



Youth Staff Picks

April 2021

Pearl Harbor

by Kate Messner — j 940.54 Mes | Nonfiction, History, World War II

This is part of a new series called “[History Smashers](#),” intending to expose the hidden truths behind the slanted stories told in common history lessons, such as, that the Pearl Harbor attack took everyone by surprise and happened without any warning signs. It may be dismaying to realize how much history repeats itself, but you’ll get a great overview of how and why the United States got involved in World War II. Similar in style to the “Who Was...?” series. (AE)

Ten Beautiful Things

by Molly Beth Griffin — E Gri | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Picture Book

Lily is moving in with her grandma in Iowa and is sad about the change. To get her mind off her situation, her grandma suggests they look for ten beautiful things as they travel to her new home. (EM)

Rules

by Cynthia Lord — j Lor | j CDAB Lor | ebook on [OVERDRIVE](#) | Realistic Fiction

Catherine’s brother David has autism, and a lot of the time it feels as if her family’s life revolves around his behavior and care. All she really wants is a chance at a regular, boring life and maybe a new friendship, which she ends up finding in an unexpected way. A touching book about love, understanding and acceptance. (EK)

The Ickabog

by J. K. Rowling — j Row | ebook on [OVERDRIVE](#) | Fiction, Fantasy

In an old-fashioned once-upon-a-time story, two conniving lords have taken over the running of a tiny kingdom called Cornucopia. They are making the lives of the people miserable, but good King Fred has no idea this is happening. Meanwhile, the lives of two almost-orphans are headed toward a confrontation with the supposedly mythological Ickabog, a monster who eats people (especially children). Will there be a happily-ever-after? (PS)



The Last Rabbit

by Shelley Moore Thomas — j Tho | Fiction, Fantasy

Albie wasn't always a rabbit, and just two years ago there weren't any rabbits on the island of Hybrasil – just four sisters and an old man. Now the island is sinking, all of her sisters have gone, and she must go, too! But she needs to right a wrong, because mistakes have consequences. Does she find forgiveness? Is she able to reveal her secret wish and discover her inner strength? (JL)

The Smartest Kid in the Universe

by Chris Grabenstein – j Gra | Fiction

Jake McQuade thinks that he is the coolest kid in seventh grade at Riverview Middle School. He considers slothfulness to be his superpower. Being smart is not a priority for him until one day he eats some experimental jellybeans with surprising results. Maybe super smart Grace Garcia will notice him after all, and he can help save his school! (LD)

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Dr. Maggie's Grand Tour of the Universe

by Maggie Aderin-Pocock – j 523.2 Ade | Nonfiction, Space Science

Dr. Maggie is an American space scientist who takes us on an imaginary trip to the outer edge of our Solar System with stops at all of the planets. The end of the tour is the gigantic Oort Cloud which is believed to surround the entire Solar System. Hop on board! (LD)

Ten Little Dumplings

by Larissa Fan — E Fan | Picture Book

This is a story inspired by a family with ten sons in a small Taiwan village, during a time when having boys was cherished over girls. These boys were considered lucky, and as they learned and grew and became respected, there was always one other little one watching and learning. Search for that little 11th one in the pictures! (JL)

Out the Door

by Christy Hale — E Hal | Picture Book

Told through a plethora of short prepositional phrases (using past, along, up to, across, beyond, amid, until – to list just a few prepositions), a young child goes through a full day, beginning with leaving her front door and riding the subway to school, to reversing the route and returning home to be among family. “Until it’s time for bed and then... out the door,” coming full circle to the book’s beginning. Lovely. (AE)



The Candy Mafia

by Lavie Tidhar — j Tid | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction, Mystery

Twelve-year-old Nelle Faulker is a private detective in a town where candy is illegal. Soon after Eddie, a candy gangster, asks for help to find his missing teddy bear, he goes missing, too, and Nelle finds herself mixed up in the underworld of candy smuggling. Who is behind the disappearances and why? (EM)

Because of Winn-Dixie

by Kate DiCamillo — j DiC | various formats on [OVERDRIVE](#) and [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction

It all started in the local grocery store of India Opal's new town. From the moment she laid eyes on the big, shaggy, stray dog she found there and brought home, her life began to change for the better, in ways she'd never expected. A small group of unforgettable characters and a great story about the love of a dog make this one a must read! (EK)

Math Curse

by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith — E Sci | audiobook on [HOOPLA](#) | Picture Book

"You know, you can think of almost everything as a math problem," says Mrs. Fibonacci. The very next day, our narrator discovers the unfortunate truth of this statement: it's an entire day of word problems, fractions, time, money. Everything is a problem—no, a curse! Aimed at anyone (regardless of age) who has ever dealt with any of these mathematical concepts, *Math Curse* is a very funny and wickedly clever look at real-life math. (PS)

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Bernard Makes a Splash

by Lisa Stickley – E Sti | Picture Book

Bernard has been the pool manager for five years. There is a diving contest every year at his pool. Contestants come from all over the world to compete. Bernard secretly wants to compete as well. He has been studying all of the techniques and practicing at night. Will he have enough courage to join the other competitors at the meet? Enjoy reading this beautifully illustrated book to find out! (LD)



Lightning Girl

by Alesha Dixon — j Dix | Fiction, Superheroes

Aurora is a 10-year-old girl living a relatively regular life. To her great surprise one day, during an emotionally charged moment, light beams blast out of her fingertips! Everything changes from that moment forward when she finds out her family has been keeping a huge secret! (EK)

Brother's Keeper

by Julie Lee — j Lee | Historical Fiction

Imbued with Korean culture, landscape, and history, author Lee presents the tragedy and trauma experienced by two siblings during the Korean War in the 1950's. Sora has always been expected to set aside her own interests and take care of her younger brother, Youngsoo, the honored and cherished eldest boy in the family. This becomes even more trying when the two get separated from family while escaping from communist governed North Korea in the middle of winter. Based on the experiences of the author's own mother. (AE)

Sincerely, Emerson: A Girl, Her Letter and the Helpers All Around Us

by Emerson Weber — E Web | Picture Book

Eleven-year-old Emerson writes a letter of thanks to her postal carrier for his hard work, and the letter goes viral. Soon Emerson receives boxes and boxes of letters from mail carriers across the country. Based on a true story. (EM)

Favorite Poems Old and New

Selected by Helen Ferris — j 808.81 Fav | Poetry

It's National Poetry Month! The poems in this collection are not new—the book was published in 1957. Many of these “favorite” poems are completely unknown today, and not all have stood the test of time. There are no beautiful illustrations. Instead, the reader is invited to peruse 567 pages of poetry in clear, readable type, ranging in style from limericks to sonnets, and including haiku and long story-poems. There are treasures here for the finding, and I am never able to stop at just one. (PS)



The Inquisitor's Tale

by Adam Gidwitz — j Gid | ebook and audiobook on [OVERDRIVE](#) | Fiction

Three oddly matched children and a holy dog are the topic of discussion at a tavern. Set in the Middle Ages, their misadventures are retold by different travelers that have encountered them along the way. The inquisitor, who started the conversation, wants to know *why* are they considered saints, and *why* are they wanted dead by the King of France? This is a wonderfully spun story with characters for whom you will cheer and cry! (JL)

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Papa Brings Me the World

by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw — E Kos | Picture Book

Lulu's Papa travels the world for work, and she yearns to be with him. "I'm coming with you!" she says, wearing his huge hiking boots. "Someday," he replies, "but until then, I'll bring the world to you." And he does – in unique treasures, stories, worldly wisdom. A beautiful story about the world's beauty and kindness all around, as long as your heart is open and you share. (AE)

Running with Wolves

by Jim Dutcher — j 599.77 Dut | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Nonfiction, Animals

Ever since the chance encounter at age 16 with a beautiful wolf on a Wyoming ranch, Jim Dutcher had been fascinated by wolves. When he grew up to become a filmmaker, he fulfilled a dream to assemble a wolf pack, observe and film it. This is the story of Jim and Jamie Dutcher and their amazing adventure with the Sawtooth wolf pack. A beautiful story that gives readers insight into the secret and incredible lives of wolves. (EK)

The Highland Falcon Thief

by M. G. Leonard and Sam Sedgman — j Leo | Fiction, Mystery

The Highland Falcon, a royal train, is making its last journey and Hal Beck is one of the passengers. He's expecting a dull trip, but things quickly get interesting when he spots a stowaway. Things get even more interesting when a fabulous diamond necklace is stolen and the wrong person is accused. Now it's up to 11-year-old Hal to solve the mystery. Lots of fun, and it's the first in a series! (PS)



Me and Mama

by Cozbi A. Cabrera — E Cab | Picture Book

This book is filled with beautiful paintings showing the intimacy of a family's life and their home. A little girl enjoys some special time with her mother in the morning before the rest of the family is awake and later with her brother as Mama puts them to bed. Enjoy the beauty, joy, and love of family life. (LD)

From the Desk of Zoe Washington

by Janae Mark — j Mar | ebook and audiobook on [OVERDRIVE](#) and [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction

After Zoe Washington receives a letter on her twelfth birthday from her imprisoned father who she has never met before, she decides to write him back without her mother knowing about it. While corresponding with him, he insists he is not guilty of the crime he is accused of, and Zoe becomes determined to prove his innocence. (EM)

Mr. Popper's Penguins

by Florence and Richard Atwater — j Atw | ebook and audiobook on [OVERDRIVE](#) | Fiction

Mr. Popper leads a very ordinary life with his wife and two kids, but he has always longed to go to the Antarctic like his idol, the great explorer Admiral Drake, to see penguins! When he receives a large package from the South Pole, his life goes from ordinary to extraordinary with a lot of fun, adventures, travel, and he ends with a dream come true! (JL)