8th Grade Recommended Reads 2017-2018

**Adams, Richard. *Watership down*. New York, Macmillan, 1974.**

*Watership Down* by Richard Adams is a lovely novel. This book is a great read, for it has well developed characters. Well developed bunny characters. Join our bunny protagonists as they journey away from the near fate of their home village (Warren) to start a new society. Journey with them as they come upon a bunny utopia with a great secret and a darker past. Join them as they build a thriving dwelling and free their female partners from the grasps of an evil farmer. The freedom of their free society is then threatened by a horrible selfish dictator and his brutal army. This newfound threat enslaves their ambassadors. Providing an exciting rescue from fellow bunny brethren to companion. This thrilling escape triggers a fiery call back from the ruthless dictator challenging the very life and existence of the free democratic bunny society. Do our refugee bunnies live in their imagined haven or do they reach their demise? Read Watership down to find the end of this fantastic tale.

**Adeyemi, Tomi. *Children of Blood and Bone*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2018.**

My favorite book I read this year is The Children of Blood and Bone by Tomi Adayemi.  Fantasy is not a genre I typically read, but I decided to try something different, and so I chose this book.  I was not disappointed. The start was rough, but as I kept flipping the pages, I was introduced to a world full of chaos, politics, and magic.  The story starts with a girl named Zelie, she is a Diviner, meaning she has magic in her blood. Evidence of this is her white hair. Zelie finds out that the governing Monarchy is targeting Diviners, and enslaving them.  Zelie knows this is wrong, but she does not attempt to make a difference until a mysterious lady, eventually revealed as the princess of the Monarchy, runs away from the palace. The whole army, in an attempt to find her stumbles across Zelie who is aiding her, making them both the target.  Zelie then gets in an interesting relationship with the prince, while attempting to end the Monarchy he devotes his life to serving.

**Bradley, James. *The China Mirage: The Hidden History of American Disaster in Asia*. New York, Little, Brown and Company, 2015.**

If you are a lover of history, and you like to read, then I have just the book for you. *The* *China Mirage* is a book that corrects the view of the history of China and shows that the United States view is more like the view of the peanut gallery. It is an informational book and so then does not include much, if any action at all. The book is also quite long (For me at least, being a not so active reader) (A.K.A 400 pages) making it quite a challenge (I know this because I started at the beginning of the year and finished about &#8532; of the way through.) That does not mean that it is not worth it though, you will learn about the actual history of China, and not just “Great Wall, Mao Zedong is bad.” Instead you will learn that their hand was more forced then chosen. Overall, I would recommend this book to anyone who would like to learn about history and is ok with a bit of a long read.

**Card, Orson Scott, et al. *Ender’s Game*. New York, Tor, 1991.**

One of my favorite books that I read this year was Ender’s Game. Ender’s Game is set in the future, in a time of war against an alien race. This book is about a teenager Ender who has to save humans from an alien threat. A big part of this book is isolating Ender. The reason they do this is to make him feel alone so they can control him. They are trying to make him into a new type of soldier to make him feel no remorse for their enemy. Fortunately, it doesn’t work, for the most part. Ender has no desire to kill, he only wishes to end the war and save the human race. So much of the book is spent with Ender trying to find his place among his fellow cadets. This book is highly recommended to people who like fiction books with an interesting story line.

**Dashner, James. *The Eye of Minds*. New York, Delacorte Press, 2013.**

My mom wanted me to read the Maze Runner, but she got me this one by mistake. I read it anyway, because the inside cover seemed interesting. After I read this book, I saw why James Dashner was such a wonderful author. Michael, the protagonist of this book, is a gamer. And just like all the other gamers in his area, he spends more time in the VirtNet, made by the VNS, than in real life. The VirtNet has multiple games, including “Lifeblood”, a simulation of real life. Michael, along with Bryson and Sarah, hack this game, getting what they want in the game. The VNS knows about this hacking, and the VNS hires them to stop a larger hacker, that is taking people’s lives. Michael, Bryson, and Sarah join forces to stop this hacker. Will they succeed?

**---. *The Maze Runner*. New York, Delacorte Press, 2009.**

One book that I really liked this year was The Maze Runner by James Dashner. This book is mysterious, thrilling, sad, frightening and during all of this Dashner still manages to twist humor and happiness throughout the book. The Maze Runner is written from the point of view of Thomas, who mysteriously appears in the Glade, not knowing anything but his name. The Glade is a large green area trapped inside giant stone walls. The stone walls open every morning and close every night like they are on a timer. During those few hours that the doors are open is when the runners go out into the large terrifying maze, to find their escape. But they must get back before the doors close because nobody has spent the night in the maze and lived through the night to tell about it. Not only do the walls keep the Gladers trapped inside but they also keep the grievers out. “The look was fast--only a few seconds--but it was enough to haunt him forever. A twisted, pale  figure writhing in agony, chest bare and hideous. Tight rigid cords of sickly green veins webbed across the boy’s body and limbs, like ropes under his skin. Purplish bruises covered the kid, red hives, bloody scratches. His bloodshot eyes bulged, darting back and forth. The image had already burned into Thomas’s mind before Alby jumped up, blocking the view but not the moans and screams,”- James Dashner The Maze Runner

**Franklin, Jonathan. *438 Days: An Extraordinary True Story of Survival at Sea*. New York, Atria Books, 2015.**

Jose Salvador Alvarenga is a fisherman in El Salvador trying to make a living after getting into a bar fight and receiving 11 stab wounds. He captains a 25 foot boat and goes out in the ocean for three days at a time making a profit of about $150 which in El Salvador is enough to get him through a week with a party on the weekend. With an upcoming storm Alvarenga needs to decide whether he goes out to make enough money for the week or to go hungry for a couple of days, little does he know this decision will scar him for life. He chooses to go out on the water into the storm. The worst possible thing happens to Alvarenga and his crewman Cordoba, their motor breaks and their radios die they are left at sea with nothing to eat drink or do for the next 438 days at sea.

**Garber, Stephanie. *Caraval*. New York, Flatiron Books, 2017.**

Caraval, by Stephanie Garber is a book that left me with questions.  The mysterious premise of this book starts with the main character, Scarlett, running from her very violent father, with a friend known as Julian, to an island that is the home of a huge game full of “magic” and wonder.  They soon however find out that Scarlett’s sister, Donatella has gone missing. She frantically attempts to search for her sister, but is reminded constantly that the journey is all a game and her sister is not really gone.  Scarlett does not believe this however and continues to search. She goes through a ransacked hotel room, a strange dress shop, and many other odd things in a pursuit to find her sister and the person behind this supposed performance.

**Green, John. *Looking for Alaska*. New York, Dutton Books, 2005.**

My favorite book I’ve read this past year was “Looking For Alaska”, written by John Green. I liked it because it was a kind of mix of a love story with some mystery and a bit of an adventure. This book is about Miles Halter, a teenage boy who leaves his home town and goes to a private school in Alabama. As he spends his year there he makes many new friends and continues to try to find a deeper perspective on his life. The book chapter titles are not number but say “100 days before”, then for the first half of the book you are wondering what will happen when the days run out.

**---. *Paper Towns*. New York, Dutton Books, 2008.**

Paper Towns is another one of Green’s award winning novels. A teen named Quentin Jacobsen (Q) has a completely normal life until his childhood friend Margo Roth Spiegelman climbs through his window in the middle of the night, changing Q’s life forever. After an adventurous night of revenge Q is positive that the next morning will change his life. The night did change Quentin’s life, but not for the better. Margo did not show up to school the next morning, or the day after that, or even the day after that. Margo had left Orlando, Florida, and she could be anywhere. She had done it many other times leaving clues to her destination; but this was the first time that she had left for such a long time. Q soon discovers that the clues Margo left were for him. Taking Q on an adventure across the country, he discovers, “Margo always loved mysteries. And in everything that came afterward, I could never stop thinking that maybe she loved mysteries so much that she became one.”

 **Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. New York, Doubleday, 2003.**

The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night Time is a realistic fiction novel. Christopher is on the spectrum of autism and he is very smart. The time period could be anything from 2000 to now. Christopher is living without his mom and his dad said she had died from a heart attack after being in hospital for a little while. This book really shows how hard it is to live without a family member. The first half is when the neighbors dog dies. With Christopher being the investigator he is trying to figure out who killed the dog. Christopher is definitely an interesting fella, he detests the color yellow. The color of cars in the morning shows what his day will be. So three yellow cars in a row would be a black day so he would not talk.

**---. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Doubleday, 2003.**

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is an excellent first-person realistic fiction by Mark Haddon. While published fifteen years ago as of May 2018, the book is still rather a relevant read, with an adapted play currently traveling the world, and as of 2018 in Australia.

Mark Haddon writes about a boy named Christopher Boone that is 15 years old, and while he behaves like a boy who has Asperger’s Syndrome, Haddon has never confirmed that Christopher has Asperger’s. In first-person, Christopher, who’s mom mysteriously died two years ago, finds his neighbor’s dog, Wellington, speared by a garden fork. The boy decides to investigate the dog’s death, despite his father’s wishes. What he finds in the mystery is shocking and flips upside down everything he has ever known.

This book won the 2004 Boeke Prize, the 2003 Whitbread Book of the Year, and 2004 Alex Awards. As of March 2010, the book had sold more than two million copies. Overall, I would say that if the rumors are true that Boone has Asperger’s, then this book is very accurate. It’s a must-read for all teenagers from my opinion.

**Hautman, Pete. *Rash*. New York, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2006.**

Rash by Pete Hautman was my favorite book I read this year because it had football which I love but in a whole different way. This book is about a kid who loves track but lives in a time where everything is safe and people have to be kind to one and other and you can go to jail for just calling someone a name. Football in their time is outlawed and when the main character is sent away for being accused of spreading a rash to his classmates he is forced to play football as a sort of disciplinary punishment. The outside of the correction facility is surrounded by polar bears so escape is almost impossible. This is my favorite book I have read this year so I give it four and a half out of five stars.

**Hesse, Monica. *Girl in the Blue Coat*. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 2016.**

I really enjoyed Girl in the Blue Coat this year. I read picked up this book for a book club. And after reading book, after book with the same realistic fiction plot, Girl in the Blue Coat, by Angie Thomas, was a refreshing change. Taking place in Amsterdam during World War 2, this book shows the unique perspective of Hanneke, a teenager, and her everyday lifestyle during his time. She is forced to join the black market to support her family, while turning away pestering German soldiers. She then comes across Mrs. Janssen, delivering her sausage. Mrs. Janssen then proposes a task for her, offering to even pay her. Mrs.Janssen had been housing a young jewish girl for a couple weeks, and had suddenly vanished. Hanneke then reluctantly decided to take on the task, because she knows her late boyfriend, Bas, would have wanted her to help. This book is mysterious, and historical and incredibly intriguing.

**Jinsei, Kataoka, and Kazuma Kondou. *Deadman Wonderland, Vol. 1*. Los Angeles, TokyoPop, 2010.**

Deadman wonderland is about a boy named Ganta Igarashi, who has an arch nemesis

“The man in red”  The man who killed his class slaughtering them all Ganta the only one to live. Ganta is put on trial and goes to “Deadman Wonderland” a place that is hell itself a place where criminals go to serve their life scenticance. Ganta meets Shiro  a lady who acts like shes 5 and loves sweets ganta finds himself to begin his adventure with shiro little does he know her true past. Also did i mention the fact that i “Deadman Wonderland” they use their blood to fight each other, and whoever loses they lose a piece of their body. No Anesthesia, no sanitary items, and with the help of the week of loolses, and all on live television.  If you think your life is bad put yourself in Gantas shoes a Place full of death and the desperate need to survive his story is nothing like any other.

**Kenneally, Miranda. *Catching Jordan*. Naperville, Sourcebooks Fire, 2011.**

One of my favorite novels I read this school year was, Catching Jordan written by Miranda Kenneally. Catching Jordan is the story of Jordan Woods, the daughter of the great NFL player, Donovan Woods. Jordan is the star of the Hundred Oaks High School football team. Everything in Jordan’s life looks perfect, her team follows her wholeheartedly, her dream school Alabama wants her, her best friend is always there with her. From her point of view, it is not. Her father, the GREAT Donovan Woods, doesn’t support her and her football dreams, because she is a girl, only one college offer because she is a female quarterback. She survives it though and pushes through with her dreams. At least until she meets, Ty. An attractive quarterback edging for her starting spot. A girl that normally avoids drama, is now drowning in the reality of being a teenage girl. Woods never used to notice those little things like boys, or crushes, or having a girls night. Now she is swimming in drama, and cheerleaders, and girls nights. Jordan Woods says one quote in the book, which about sums up her whole experience, “That damn fitted tee.”

**Lee, Mackenzi. *The Gentleman’s Guide to Vice and Virtue*. New York, Katherine Tegen Books, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2017.**

A Gentleman’s Guide to Vice and Virtue by Mackenzie Lee blew my mind. It was *so* well written, and the characterization was incredibly done. An issue a lot of books have is their characters are too perfect. But these characters are very real and have real struggles and issues that appear in the real world. Every character had an issue people could relate to. This book was a blessing to read.

**Lee, Sungju, and Susan McCelland. *Every Falling Star*. Amulet Books, 2016.**

*Every Falling Star* by Sungju Lee and Susan McClelland is one of the rather better books in 2017, with the Parent’s Choice Award for 2016 and the 2016 Freeman award. *Every Falling Star* is the true first-person story about how a twelve-year-old boy named Sungju, after he learns that North Korea isn’t perfect when his father and mother mysteriously disappear, is forced to live on the streets. He makes a gang, and survives by fighting, thieving, stealing rides, while facing hunger, arrest, imprisonment, and even death. This book is directed at preteens and teens as young as 11 years- to teach them that sometimes, freedom should be taken for granted.

The book starts off by showing a young, six-year-old boy playing with his father and mother, reenacting Kim Il-sung driving out the Japanese in a decisive battle. He says “I can feel it in the air. *Victory*. After all, Joseon [North Korea] always wins. We are the best country on earth!” Little did he know that this view would be reversed with 6 more years of time.

Overall, I enjoyed this book very much, which is rare for me with a first-person view. The words are precise, the story keeps flowing like a tap- I couldn’t put this book down for several days! This book, I believe, is one of the highest on my book list of 2017, and I believe I won’t find anything like it for some time.

**Lord, Emery. *When We Collided*. New York, Bloomsbury, 2016.**

When We Collided by Emery Lord is a great book if you are into romance. Jonah Daniels and Vivi a girl struggling with depression Jonah who just lost his father is co parenting with his other siblings because his mom is suffering with grief and doesn’t leave her room Vivi and Jonah meet in Jonah’s small town and the book goes through their up and downs of a relationship.

**Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1993.**

Lois Lowry releases an amazing dystopian novel, where Jonas finally can get a job. When it was almost his turn, the government outright skipped him. After the ceremony, he was chosen as the new giver. The giver is where you hold memories of something, or you could give them to someone else. The previous giver, Has to give jonas all the memories before he dies. THere is also something called releasing, which the person that is released will never come back. People think that this is a good thing, but what it really is is truly gruesome. The giver and Jonas have to do something. What will they do????? (dun dun dun)

**Marquardt, Marie F. *The Radius of Us*. New York, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2017.**

The Radius Of Us is a complicated love story between a refugee (Phoenix) seeking asylum in the US and a American girl (Gretchen) who had once been assaulted and now is suffering from panic attacks. This love story starts when Gretchen runs away from Phoenix, Gretchen ran away because she was shaking in fear thinking Phoenix was her attacker. This little accident turned into a beautifully yet still scary love story bringing the two main characters, Gretchen and Phoenix through the troubles of being a refugee and the troubles of being lost wanting to be found again. The author doesn’t just use the book for her information about refugees; she has real life experience with refugees, too.

**---. *The Radius of Us*. New York, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2017.**

The Radius Of Us reviews are through the roof, it took the reading community by storm with it’s incredibly inspiring plot. When this storyline begins, Marie Marquardt really takes the time to illustrate the big life problems that both Phoenix and Gretchen are facing at this time in their lives. Gretchen is suffering from severe PTSD, and at any time can be set off into full panic attack mode by almost anything. Anxiety has overruled her life after she was violently attacked in a parking lot by a gang member in her neighborhood. Ever since then she has had major trust issues and doesn’t like to let any new people in her life. That’s partly why she has stuck with the same “boyfriend” for over two years&#8230;. until she accidentally meets Phoenix.

**---. *The Radius of Us*. New York, St. Martin’s Griffin, 2017.**

My favorite book of this year is the “Radius Of Us” by Marie Marquardt book is a love story between two different characters with two different backgrounds. If you love love stories then you will adore this book. Gretchen had a normal teenage life, she had a boyfriend and went to school and had friends. 90 seconds can change someone’s life. It changed Gretchen Ashers’ life. Those 90 seconds not only changed her routine in life  but changed her whole life in general. Phoenix crossed the U.S -Mexican border with his brother in search for safety. Phoenix finally finds a safe place with a family. But some people in the neighborhood that Phoenix is living in don’t think he belongs there and that he should go back to Mexico, but little do they know if he does he will probably be killed. Gretchen and Phoenix meet each other and as soon as they do they both feel this connection with each other that is unbreakable.

**Mathieu, Jennifer. *Moxie*. New York, Roaring Brook Press, 2017.**

Moxie by Jennifer Mathieu is a realistic fiction story about a quiet, “keep to herself,” girl named Vivi going to a typical small town high school. Vivi was a quiet girl at the beginning of her freshman year but after seeing her sexist, football crazed principal blow all the school’s budget on the football team (that can do no wrong) she decides to take action. Vivi wants the hallway harassment to stop along with the stupid dress code checks that humiliate girls. Not only that but Vivi wants the budget to be spread evenly amongst all the sports teams and other extra curricular activities not just the football team.

**Moore, Alan, et al. *Batman: The Killing Joke*. New York, DC Comics, 1988.**

Batman: The Killing Joke

Batman is one my all time favorite book and also one of the most famous graphic novels of all time. The book starts with Jack Napier before he became the joker pursuing his dream of stand up comedy and failing miserably, he can’t pay for food and shelter for him and his pregnant wife. After having a really bad day he snaps and becomes insane. A little bit later and he makes it a point to prove that all it takes is one bad day to bring the sanest man down to his level. The book goes on but that is the basic idea of it. I like the book because its a simple concept but its made so complex and well written and illustrated by Alan Moore. I wouldn’t recommend it for younger readers as there is some darker concepts. It also has some quality jokes in it.

**Nijkamp, Marieke. *This Is Where It Ends*. Naperville, Sourcebooks Fire, 2016.**

The book This is Where it Ends, written by Marieke Nijkamp is a book about a school shooting, and I really liked this book because it was from the points of view of four very different people, which means four different stories, around the same event. The person who wrote this book was also taking a risk writing about this sensitive subject, but the author did a very nice job with it. The author also never fails to leave anything out, it has both the good and bad details.

**Niven, Jennifer. *All the Bright Places*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2015.**

“All the Bright Places” is one of favorite books of all time. The two main characters are Violet and Finch. They meet on the roof of their school both considering jumping. Finch feels like he has nothing left to live for and Violet got in a car crash, her sister passed away and she feels like it is all her fault. Finch talks her off the ledge and they become friends. This book has romance, adventure and heartbreak and I never wanted the book to end. The author is really good at setting the scene and I can picture every location and person. The book is split up in chapters from Finch’s perspective and Violet’s perspective. This book is the right amount of happiness and sadness and romance and friendship.

**Reynolds, Jason. *Ghost*. New York, Atheneum Books For Young Readers, 2016.**

Ghost by Jason Reynold is my favorite book this year because, it’s about real life problems and follows a story of a boy who was scared at a young age because of his father who shot at him and his mother they gave him the name Ghost because that was how he looked when they found him. Ghost is bullied in school and decides to join a track team he makes new friends and has new emotions. What ghost didn’t know is that his bully is on a different track team and that he is fast. Is Ghost running for his life, or from it? I suggest this book to those who like teenage problems and real life stories. I think Jason Reynold is trying to attract a teenage audience.

**Saenz, Benjamin Alire. *The Inexplicable Logic of My Life*. Boston, Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.**

One of my favorite books this year was definitely The Inexplicable Logic of my Life, by Benjamin Alire Saenz. I loved this book so much and it really stands out to me when I think of all the books I’ve read this year. This book was about a boy with a very complicated life, and it made me laugh, cry, and think about things that I’ve never thought of in my entire life. In this book, a boy named Sal, (which is short for Salvador), lives with his adoptive father and dog in a small town in New Mexico. His birth father disappeared and his mother died when he was young, so his friends are a very important part of his life. When Sal’s best friends, Sam and Fido, both face life changing events, Sal finds himself questioning the fundamentals of his own life. As disaster strikes the life of his friends, he learns the values of friendship and family. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes a book with a strong tree of well-built characters, and a story that is put together very nicely.

**Schmidt, Gary D. *Orbiting Jupiter*. Boston, Clarion Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015.**

Orbiting Jupiter takes place in a small town in Maine. The book is narrated by a 13 year old boy named Jack. In the book Jack’s family adopted Joseph who is now his new older brother. Joseph is the main character in  Orbiting Jupiter. In the beginning we find out that Joseph’s past was very rough. He was abused by his dad, has gone to jail for trying to kill a teacher, and has a kid at the age of 14. Most people would try to stay away from Joseph but Jack was trying to build a friendship with him.  Because of that every kid thinks that Jack’s a weirdo for hanging out with Joseph because of what Joseph did in his past. I would recommend this book for someone that wants an easy but very entertaining and emotional read.

**Sepetys, Ruta. *Salt to the Sea*. Waterville, Thorndike Press, a part of Gale, Cengage Learning, 2016.**

 My favorite read of the year was Salt to the Sea. It is a book about four teenagers (or young adults). Three are refugees and one is a soldier during WWII. It takes place in early 1945 in the eastern front during the Soviet advance. Unlike most other books, this book takes place from the four points of view from Florian, Emilia, Joana, who are refugees, and Alfred, who is a soldier in the German army. The refugees are trying to get to a port, the one that Alfred is stationed at, to get on the Wilhelm Gustloff, a cruise ship turned refugee ship that is trying to evacuate refugees before the Soviets arrive. Overall the book is fairly active with lots of stuff happening, then pause, then back to action. The book does have a small amount of romance, but definitely not too much. Overall, it is a great book for people who like historical fiction and a bit more.

**Shusterman, Neal. *Scythe*. New York, Simon & Schuster BFYR, 2016.**

Imagine a world free of starvation, disease, war and even death itself. And imagine that a select group of people are chosen to kill people in order to control the population. And think that one day you received a mysterious letter in the mail to meet someone, and of course, you agree.

That’s the situation Citra and Rowan are in. The person in question who sent the letter was a Scythe Faraday and he has selected them to become his apprentice. Citra and Rowan must now learn the art of killing under the eye of Scythe Faraday.

When tragedy strikes and Rowan and Citra are now taught under different Scythes, they must now fight to the death for the role of a new Scythe(A role neither want), they are forced to get an ending that will end badly for both. Filled with drama, fights, weapons, and well, death, Scythe will keep you on the edge of your seat.

**Silvera, Adam. *They Both Die at the End*. New York, Harper Teen, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2017.**

They Both Die At the End by Adam Silvera is one of my favorite books I read this year. It was a wonderful love story about love at first sight at the edge of death and the last friend two teenagers will have.

Set in a dystopian world where people predict others deaths and warn them by a single phone call, two teenage boys get the call one night that that day, they will die. They don’t know each other, or the fact they will connect on an app called “Last Friend” that was created for people that would die that day to create a friendship that will, well, last the rest of their short life. The book is filled with romance, action(as they avoid death), memories, death, sadness, and family.

**Sloan, Holly Goldberg. *Short*. New York, Dial Books for Young Readers, 2017.**

The book Short, by Holly Sloan was an emotionally good book. It had great friendships and a great story of how people let go of  things that are holding them back from better things. This book takes place in the summertime and Julia Marks is not excited for this season. She has recently lost her favorite pet dog and is still grieving him. Her friends also went away for the summer which makes it boring until, Julia’s brother wants to be in the Wizard of Oz, so Julia is forced to be in the play too. Julia gets the part of a Munchkin which makes sense because Julia is very short. She doesn’t like being short, but over the summer Julia meets some amazing people who help her overcome many things. These friendships will last forever.

**Smith, Sherri L. *Flygirl*. New York, G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2008.**

The best book I read this year was by far Flygirl. It had fleshed out and very charming characters, and had some major plot twists I doubt anyone could see. Flygirl, is a historical fiction read set in 1941- during World War II, as the United States establishes the Women’s Airforce Service Pilots (referred to as WASP) after the Pearl Harbor Attack, where Japan bombed Hawaii dragging the United States into the war. Ida Mae, 17,  the main protagonist is an African-American woman living in New Orleans, when she hears about the WASP Program. She soon steals her father’s license and sneaks off to the recruitment center were she sneaks in because of her lighter skin. However there will be trials and tribulations and Ida Mae will be thrown right into them. Happy reading!

**Stiefvater, Maggie. *The Raven Boys*. New York, Scholastic Press, 2012.**

The Raven Boys by Maggie Stiefvater was a great book because of the character development. A problem a lot of YA books have is that they pack it full of so much action that you lose your connection to the characters. This book was different because while it had action, it focused more on the relationships between the characters and the way they connected with the reader, which made the book incredibly difficult to put down. The Raven Boys is the fantasy story of a group of friends who are searching for a lost king who is said to grant a wish. The story is full of magic, romance, and humor. This book is an incredibly good read, and I think that it provides a very different view of the YA genre.

**Stork, Francisco X. *The Memory of Light*. New York, Arthur A. Levine Books, an imprint of Scholastic, 2016.**

The Memory of Light by Francisco X. Stork  is a book about Victoria, Vicky Cruz, a 16 year old girl who is convinced that she should not be alive. In the beginning Vicky is admitted to a mental hospital and this is where the majority of the book takes place. The Memory of Light  follows Vicky as she grows to accept herself and as she comes to understand how her mind works. Through the book Vicky also makes a few friends who are also in the hospital and by the end of the book they each have helped each other overcome most of their challenges and become a better person.

**Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give*. New York, Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2017.**

In the book The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas, Starr is an African American teenage girl that happens to be the only witness to her childhood best friend being shot [and killed] by a european police officer. Throughout the book, we watch Starr struggle with media wanting to know her story about the incident. But, she is hesitant to release her point of view, worrying about the opinions of fellow neighbors, as well as the students of her dominantly white private school. Starr’s family really helps her through this process in the ways of support, love, advice and letting her have an ear to talk to. After reading this book, my point of view has changed about the culture of Starr’s neighbor[hood]. The book also taught me some about the legal system and how the process of justice goes. I would suggest this book to anyone that would like to learn about different lifestyles and, people who like books about family and love.

**Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.**

Jessica is sixteen years old when her life gets flipped upside down. When you eat, sleep, and breathe running, losing a leg in a devastating accident is not any easy thing to adapt to. The Running Dream, by Wendelin Van Draanen shows what it’s like to go from being the fastest track runner to being the one who gets left behind. Jessica has to deal with the roller coaster of emotions that comes with losing a limb. Although her best friend Fiona is incredibly supportive, and pushes her to get back to her “regular” life, at times Jessica feels excluded and overwhelmed. However, one day, while struggling in math class, she sits next to Rosa, a girl with cerebral palsy, who saves her math career. They get to know each other more and more, and learn to push themselves and each other. Meanwhile, Jessica starts to wonder if a new leg (and life) is possible. Could she be able to ever walk, or run again?

**Warga, Jasmine. *My Heart and Other Black Holes*. New York, Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2016.**

“My Heart and Other Black Holes” by Jasmine Warga is one of my favorite books. The main characters name is Aysel named by her dad before he went mad and went to a correctional facility, and everyone started treating her like she also did. When she had to go live with her mom, her mom acted like Aysel wasn’t her daughter anymore and favored Aysel’s half brother and sister more than her. Now her life is going down hill. She’s sure that she wants to kill herself, and she wants a partner to do it with she has been using an online website for people with suicidal thoughts and meets a boy from the town over. I really enjoyed this book and the characters in it. You should definitely read it.

**Weir, Andy. *Artemis*. New York, Crown, 2017.**

Artemis by Andy Weir is a book about the first moon colony, Artemis,  and what its like to live in it. The main protagonist is named Jasmine, and she is a porter, a worker that transports goods. Andy weir also wrote the Martian, which is good too. This book has a really good story and a lot of action-filled scenes. However, what caught my attention was that the book focused mainly on the science behind all of the gizmos that power the colony, like how most of the colony is expensive resorts and casinos because the economy is focused mostly on rich people coming and spending vacation on the moon, and that since the moon has &#8537; gravity and the earth’s atmosphere is &#8537; oxygen, the air in the colony is 100% air.

**Welch, Jenna Evans. *Love & Gelato*. New York, Simon Pulse, 2016.**

One of my favorite books that I have read this year is “Love and Gelato” by Jenna Evans. It’s a romance novel about this girl (Lina)  who moved to Italy because her mom passed away from cancer. She moves in with her dad who she has not ever met and she is very unsure about going, but her mother thought it was for the best because he can take care of her. When she moved in with her dad, she met this boy, Ren.  Lina and Ren become very good friends and he showed her around the town. Ren brings Lina around Italy to help her find out things about her mother, but while she was doing that she found things out about herself. Lina’s dad’s friend, who was very good friends with Lina’s mom, gave Lina her mom’s jurnal from when she was younger and as she read it,  she found things out that maybe she wanted to know and some things she did not want to know.

**---. *Love & Gelato*. New York, Simon Pulse, 2016.**

 Love and Gelato is a great romance novel which takes place in Tuscany, Italy where a teenage girl named Lina moves for the summer after her mother dies to be with her father whom she had never met or knew about until then. In Italy she meets a boy named Ren who she adventures around the city of Florence with trying to solve the mystery of her father and why she was never told about him. While in Italy she meets tons of interesting people and she receives the journal of her mother which was written when she was staying in Italy during college. She reads about secret bakeries, a mysterious person and big clubs. The whole story is based on Lina’s adventures which are similar to her mother’s.