

Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Book list (Summaries)



Want to Read

Maybe He Just Likes You

by
Barbara Dee

4.28 · [Rating details](#) · [5,486 ratings](#) · [1,117 reviews](#)

A 2020 ALA Notable Children's Book

A *Washington Post* Best Children's Book of 2019

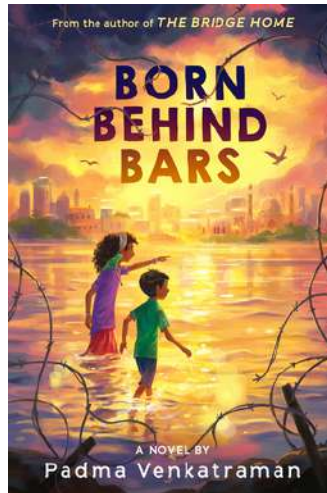
Barbara Dee explores the subject of #MeToo for the middle grade audience in this heart-wrenching—and ultimately uplifting—novel about experiencing harassment and unwanted attention from classmates.

For seventh-grader Mila, it starts with some boys giving her an unwanted hug on the school blacktop. A few days later, at recess, one of the boys (and fellow trumpet player) Callum tells Mila it's his birthday, and asks her for a "birthday hug." He's just being friendly, isn't he? And how can she say no? But Callum's hug lasts a few seconds too long, and feels...weird. According to her friend, Zara, Mila is being immature and overreacting. Doesn't she know what flirting looks like?

But the boys don't leave Mila alone. On the bus. In the halls. During band practice—the one place Mila could always escape.

It doesn't feel like flirting—so what is it? Thanks to a chance meeting, Mila begins to find solace in a new place: karate class. Slowly, with the help of a fellow classmate, Mila learns how to stand her ground and how to respect others—and herself.

From the author of *Everything I Know About You*, *Halfway Normal*, and *Star-Crossed* comes this timely story of a middle school girl standing up and finding her voice." ([less](#))



Want to Read [Preview](#)

Born Behind Bars

by

Padma Venkatraman ([Goodreads Author](#))

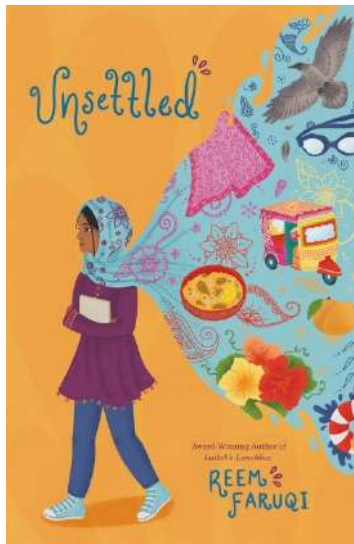
4.30 · [Rating details](#) · [1,210 ratings](#) · [227 reviews](#)

Set in Chennai, India, this is the story of a boy who's unexpectedly released into the world after spending his whole life in jail with his mom.

Kabir has been in jail since the day he was born, because his mom is serving time for a crime she didn't commit. He's never met his dad, so the only family he's got are their cellmates, and the only place he feels the least bit free is in the classroom, where his kind teacher regales him with stories of the wonders of the outside world.

Then one day a new warden arrives and announces Kabir is too old to stay. He gets handed over to a long-lost uncle who unfortunately turns out to be a fraud, and intends to sell Kabir. So Kabir does the only thing he can--run away as fast as his legs will take him. How does a boy with nowhere to go and no connections make his way?

Fortunately, he befriends Rani, another street kid, and she takes him under her wing. But plotting their next move is hard--and fraught with danger--in a world that cares little for homeless, low caste children. This is not the world Kabir dreamed of--but he's discovered he's not the type to give up. Kabir is ready to show the world that he--and his mother--deserve a place in it. ([less](#))



Want to Read

Unsettled

by

Reem Faruqi (Goodreads Author)

4.26 · [Rating details](#) · 1,045 ratings · 242 reviews

A stirring, hopeful immigration story of Nurah and her family, who move from Karachi, Pakistan, to Peachtree City, Georgia, from Reem Faruqi, ALA Notable author of the award-winning picture book *Lailah's Lunchbox*. Powerful and charming, *Other Words for Home* meets *Front Desk* in this debut middle grade novel in verse about finding your footing in a new world.

From Pakistan to Peachtree City—Nurah's stirring story of finding your place.

When Nurah's family moves from Karachi, Pakistan, to Peachtree City, Georgia, all she really wants is to blend in, but she stands out for all the wrong reasons. Nurah's accent, floral-print kurtas, and tea-colored skin make her feel excluded, and she's left to eat lunch alone under the stairwell, until she meets Stahr at swimming tryouts. Stahr covers her body when in the water, just like Nurah, but for very different reasons.

But in the water Nurah doesn't want to blend in: She wants to stand out. She wants to win medals like her star athlete brother, Owais—who is going through struggles of his own in America—yet when sibling rivalry gets in the way, she makes a split-second decision of betrayal that changes their fates.

As Nurah slowly begins to sprout wings in the form of strong swimming arms, she gradually gains the courage to stand up to bullies, fight for what she believes in, and find her place



Want to Read

Preview

Finding Junie Kim

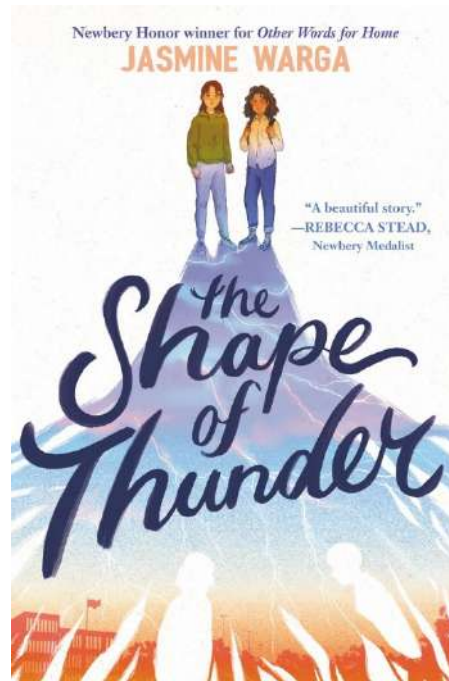
by
Ellen Oh (Goodreads Author)

4.28 · [Rating details](#) · 1,668 ratings · 357 reviews

A story of family, hope, and survival, inspired by the author's mother's real-life experiences during the Korean War. Faced with middle school racism, Junie Kim learns of her grandparents' extraordinary strength and finds her voice.

Junie Kim just wants to fit in. So she keeps her head down and tries not to draw attention to herself. But when racist graffiti appears at her middle school, Junie must decide between staying silent or speaking out.

Then Junie's history teacher assigns a project and Junie decides to interview her grandparents, learning about their unbelievable experiences as kids during the Korean War. Junie comes to admire her grandma's fierce determination to overcome impossible odds, and her grandpa's unwavering compassion during wartime. And as racism becomes more pervasive at school, Junie taps into the strength of her ancestors and finds the courage to do what is right.



Want to Read

Preview

The Shape of Thunder

by
Jasmine Warga (Goodreads Author)

4.25 · [Rating details](#) · [2,927 ratings](#) · [606 reviews](#)

Cora hasn't spoken to her best friend, Quinn, in a year.

Despite living next door to each other, they exist in separate worlds of grief. Cora is still grappling with the death of her beloved sister in a school shooting, and Quinn is carrying the guilt of what her brother did.

On the day of Cora's twelfth birthday, Quinn leaves a box on her doorstep with a note. She has decided that the only way to fix things is to go back in time to the moment before her brother changed all their lives forever—and stop him.

In spite of herself, Cora wants to believe. And so the two former friends begin working together to open a wormhole in the fabric of the universe. But as they attempt to unravel the mysteries of time travel to save their siblings, they learn that the magic of their friendship may actually be the key to saving themselves.



Want to Read

Coop Knows the Scoop

by

Taryn Souders (Goodreads Author)

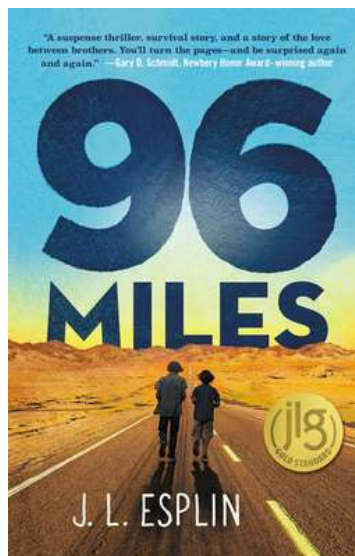
4.12 · [Rating details](#) · 649 ratings · 141 reviews

The whole town is talking about what's buried beneath the playground...

Windy Bottom, Georgia is usually a peaceful place. Coop helps his mom at her café and bookstore, hangs out with his grandpa, and bikes around with his friends Justice and Liberty. The town is full of all kinds of interesting people, but no one has ever caused a problem. Until now.

And somehow, Gramps is taking all the blame! It seems like there are a lot of secrets that were buried in their small town after all...

Will Coop and his friends get to the bottom of the mystery and clear Gramps' name before it's too late? ([less](#))



96 Miles

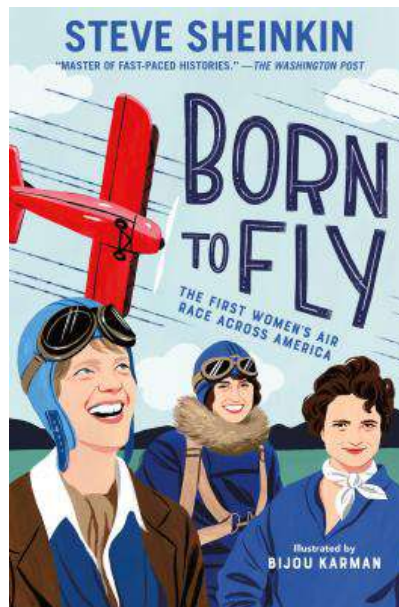
by

J.L. Esplin (Goodreads Author)

4.11 · [Rating details](#) · 1,457 ratings · 277 reviews

Dad always said if things get desperate, it's okay to drink the water in the toilet. I never thought it would come to that. I thought I'd sooner die than let one drop of toilet water touch my lips. Yet here I am, kneeling before a porcelain throne, holding a tin mug for scooping in one hand, and my half-gallon canteen in the other.

The Lockwood brothers are supposed to be able to survive anything. Their dad, a hardcore survivalist, has stockpiled enough food and water on their isolated Nevada ranch to last for months. But when they are robbed at gunpoint during a massive blackout while their dad is out of town, John and Stew must walk 96 miles in the stark desert sun to get help--and they have only 3 days before their time runs out.... ([less](#))



Preview

Born to Fly: The First Women's Air Race Across America

by

Steve Sheinkin,

Bijou Karman (Illustrator)

4.33 · [Rating details](#) · 441 ratings · 138 reviews

***Born to Fly* is the gripping story of the fearless women pilots who aimed for the skies—and beyond.**

Just nine years after American women finally got the right to vote, a group of trailblazers soared to new heights in the 1929 Air Derby, the first women's air race across the U.S. Follow the incredible lives of legend Amelia Earhart, who has captivated generations; Marvel Crosson, who built a plane before she

even learned how to fly; Louise Thaden, who shattered jaw-dropping altitude records; and Elinor Smith, who at age seventeen made headlines when she flew under the Brooklyn Bridge.

These awe-inspiring stories culminate in a suspenseful, nail-biting race across the country that brings to life the glory and grit of the dangerous and thrilling early days of flying, expertly told by the master of nonfiction history for young readers, National Book Award finalist Steve Sheinkin



Want to Read

Amari and the Night Brothers

(Supernatural Investigations #1)

by

B.B. Alston (Goodreads Author)

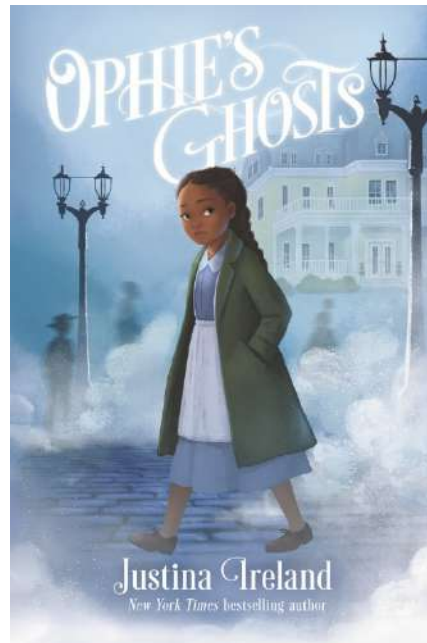
4.44 · [Rating details](#) · [17,295 ratings](#) · [3,735 reviews](#)

Quinton Peters was the golden boy of the Rosewood low-income housing projects, receiving full scholarship offers to two different Ivy League schools. When he mysteriously goes missing, his little sister, 13-year-old Amari Peters, cannot understand why it is not a bigger deal. Why isn't his story all over the news? And why do the police automatically assume he was into something illegal?

Then Amari discovers a ticking briefcase in her brother's old closet. A briefcase meant for her eyes only. There was far more to Quinton, it seems, than she ever knew. He has left her a nomination for a summer tryout at the secretive Bureau of Supernatural Affairs. Amari is certain the answer to finding out what happened to him lies somewhere inside, if only she can get her head around the idea of mermaids, dwarves, yetis and magicians all being real things, something she must instantly confront when she is given a weredragon as a roommate.

Amari must compete against some of the nation's wealthiest kids—who've known about the supernatural world their whole lives and are able to easily answer questions like which two Great Beasts reside in the Atlantic Ocean and how old is Merlin? Just getting around the Bureau is a lesson alone for Amari with signs like 'Department of Hidden Places this way, or is it?' If that all wasn't enough, every Bureau trainee has a talent enhanced to supernatural levels to help them do their jobs – but Amari is given an illegal ability. As if she needed something else to make her stand out.

With an evil magician threatening the whole supernatural world, and her own classmates thinking she is an enemy, Amari has never felt more alone. But if she doesn't pass the three tryouts, she may never find out what happened to Quinton.



Want to Read

Preview

Ophie's Ghosts

by

Justina Ireland (Goodreads Author)

4.34 · [Rating details](#) · [2,303 ratings](#) · [525 reviews](#)

The New York Times bestselling author of Dread Nation makes her middle grade debut with a sweeping tale of the ghosts of our past that will not stay buried, starring an unforgettable girl named Ophie.

Ophelia Harrison used to live in a small house in the Georgia countryside. But that was before the night in November 1922, and the cruel act that took her home and her father from her. Which was the same night that Ophie learned she can see ghosts.

Now Ophie and her mother are living in Pittsburgh with relatives they barely know. In the hopes of earning enough money to get their own place, Mama has gotten Ophie a job as a maid in the same old manor house where she works.

Daffodil Manor, like the wealthy Caruthers family who owns it, is haunted by memories and prejudices of the past--and, as Ophie discovers, ghosts as well. Ghosts who have their own loves and hatreds and desires, ghosts who have wronged others and ghosts who have themselves been wronged. And as Ophie forms a friendship with one spirit whose life ended suddenly and unjustly, she wonders if she might be able to help--even as she comes to realize that Daffodil Manor may hold more secrets than she bargained for.

Welcome to the 2022-23 Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl competition.

Dear Parents:

I am so excited that your student is interested in competing in the 2022-23 [Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl](#). The competition consists of reading the 10 Georgia Young Author Book Awards and answering questions that are derived from the contents of these books in a quiz bowl style format. You may review the summaries of each of these titles on our school website at [and they are also posted on our Luella Website under the Media Center tab](#). Those pages are for you to keep. Each student does not need to read every book but having a general knowledge of each book's main characters, main events, theme, and conclusions is essential to be competitive on our team. We can register 10 students for our team, and they compete in teams of 5 at a time during the 5 rounds of the competition which will be at a date determined by the district usually sometime in January.

Another permission slip will be distributed before the competition to account for the location of the district competition dealing with the hours of the competition, lunch arrangements, and any fees if a bus is required. This permission slip is to cover your student reading and studying the ten titles that the competition covers to prepare for the competition. If any of the book themes are contents are such that you would prefer that your student would not read that title, please email me at barbra.rose@henry.k12.ga.us, and we can arrange a phone call to discuss options for your student. We have hard copies of each title in the library as well as e-book copies in our library catalog, Destiny Discover. You should not have to purchase any of the above titles for your student to prepare.

We will determine a practice schedule that accommodates the maximum number of students and will practice two days a week starting in October.

Thanks for your support in our academic competition and we hope for a great season!

Sincerely,

Barbra Rose

Luella Middle School Media Specialist

Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl Coach

Permission form for preparation in the 2022-23 Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl. You may fill out this paper form or you may fill out an online form at: <https://forms.office.com/r/akucdS6ZXL>

Student Name:

Student Grade level:

Parent/Guardian name:

Parent/Guardian phone number:

Parent/Guardian email address:

I the undersigned agree that my student, _____,

may read and study content questions on the competition titles for the 2022-23 Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl (titles listed below).

1. Alston, B. B. (2021). *Amari and the night brothers*. Balzer + Bray.
2. Dee, B. (2020). *Maybe he just likes you*. Aladdin.
3. Esplin, J. L. (2020). *96 miles*. Starscape.
4. Faruqi, R. (2021). *Unsettled*. HarperCollins.
5. Ireland, J. (2021). *Ophie's ghosts*. Balzer + Bray.
6. Oh, E. (2021). *Finding Junie Kim*. HarperCollins.
7. Sheinkin, S. (2019). *Born to fly: The first women's air race across America*. Roaring Book Press.
8. Sounders, T. (2020). *Coop knows the scoop*. Sourcebooks Young Readers.
9. Venkatraman, P. (2021). *Born behind bars*. Nancy Paulsen Books.
10. Warga, J. (2021). *Shape of thunder*. Balzer + Bray.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

