

INTERNATIONAL  
**LITERACY**  
ASSOCIATION

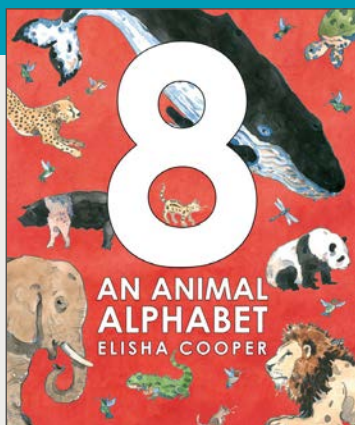
# TEACHERS' CHOICES

## 2016 Reading List

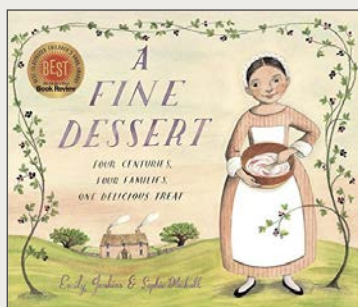


# What Is the Teachers' Choices List?

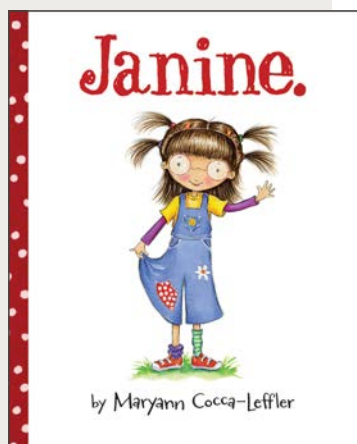
For teachers looking for the best new titles to add to their classroom library, the Teachers' Choices list is *the* place to start. Not only is it where they'll find the best books for ages 5–14, but they'll know it comes from a source they can rely on—their fellow educators. Since 1989, the International Literacy Association's Teachers' Choices project has identified outstanding trade books published in the last year that teachers themselves choose as being exceptional for curriculum use. Parents will also find the list invaluable, as it provides excellent choices for reading aloud or for help answering important questions prompted by children's experiences as they grow up.



8: *An Animal Alphabet*. Elisha Cooper. Orchard/Scholastic.



*A Fine Dessert: Four Centuries, Four Families, One Delicious Treat*. Emily Jenkins. Ill. Sophie Blackall. Schwartz & Wade.



*Janine*. Maryann Cocca-Leffler. Albert Whitman.

## Primary Readers (Grades K–2, Ages 5–8)

### **8: *An Animal Alphabet***

Elisha Cooper. Orchard/Scholastic.

Children will enjoy finding both common and unusual animals on each page while also hunting for eight of one kind. Endnotes reveal an interesting fact about each animal.

### ***A Fine Dessert: Four Centuries, Four Families, One Delicious Treat***

Emily Jenkins. Ill. Sophie Blackall. Schwartz & Wade.

This story shows how one sweet treat evolves over the centuries, both in how it is prepared and how families enjoy it. The recipe and historical notes are included.

### ***Flutter & Hum: Animal Poems/Aleteo y Zumbido: Poemas de Animales***

Julie Paschkis. Henry Holt.

Many different animals “flutter and hum” their way through this collection of poems written in both English and Spanish. Brilliant gouache paintings bring the words and the animals they describe to life.

### ***Janine***

Maryann Cocca-Leffler. Albert Whitman.

Janine marches to her own drummer. When she is excluded from the “cool” kids’ party, Janine finds a way to celebrate who she is and quickly learns that others want to join in her kind of fun.



## **Last Stop on Market Street**

**Matt De La Peña. Ill. Christian Robinson. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers.**

Young CJ learns valuable lessons about appreciating one's community as he and his Nana ride the bus through their urban neighborhood to help serve a Sunday meal at a soup kitchen.

## **\*Marvelous Cornelius: Hurricane Katrina and the Spirit of New Orleans**

**Phil Bildner. Ill. John Parra. Chronicle.**

Marvelous Cornelius, a garbage collector in New Orleans, teaches a lesson about taking pride in one's work. Not even the devastation left behind by Hurricane Katrina could dampen his spirits.

## **Mother Bruce**

**Ryan T. Higgins. Disney-Hyperion.**

When a grumpy bear unwittingly becomes "mama" to a gaggle of goslings, he realizes that life is more enjoyable when you form relationships and embrace change.

## **A Nest Is Noisy**

**Dianna Hutts Aston. Ill. Sylvia Long. Chronicle.**

This award-winning author/illustrator team has collaborated again to shed light on another miracle of nature. The focus in this book is on the wonder of nests and the creatures large and small that build them.

## **Raindrops Roll**

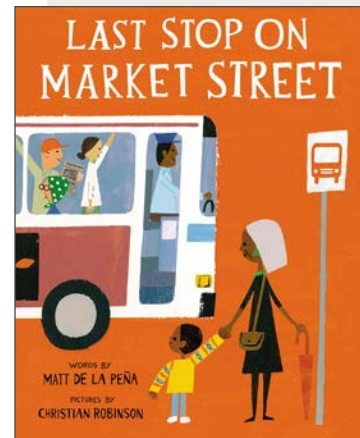
**April Pulley Sayre. Beach Lane.**

Stunning photography and lyrical text highlight the effects of a rainstorm. Endnotes extend readers' understanding of water science.

## **Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt**

**Kate Messner. Ill. Christopher Silas Neal. Chronicle.**

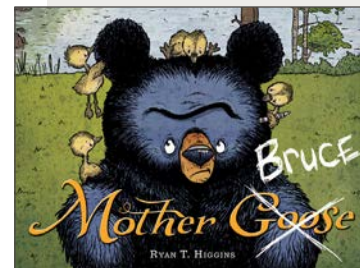
Poetic language and vivid illustrations combine to help young readers understand the creatures that are working above and below the soil to help a garden grow. Extensive end matter provides more details about the animals.



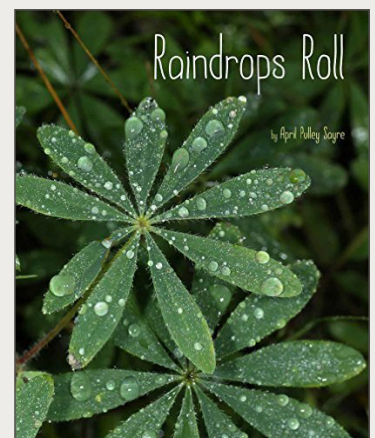
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Matt De La Peña. Ill. Christian Robinson. G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers.



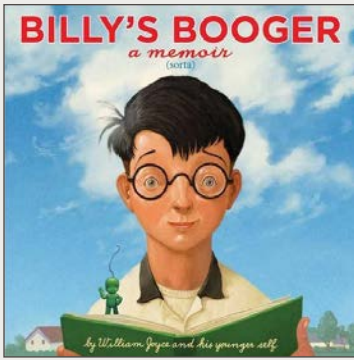
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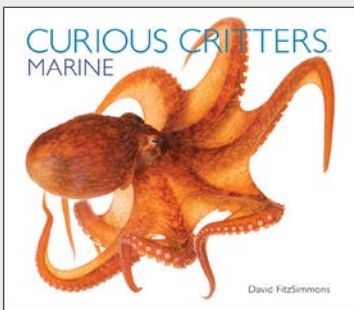
*Raindrops Roll.* April Pulley Sayre. Beach Lane.



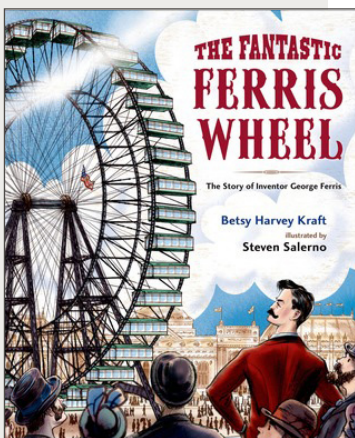
*Billy's Booger: A Memoir (Sorta).*  
William Joyce. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.



*The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower, or John Howland's Good Fortune.* P.J. Lynch. Candlewick.



*Curious Critters: Marine.* David FitzSimmons. Wild Iris.



*The Fantastic Ferris Wheel: The Story of Inventor George Ferris.*  
Betsy Harvey Kraft. Ill. Steven Salerno. Henry Holt.

## Intermediate Readers (Grades 3–5, Ages 8–11)

### *Billy's Booger: A Memoir (Sorta)*

William Joyce. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

This “mostly true” story of how William Joyce became an author and illustrator will encourage children of all abilities to explore their passions and follow their dreams.

### *The Boy Who Fell Off the Mayflower, or John Howland's Good Fortune*

P.J. Lynch. Candlewick.

John Howland, a teenaged servant, recounts the Pilgrims' journey on the *Mayflower* and their first months in the new world. Howland went on to become one of the most prominent citizens of the Plymouth Colony.

### *Curious Critters: Marine*

David FitzSimmons. Wild Iris.

Remarkable marine animals are showcased in stunning photographs. Each animal tells its own story about its life. Factual information about each animal is included in the endnotes.

### *The Fantastic Ferris Wheel: The Story of Inventor George Ferris*

Betsy Harvey Kraft. Ill. Steven Salerno. Henry Holt.

In spite of many obstacles, engineer George Ferris created a never-before-seen spectacle for the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, Illinois—a 26-story observation wheel that we now call the Ferris wheel.

### *Firefly Hollow*

Alison McGhee. Ill. Christopher Denise. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

Three unlikely friends—a boy, a cricket, and a firefly—help one another overcome their fears and pursue their dreams. Enchanting illustrations complement the text.

## **\*Painting for Peace in Ferguson**

**Carol Swartout Klein. Amphorae/Treehouse.**

This testimony to the healing power of art describes how volunteers came together to bring beauty back to the neighborhoods of Ferguson, Missouri, after race riots nearly destroyed their community.



*Painting for Peace in Ferguson.* Carol Swartout Klein. Amphorae/Treehouse.

## **Stella by Starlight**

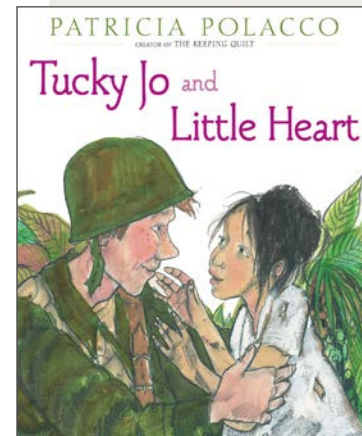
**Sharon M. Draper. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.**

During the 1930s in segregated North Carolina, a young black girl and her brother experience the prejudice of white townspeople and the hatred of the Ku Klux Klan. This historical fiction novel will help middle-grade readers understand some of the negative elements of U.S. history.

## **Tucky Jo and Little Heart**

**Patricia Polacco. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman.**

Johnnie Wallen, known as the "Kentucky Kid" by his comrades, was a young U.S. soldier stationed in the Philippines during World War II. His friendship with a local child and her family shows that compassion and kindness triumph over the atrocities of war.

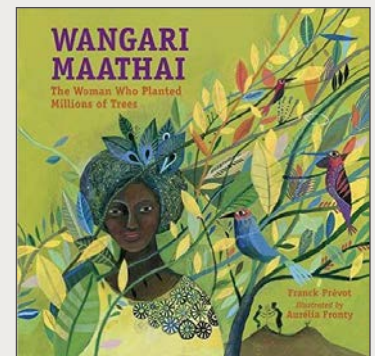


*Tucky Jo and Little Heart.* Patricia Polacco. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman.

## **Wangari Maathai: The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees**

**Franck Prévot. Ill. Aurélia Fronty. Charlesbridge.**

This picture book biography of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner is a powerful example of someone who overcame gender, social, and political barriers to accomplish her dreams. Endnotes include a timeline and additional resources.

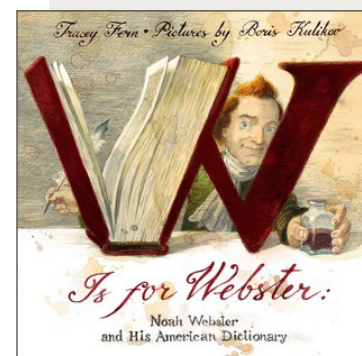


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## **W Is for Webster: Noah Webster and His American Dictionary**

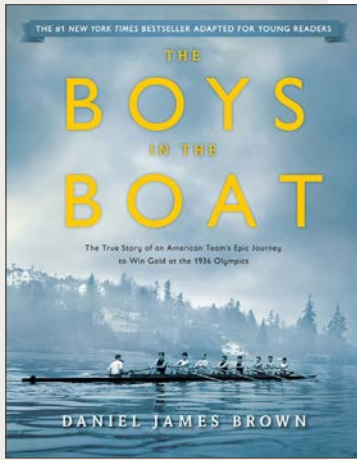
**Tracey Fern. Ill. Boris Kulikov. Farrar Straus Giroux.**

Noah Webster's story is told with humorous and expressive language. This picture book biography inspires readers to persevere through adversity and stay true to their dreams.

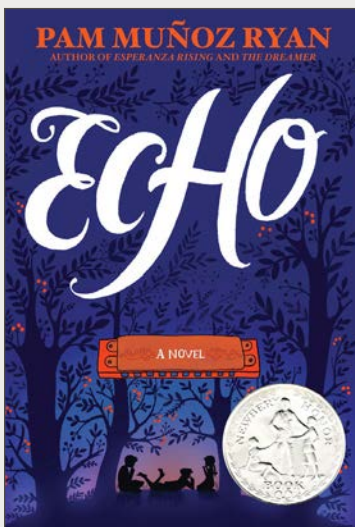


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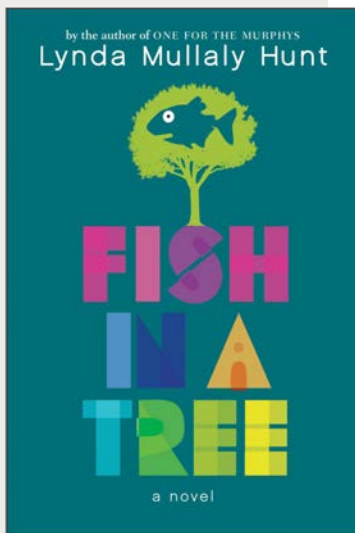




*The Boys in the Boat.* Daniel James Brown. Viking Books for Young Readers.



*Echo.* Pam Muñoz Ryan. Scholastic.



*Fish in a Tree.* Lynda Mullaly Hunt. Nancy Paulsen.

## Advanced Readers (Grades 6–8, Ages 11–14)

### *The Boys in the Boat*

**Daniel James Brown. Viking Books for Young Readers.**

Part biography and part historical account of the Olympics, this adaptation of the adult nonfiction book by the same title brings the story of Joe Rantz and his teammates to middle-school readers. These boys overcame seemingly insurmountable odds to triumph in a sport in which they were unlikely to succeed.

### *The Boys Who Challenged Hitler: Knud Pedersen and the Churchill Club*

**Phillip Hoose. Farrar Straus Giroux.**

When Nazi soldiers occupied Denmark during World War II, a group of teenaged Danish boys formed a secret society to sabotage the German military. Period photographs and detailed maps supplement the text.

### *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*

**William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. Ill. Elizabeth Zunon. Puffin.**

Young William Kamkwamba figured out how to build a windmill from repurposed scrap parts after a terrible drought in his native Malawi destroyed all the season's crops. Photographs, illustrations, and an epilogue help readers visualize Kamkwamba's remarkable achievement.

### *Echo*

**Pam Muñoz Ryan. Scholastic.**

Four characters' stories are woven together by a shared harmonica. Their tales reveal the power of music to overcome fear and intolerance and to provide hope, healing, and inspiration.

### *Fish in a Tree*

**Lynda Mullaly Hunt. Nancy Paulsen.**

Ally has always been good at math, and she uses clever avoidance tactics to disguise her inability to read. When Mr. Daniels, an insightful teacher, discovers Ally's learning difficulties, he transforms her life.

### **\*Full Cicada Moon**

**Marilyn Hilton. Penguin Young Readers/Dial Books for Young Readers.**

As a biracial girl who moves to an all-white Vermont community in the late 1960s, Mimi faces racism and prejudice on a daily basis. This novel-in-verse shows readers how determination and perseverance can overcome stereotypes and break down barriers.

### **Last in a Long Line of Rebels**

**Lisa Lewis Tyre. Penguin Young Readers/Nancy Paulsen.**

History meets mystery when Lou Mayhew sets out to stop the city from tearing down her family's 176-year-old home. When she uncovers clues to a Civil War-era mystery, she also realizes that there are some lingering injustices in her small Southern hometown.

### **A Night Divided**

**Jennifer A. Nielsen. Scholastic.**

The Lowe family is divided overnight when the Berlin Wall is erected without warning. Twelve-year old Gerta, her mother, and her brother Fritz must find a way out of Communist-controlled East Germany to be reunited with her father and older brother.

### **The Seventh Most Important Thing**

**Shelley Pearsall. Knopf Books for Young Readers.**

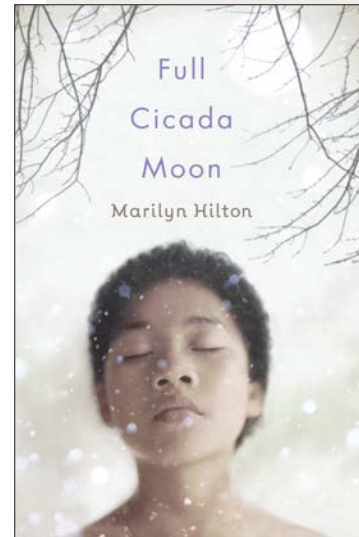
When 13-year-old Arthur is sentenced to do community service with the Junk Man for an act of rage, he learns about redemption and forgiveness. This coming-of-age story was inspired by the work of American folk artist James Hampton.

### **The War That Saved My Life**

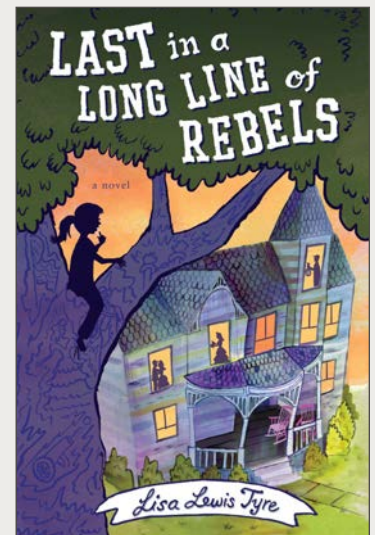
**Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Penguin Young Readers/Dial Books for Young Readers.**

Nine-year-old Ada was born with a twisted foot, and her abusive mother has never let her out of their London apartment. When Ada and her younger brother are sent to the country to escape the encroaching bombs of World War II, she discovers that she might be worthy of love after all.

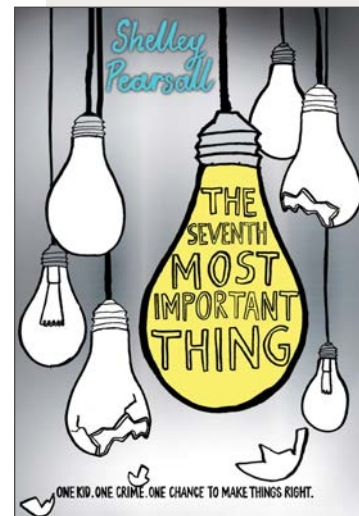
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## More About Teachers' Choices

Thank you to the 2015–2016 ILA Teachers' Choices cochairs, team leaders, and review teams. The project members were Joyce Gulley (cochair) and April Wulber (cochair). Team leaders in the field test were Dina Evans, Jennifer Fox, Sunni Johnson, Heather Jones, Amy McClure, Cecilia McCormick, Stan Steiner, and Susan Zolper.

## Get Involved!

For more information on the Teachers' Choices list, or to learn how to become involved, visit [literacyworldwide.org/choices](http://literacyworldwide.org/choices).

## Tell Us!

We want to hear your success stories using Choices lists in your classroom! Contact us at [social@reading.org](mailto:social@reading.org).



## ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers, and experts across 75 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught, and evaluated. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather, and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices, and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students, and inform policymakers. ILA publishes *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, and *Reading Research Quarterly*, which are peer reviewed and edited by leaders in the field. For more information, visit [literacyworldwide.org](http://literacyworldwide.org).



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