism we share our Earth with will.

CALL NUMBER: JUV 579.5 BOD

Youth - Suggested for Grades 3rd-5th

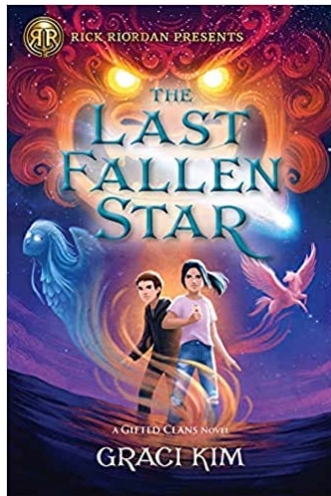


Cuba In My Pocket by Adrianna Cuevas

Recommended by Kim

Cumba is a 12 year old boy living in Cuba when Fidel Castro takes over. In order to avoid military service as a young boy, his family sends him to live with distant relatives in Miami.

CALL NUMBER: JUV CUEVAS, A.

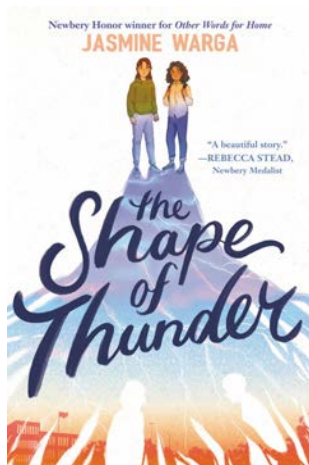


The Last Fallen Star by Graci Kim

Recommended by Miles

Riley Oh, a non-magic user adopted into a family of witches, desperately wants to learn their healing magic--but when her sister tries a forbidden spell to share her magic with Riley, Riley has to go on an adventure to save her sister's life.

CALL NUMBER: JUV FICTION KIM, G.



The Shape of Thunder by Jasmine Warga

Recommended by Bridget

Cora and Quinn had been best friends their whole lives, until a school shooting at their older siblings' high school ruined everything. Now a year later, Quinn and Cora are desperate to save their siblings and begin researching time travel together. This story is heart wrenching and beautiful.

CALL NUMBER: JUV FICTION WARGA, J.

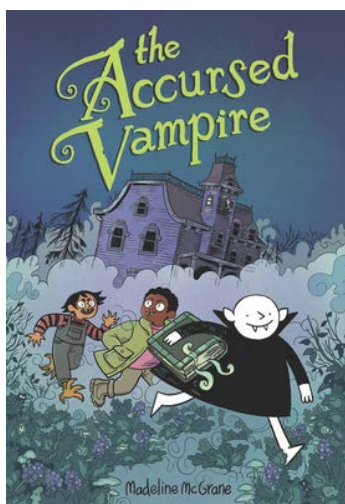


¡¡Manu!! by Kelly Fernández

Recommended by Sarah R.

A wonderful story about friendship, defying expectations, and finding your story in the world.

CALL NUMBER: JUV GRAPHIC FERNANDEZ, K.



The Accursed Vampire by Madeline McGrane

Recommended by Bridget

Dragoslava the centuries old child vampire goes on a quest with their friends to steal a spellbook from a witch; a hilarious comic about friendship.

CALL NUMBER: JUV GRAPHIC MCGRANE, M.



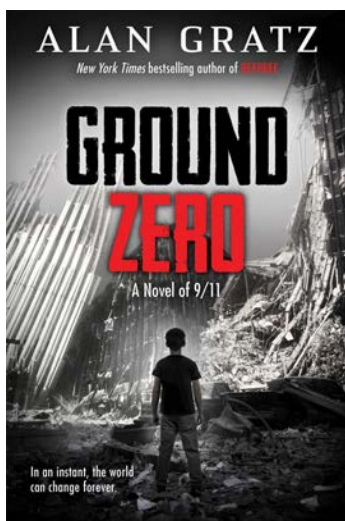
The Cardboard Kingdom: Roar of the Beast by Chad Sell

Recommended by Bridget

The Cardboard Kingdom kids are back, getting ready for Halloween! So many fun stories!

CALL NUMBER: JUV GRAPHIC SELL, C.

TEEN - suggested for Grades 6th - 8th

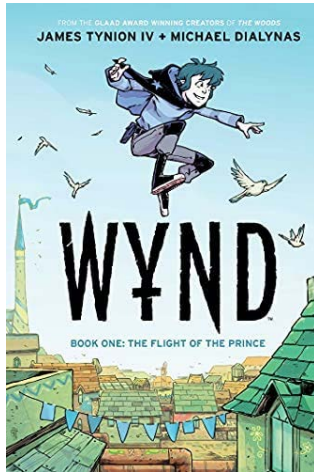


Ground Zero by Alan Gratz

Recommended by Sara C.

I could not put this fast paced, emotionally intense read down. Well developed and relies on multiple perspectives and parallel narratives to tell the story.

CALL NUMBER: JUV FICTION GRATZ, A.



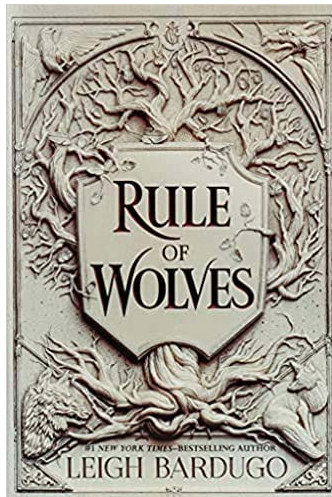
Wynd by James Tynion IV and Michael Dialynas

Recommended by Amanda M.

Wynd lives a normal and boring life in the magical world of Esseriel until the day long buried secrets and dangers come to light and Wynd and his friends set off on a life or death adventure.

CALL NUMBER: YA GRAPHIC TYN

TEEN - suggested for Grades 9th-12th

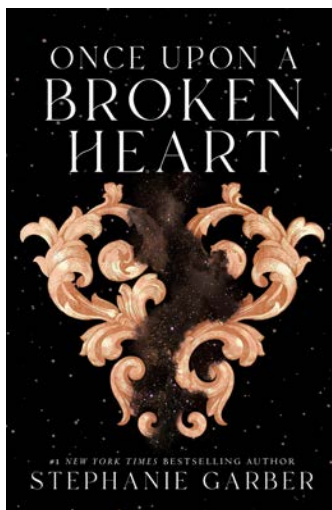


Rule of Wolves by Leigh Bardugo

Recommended by Miles

Intrigue and deception follow Nikolai, Zoya, and Nina as they fight to help Nikolai keep his place on Ravka's throne and head off the impending war with Fjerda.

CALL NUMBER: YA FICTION BARDUGO, L.



Once Upon a Broken Heart by Stephanie Garber

Recommended by Sarah R.

Incredibly immersive fantasy novel with mystery, magic, and romance!

CALL NUMBER: YA FICTION GARBUR, S.



***Fat Chance, Charlie Vega* by Crystal Maldonado**

Recommended by Amanda M.

Charlie Vega is a charming and resilient character that fans of *To All The Boys I've Loved Before* will gladly cheer for.

CALL NUMBER: YA FICTION MALDONADO, C.



***What Big Teeth* by Roze Szabo**

Recommended by Bridget

When Eleanor returns to her family of literal monsters after years of being kept away at boarding school, she must uncover why she was forced to leave and the house's secrets in this atmospheric drama.

CALL NUMBER: YA FICTION SZABO, R.



***Iron Widow* by Xiran Jay Zhao**

Recommended by Bridget

In a future where young men and women are paired to power giant robots and fight an alien invasion, Zetian is on a quest to kill the pilot who murdered her sister and becomes a fabled class of pilot -- the Iron Widow. This feminist sci-fi adventure is violent and stunning.

CALL NUMBER: YA FICTION ZHAO, X.



Squad by Maggie Tokuda-Hall and Lisa Sterle

Recommended by Bridget

Cliques, werewolves, and revenge-- what's not to love?

CALL NUMBER: YA GRAPHIC TOK



Alone In Space: A Collection by Tillie Walden

Recommended by Bridget

Gorgeous collection of short comics from Tillie Walden, including The End of Summer (a fantasy winter tale) and I Love This Part (teen romance).

CALL NUMBER: YA GRAPHIC WALDEN