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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION'S (ILA) 2018 CHOICES READING LISTS HELP DIVERSIFY BOOKSHELVES

Newark, Del. (May 1, 2018) —The International Literacy Association (ILA) today announced the winning titles of the 2018 Choices reading lists: an annual selection of outstanding new children's and young adults' books, curated by students and educators themselves. These lists are issued during Children's Book Week each year.

All three categories show an increase of titles featuring an author, character or storyline reflecting diversity in race, gender identity or ability. This is not entirely surprising, considering ILA's commitment to fostering inclusion in children's and young adult literature. Compared with 2017, the lists include 50% more diverse books overall. These books explore themes such as racial prejudice and police brutality, religious persecution and biracial relationships, to name a few.

"Until we no longer have to seek out *diverse* literature, it's critically important that educators connect our young readers to the broadest possible spectrum of voices," says ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. "Much work still needs to be done, but we're proud of our progress this year."

Each year, Choices empowers thousands of children and young adults to read and evaluate newly published books and vote for their favorites. In turn, a network of teachers, librarians and reading specialists develop and annotate a list of books that children enjoy and that support learning across the curriculum. Three lists are released annually: Children's Choices, cosponsored by the Children's Book Council, Young Adults' Choices and Teachers' Choices.

The Choices projects are run by volunteer team leaders across the United States who recruit participants, distribute books and oversee the selection process. The number of book submissions continues to grow annually across the three Choices projects.

Winning titles will be recognized at the ILA 2018 Conference in Austin, TX, in July and embraced by today's teachers, booksellers, librarians, parents, caregivers and anyone who wishes to encourage young people to read for pleasure.

The 2018 Choices reading lists, including titles and annotations, and information on how to get involved in the project can be found at literacyworldwide.org/choices.

About the Choices Project

Each year, thousands of children, young adults, and educators around the United States select their favorite recently published books for the International Literacy Association's Choices reading lists. These lists are used in classrooms, libraries, and homes to help readers of all ages find books they will enjoy. The annotated lists for the current year are posted online in May and are available for free download at literacyworldwide.org/choices.

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 78 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.

About the Children's Book Council

The Children's Book Council (CBC) is the largest nonprofit trade association of children's book publishers in North America, dedicated to supporting the industry and promoting children's books and reading. To learn more about the CBC, visit cbcbooks.org/about/.

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