

## Annotated Bibliography Contemporary Fiction

### Guide to reading levels

Grade	Lexile Framework for Reading	Follett Library Resources
Kindergarten	BR-199	0.0 to 0.9
Grade 1	200-299	1.0 to 1.9
Grade 2	300-599	2.0 to 2.9
Grade 3	500-799	3.0 to 3.9
Grade 4	600-899	4.0 to 4.9
Grade 5	700-999	5.0 to 5.9
Grade 6	800-1049	6.0 to 6.9
Grade 7	850-1099	
Grade 8	900-1149	
Grade 9	1000-1199	
Grade 10	1025-1209	
Grade 11	1050-1214	
Grade 12	1075-1224	

Title & Publishing information	Themes, Setting & Synopsis	Reading Level	Interest level / Appropriateness
<p><b>A Bottle in the Gaza Sea</b> Valerie Zenatti</p> <p>New York: Bloomsbury, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Israel; Palestine</p> <p>Themes: Children and war, Toleration</p> <p>This narrative is told largely through the email correspondences of two young people on different sides of a cultural and political divide: Tal, an Israeli who lives in Jerusalem and Naïm, a Palestinian who lives in Gaza. As a strong believer in peaceful relations between Israelis and Palestinians, Tal writes a message of peace, seals it in a bottle, and encourages her brother, who is serving in the Israeli army, to cast the bottle into the sea along the Gaza coast. Instead, he tucks the bottle in the sand on a Gaza beach, where Naïm finds it. From this, an email relationship is born, in which the two teens develop a close bond. Despite their different backgrounds, they have the shared reality of living in a conflict zone and yet maintaining a commitment to peace within it. In addition to offering a personal look into the complexities of this political climate, this story demonstrates the power of understanding and good will.</p>	Young Adult	Gr. 7 - 12
<p><b>All the Broken Pieces: a novel in verse</b> Ann E. Burg</p>	<p>Setting: Vietnam; America</p> <p>Theme: Children and war</p>	<p>Follett 4.1</p> <p>Lexile 680</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 4 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Gr. 6 - 8 Ages 11+</p>

<p>New York: Scholastic Press, 2009</p>	<p>This novel, written in free verse, explores themes of war, trauma, loss, and belonging through a story of twelve-year-old Matt, the son of a American soldier and a Vietnamese woman. During the turmoil of war, Matt is airlifted out of his home country of Vietnam and taken to America, where he is adopted by an American family. While he is surrounded by many caring and supportive people in his new home, he is still faced with the difficulty of coping with feelings of abandonment, sadness, 'culture shock', and terrifying memories of war. Unfurling some historical background on the Vietnam war through Matt's story contextualizes events that would otherwise remain inaccessible to young readers today. While his experiences were unique, his feelings of alienation and uncomfortably are deeply relatable.</p>		
<p><b>A Long Walk to Water: a novel: based on a true story</b> Linda Sue Park  Boston: Clarion Books, 2010</p>	<p>Setting: Sudan; America</p> <p>Themes: Children and war, Refugees</p> <p>This novel tells us two different yet interconnected narratives, in alternating sections. Based on true events, this novel introduces readers to Salva and Nya, who both live in Sudan at different times. During the Sudanese civil war in 1985, Salva becomes one of the "lost boys" of Sudan. The violent climate and separation from his family forces him and many other young people to wander across the African continent on foot as refugees, in search of their families and safe shelter. During this time, the refugees are faced with a range of dangerous situations (from vicious wildlife to harsh militant forces). Readers also learn of Nya's story, taking place in Sudan in 2008. Nya's daily reality involves taking two separate trips on foot to fetch water from a pond. She is on foot making this journey for four hours everyday. The surprising intersections between these two different realities are unearthed in a way that illuminates both the continuities and changes in Sudan over a span of more than 20 years.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9  Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8  Reviews: Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Bamboo People</b> Mitali Perkins  Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2010</p>	<p>Setting: Burma</p> <p>Themes: Children of War, Human Rights</p> <p>The book is narrated by two 15-year-old boys who are on opposite sides of the battle between the Burmese government and Karenni rebels. Chika, whose father is a political prisoner, is peaceful and book loving, whereas Tu Reh is angry and wants to fight for freedom.</p>	<p>Gr. 7 - 10</p>	
<p><b>Between Shades of Gray</b> Ruta Sepetys</p>	<p>Setting: Lithuania; Siberia</p> <p>Themes: children of war, human rights</p>	<p>Gr. 8 - 9 to Adult</p>	

<p>New York: Penguin Young Readers, 2011</p>	<p>15-year-old Lina lives in Lithuania in 1941. Her family is arrested by Soviet police: her father is sentenced to death, and she, her mother, and brother are sent to a work camp in Siberia. Lina uses art and stories to survive the experience. There is also a romance subplot. In the end, she returns to Lithuania, and unable yet to tell her story publicly, she buries it in a jar.</p>		
<p><b>Boys without names</b> Kashmira Sheth</p> <p>New York: Balzer + Bray, c2010</p>	<p>Setting: India</p> <p>Themes: Child Labor, Poverty</p> <p>Faced with poverty and famine, eleven-year-old Gopal and his family must leave their home in rural India to find employment in the city: Mumbai. Once in the city, Gopal wants to find ways to support his family and ends up accepting an offer, from a stranger, to take a position doing factory work. He quickly discovers that he has been deceived, and the factory is in fact a sweatshop, where the owner is holding young boys captive and forcing them to provide unpaid labor. The conditions in the sweatshop are dire: the 6 young boys are told not to speak or even use each other's names, and are barely given enough food to survive. In this atmosphere of distrust and isolation, locked in a rundown building in an unknown part of the city, Gopal despairs of ever seeing his family again. When the boys eventually start to exchange kahanis, or stories, late at night, they discover the catharsis that storytelling holds for them. Through these exchanges the boys become more hopeful for their future and in particular, possibilities for escape.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Breadwinner</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press, 2001, c2000</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan</p> <p>Themes: Children and war; women's rights</p> <p>This is the story of a young Afghani girl, Parvana, who struggles to cope with Taliban rule by dressing as a young boy. Since girls are forbidden to work under this regime, this is her only way of earning money to support her destitute family. The novel explores This is a novel about loyalty, survival, families and friendship, set against the backdrop of an intolerable situation brought about by war.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Broken Glass</b> Alain Mabanckou</p> <p>England: Serpent's Tail, 19 Feb 2009</p>	<p>Setting: India</p> <p>Theme: poverty</p> <p>Exploring the realities of poverty, famine and homelessness in India, "Broken Glass" is a story of brothers Sandeep and Suresh who are but two of the many 'street youth' in the country. The narrative not only discusses life on the street,</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>

	<p>but also gives context to the way in which many children end up getting separated from their parents and living on the street in the first place. The boys demonstrate the way in which this inhospitable climate of the densely populated streets requires creative, demanding and difficult modes of survival. Making money for food and finding safe places to sleep are daily challenges. Despite the fact that the brothers are presented with many dishonest and dishonorable opportunities to earn money and take care of themselves, they struggle to uphold the values that their parents have instilled in them.</p>		
<p><b>Camel Rider</b> Prue Mason</p> <p>Massachusetts: Charlesbridge Publishing, July 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Middle East</p> <p>Themes: Cultural Difference</p> <p>Adam is a Caucasian Australian boy, who runs away from his home. In his difficult journey through the unforgiving desert, he meets Walid, an abused camel boy. The two boys of radically different backgrounds, struggle to bridge the gap between their cultures and languages in order work as a team and survive the elements together.</p>		Young Adult
<p><b>Chandra's Wars</b> Allan Stratton</p> <p>New York: HarperTeen, March 11, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Africa</p> <p>Theme: Civil War; Children and War</p> <p>She promised her mama she'd keep them safe.</p> <p>It's been six months since Mama died, and Chandra is struggling to raise her little brother and sister. Determined to end a family feud, she takes them to her relatives' remote rural village.</p> <p>But across the nearby border, a brutal civil war is spreading. Rebels led by the ruthless General Mandiki attack at night, stealing children. All that separates Chanda from the horror is a stretch of rugged bush and a national park alive with predators. Soon, not even that. Before she knows it, Chanda must face the unthinkable, with a troubled young tracker as her unlikely ally.</p>	Lexile 530	Ages 9 - 14
<p><b>Children of the River</b> Linda Crew</p> <p>New York: Random House, 1991</p>	<p>Setting: Cambodia; America</p> <p>Themes: refugee experiences, gender equity, inter-racial relationships</p> <p>When she was 13, Sundara's family fled the soldiers of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and now live in Oregon. At 17, she struggles with her family's expectations of her to be a</p>	Lexile 700	Gr. 9 - 12

	<p>"proper Cambodian" girl, especially since she has fallen in love with an American boy.</p>		
<p><b>Children of War: Voices of Iraqi refugees</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto, Ont; Berkeley, CA: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press, c2009</p>	<p>Setting: Iraq</p> <p>Theme: Children and War; Refugee Experience</p> <p>This is a collection of several twenty different narrative accounts, given by Iraqi children. Each child discusses the many (at times less apparent) ways in which the War on Terror has impacted their lives.</p>	<p>Lexile 860</p>	<p>Young Adult Reviews: Gr. 6 - 9</p>
<p><b>Colibri</b> Ann Cameron</p> <p>New York: Laurel-Leaf, [2005], c2003</p>	<p>Setting: South America</p> <p>Themes: Children's rights, Child Labor</p> <p>This is the story of a 12-year-old Mayan girl who was kidnapped from her parents. The unkind kidnapper used her to make a profit by forcing her to both lie and beg for money, which he kept for himself. While struggling with this abusive relationship and living in bad conditions, she dreams of finding a way to return to her family, who she has been separated from so long, she has a hard time, she has difficulty even remembering. The book offers an interview with the author as well as Readers Circle questions.</p>	<p>Follett 6.2</p> <p>Lexile 730</p>	<p>Reviews: Gr. 5 - 8 Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Dangerous Skies</b> Suzanne Fisher Staples</p> <p>England: HarperCollins, March 13, 1998</p>	<p>Setting: Virginia, USA</p> <p>Theme: Racial Issues; Difference</p> <p>While Buck comes from an African American family and Tunes is a Caucasian boy, the two grew up together as close as a brother and a sister might. When controversy over a homicide in the area erupts, the community accuses Buck, though Tune is adamant that she wouldn't do such a thing. In defending her, he alienates himself from the community, which Buck has been shunned from as well, without due cause or proof. They face the challenge of seeking justice together in an unjust scenario and cultural environment.</p>	<p>Lexile 990</p>	<p>Gr. 6 - 8</p>
<p><b>Day of the Pelican</b> Katherine Paterson</p> <p>Boston: Clarion Books, 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Kosovo</p> <p>Themes: Children and war, Refugees</p> <p>This story illustrates the plight of refugees during the escalation of Kosovo hostilities in 1998. Main character,</p>	<p>Follett 6.3</p> <p>Lexile 770</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8 Reviews: Gr. 5 - 8 Ages 10+</p>

	<p>thirteen-year-old Meli, is an ethnic Albanian. She and her culture are prosecuted ruthlessly: they are banned from schools, and they are harassed on a daily basis. When Meli's brother escapes the imprisonment of his Serbian captors, the entire family must act quickly to find safety. They decide to flee from one refugee camp to the next, so as not to be found, and they wait for the opportunity to immigrate to America.</p>		
<p><b>Diamonds in the Shadow</b> Caroline B Cooney</p> <p>New York: Delacorte Press, c2007</p>	<p>Setting: Africa; America</p> <p>Themes: Immigration, refugees, belonging</p> <p>This novel tells a story of immigration from several distinct perspectives. An American family with two kids, Jared and Mopsy, aids a family of refugees from Africa by hosting them in their home. While Jared and Mopsy have their reservations about sharing their private space, and everyone takes time to adjust to the changes, the experience serves as a powerful learning opportunity. For instance, elements of daily life, like school, which are often taken for granted by the American children, are exciting and special for the teenaged boy Mattu they are hosting. As the families discuss realities of poverty, civil war and living as refugees being faced by many throughout Africa and explore American customs and ways of life, they expand their understandings and appreciations of one another.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Dia's Story Cloth</b> Dia Cha</p> <p>New York: Lee &amp; Low, 1998</p>	<p>Setting: Vietnam; America</p> <p>Theme: refugee experience</p> <p>Dia's aunt and uncle have made for her a story cloth which tells the story of the Hmong people's suffering during the war in Vietnam, focusing on her family's flight from Laos to the United States.</p>	<p>Lexile 1050</p>	<p>Gr. 3 - 5</p>
<p><b>Drita My Home Girl</b> Jenny Lombard</p> <p>New York: Penguin Young Readers, 2006</p>	<p>Setting: Kosovo; New York</p> <p>Themes: children of war, refugee experience</p> <p>Drita, a 10-year-old refugee from Kosovo moves with her family to New York and is teased on account of being different and because of her difficulty learning English. One of her tormentors, a popular girl, is forced to befriend Drita and to learn about Kosovo; the two become unlikely friends.</p>	<p>Gr. 5 - 7</p>	
<p><b>Escaping the tiger</b> Laura Manivog</p>	<p>Setting: Laos; Thailand</p> <p>Themes: Children and war, Refugees</p>	<p>Follett 5.1</p> <p>Lexile 750</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Gr. 7 - 10</p>

<p>New York: Harper, c2010</p>	<p>To escape political and social turmoil in Laos during 1982, twelve-year-old Vonlai and his family must escape to a Thai refugee camp. There, they spend four difficult years struggling to make due in bad conditions in the hope that one day they might find safety in America.</p>		
<p><b>Extra Credit</b> Andrew Clements</p> <p>New York: Simon &amp; Schuster Children's Publishing, June 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan; America</p> <p>Themes: Cultural difference, children and war</p> <p>This story unfolds through two perspectives: that of Abby, an American 6<sup>th</sup> grader doing a pen-pal project for extra credit, and Sadeed, the Afghani boy with whom she ends up corresponding. While the Afghani school she contacts considers it inappropriate for a male and female to be pen pals, the teacher decides it will reflect well on the community to have the best student, Sadeed, write the letters (under the guise that it is his sister writing). In these letters, Sadeed discusses illuminating details about the cultural or political environment in which he lives and about his personal life more generally. Abby also shares personal information, which highlights the differences and similarities of their daily lives. Though Abby's original motivation for being a pen pal was to gain the extra credit she needed to pass the sixth grade, the experience proves to be much more meaningful to her.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Fish</b> L. S. Matthews</p> <p>New York: Yearling, [2005], c2004</p>	<p>Setting: Fictional</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Gender; Refugee Experience</p> <p>This book is set in a fictional village, which is facing difficult war times. As the warring forces close in on their village, he and his parents must embark on a difficult journey to safety, led by a mysterious guide.</p>	<p>Lexile 980</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 6 - 8</p>
<p><b>Give Me Shelter: Stories about Children Who Seek Asylum</b> Ed. Tony Bradman</p> <p>London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Global</p> <p>Themes: refugee experience, human rights</p> <p>This is a collection of fourteen fictional stories set around the world about children who are seeking asylum for a variety of reasons: fleeing war/famine, seeking economic opportunity. The collection raises interesting questions about migration, race, and religion.</p>	<p>Gr. 4 - 7</p>	
<p><b>Habibi</b> Naomi Shihab Nye</p> <p>New York: Simon &amp; Schuster, 1999</p>	<p>Setting: Palestine; America</p> <p>Themes: Children of War, Human Rights</p> <p>Liyana's family moves from the U.S. to Palestine, where she</p>	<p>Lexile 850</p>	<p>Gr. 6 - 8</p>

	<p>struggles to come to terms with her Arab heritage, of which she knows little: she cannot even speak with her relatives, as she speaks no Arabic and they do not speak much English. She makes friends with a Jewish boy, Omer, which is not supported by her family.</p>		
<p><b>Heaven Shop</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Markham, Ont: Fitzhenry &amp; Whiteside, 2004</p>	<p>Setting: Malawi</p> <p>Themes: AIDS orphans; poverty</p> <p>Deborah Ellis tells us the fictional story of a 13 year-old girl from Malawi, named Binti, whose mother died of AIDS when she was young. Binti's father, who owns a coffin business named 'The Heaven Shop', later becomes infected with AIDS and passes away from the illness. She and her siblings are forced to live with her impoverished relatives, who take advantage of the children's relative wealth. This story follows the children through these difficult times, and in doing so, explores the impact of AIDS and specifically some realities faced by AIDS orphans.</p>		Gr. 7 - 9
<p><b>Home of the Brave</b> Katherine Applegate</p> <p>New York: Feiwel and Friends, 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Sudan; Minnesota</p> <p>Themes: refugee experience</p> <p>Kek is a refugee from the Sudan; he and his mother are the only members of the family to survive an attack, and now he has been separated from his mother in a refugee camp and is alone, trying to adapt to life in snowy Minnesota. The verse novel traces his coming to terms with his new world and his gradual making of friends.</p>	Gr. 5 - 7	Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>I am a Taxi</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto: Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press, c2006</p>	<p>Setting: Bolivia</p> <p>Themes: Poverty, drug trade, child labor</p> <p>Like many in Bolivia have done for centuries, Diego's parents farmed coca, a plant traditionally grown for its medicinal qualities. However, during the government's 'war on drugs', these crops were disallowed and his parents were sent to serve a sentence at the San Sebastian Women's Prison in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Though his mom and dad are locked up, Diego is able to come and go from the prison facilities where the whole family lives. He attends school, sells his mother's hand-knitted goods at the market, and works as a "taxi" (which involves running errands for other prisoners). When Diego's sister runs away from the prison, however, she leaves the family a large fine, and in efforts to improve the situation, Diego gets ensnared in a moneymaking scheme. He ends up deep in the jungle, working as a virtual slave for an illegal cocaine operation. In this position, he finds his drive for survival is at odds with</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>



	his values - and he struggles to find a way to reconcile the two and return to his family.		
<p><b>I am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced</b> Nujood Ali</p> <p>New York: Three Rivers Press, c2010</p>	<p>Setting: Yeman</p> <p>Themes: Children's rights, women's rights, oppression</p> <p>This is the self-authored, true story of Nujood Ali, a girl who made international news for her tenacious stand against unjust marital practices. As is the reality for many young girls in Yeman, eight-year-old Nujood's father arranged for her to marry to a man three times her senior. While agreements are made between her father and husband, to protect Nujood's safety, they are broken after the wedding. As a result, Nujood suffers constant raping and beating. The novel brings to light the cultural and religious climate that enables this oppressive system, wrought with violence, as well as the power of thinking and acting subversively to incite change. In light of her persistence, Nujood was the first child bride of Yeman to obtain a divorce.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>I Live Here</b> Mia Kirshner, J. B. MacKinnon, Paul Shoebridges</p> <p>New York: Pantheon Books, 14 Oct 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Multiple (Chechnya; Burma; Mexico; Malawi)</p> <p>Themes: Women's and children's rights, refugees, poverty</p> <p>"I Live Here" is a collection of four short books, each made up of different stories of refugee or generally displaced women and children. These narratives are told through a rich layering of journal entries, prose, photos, drawings and graphic novellas. The first-hand encounters captured through these mediums come from 'four corners' of the world - each with their own focus: war in Chechnya, ethnic cleansing in Burma, globalization in Mexico, and AIDS in Malawi.</p> <p>Mia Kirshner (co-author/editor) offers her own journals entries as a guide through the multiple narratives making up this 'paper documentary'.</p>	<p>Follett 5.9</p> <p>Lexile 720</p>	<p>Follett Gr. 5 - 8</p> <p>Reviews: Ages 10+</p>
<p><b>Iqbal</b> Francesco D'Adamo Translated by Ann Leonori</p> <p>New York; Toronto: Aladdin Paperbacks, 2005, c2003</p>	<p>Setting: Pakistan</p> <p>Themes: Child Labor; Children's Rights</p> <p>This novel tells us a fictionalized account of Iqbal Masih's life, which was sold into child-bonded labor by his parents at the age of 4. He was forced to work under terrible conditions in a rug-making factory in Pakistan. When he succeeded at escaping at the age of 10, he began to fight against the kind of illegal child labor practices, which he had survived. He was recognized for this work when he won the Reebok Human Rights Award. After returning to Pakistan from the US, where he received the award, he is</p>	<p>Lexile 730</p>	<p>Ages 8 - 12</p>

	tragically murdered. It is assumed that the crime was organized by the 'carpet mafia' as an act of revenge.		
<p><b>It's Our World Too! Young People Who are Making a Difference</b> Phillip Hoose</p> <p>New York: Farrar, Straus, &amp; Giroux, 2002</p>	<p>Setting: Global</p> <p>Themes: gender equity, human rights, environment, health, peace</p> <p>The first part of the book comprises 14 real-life stories about youth who are taking a stand and promoting positive change in areas such as gender equity, health, poverty, the environment, human rights, and world peace. The second part is a handbook for young activists.</p>	Lexile 840	Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>Journey to Jo'Burg</b> Beverley Naidoo</p> <p>New York: HarperCollins, 1988</p>	<p>Setting: South Africa</p> <p>Theme: Human Rights</p> <p>South African Naledi and her brother Tilo are worried about their baby sister Dineo, who is ill. Since their grandmother has no money and there is no doctor in their village, they decide to walk to Johannesburg to find their mother to help their sister.</p>	Lexile 760	Gr. 4 - 8
<p><b>Keeping Corner</b> Kashmira Sheth</p> <p>New York: Disney/Hyperion Books, 2009, c2007</p>	<p>Setting: India</p> <p>Themes: Children's rights, Women's rights</p> <p>This is the story of thirteen-year-old Leela's young life. Growing up in India in the 1940s, Leela lives a charmed life, full of riches and comforts. However, when her husband who she was arranged to marry at the age of nine, passes away, she is left widowed. At this time, strict social codes required widows of any age to live in poor, confined conditions with other widows and remain excluded from the outside world. Her only hope for a different reality hinges on Mahatma Gandhi's success to make social and political reforms.</p>	Lexile 760	Young Adult Reviews: Gr. 6 - 9
<p><b>Kiss the Dust</b> Elizabeth Laird</p> <p>London: Macmillan Children's Books, 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Iraq</p> <p>Themes: Children and war, Refugees</p> <p>Thirteen-year-old Tara's safety and security in her home of Iraq has been threatened in light of her father's participation in Kurdish resistance movement. Her family is forced to leave Iraq and cross the border into Iran, where they could possibly face an even more dangerous and risky future.</p>	Lexile 850	Reviews: Gr. 6 - 8

<p><b>Libertad</b> Alma Fullerton</p> <p>Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, September 13, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Guatemala</p> <p>Themes: Poverty; Child Labor; Migrant Experience</p> <p>This narrative of Libertad, a young Guatemalan boy, is told through a series of free-verse poems. These poems outline the events that lead up to Libertad's mother's unusual death in the dumps where his family collected garbage for a living. After the loss of his mom, he and his little brother, Julio, and a dog, are left with no other choice but to leave on a journey to find their dad, who is living in the United States. Along the way, they find a number of means for making food money: they play a marimba that they picked out of the trash, work in fields, work in a tortilla factory, and panhandle on the streets of Mexico City.</p>		<p>Young Adult Gr. 7 - 10</p>
<p><b>Little Princes</b> Connor Grennan</p> <p>England: HarperCollins, 17 Mar 2011</p>	<p>Setting: Nepal</p> <p>Theme: child trafficking</p> <p>A young man becomes involved in rescuing children who are being abandoned in Katmandu by child traffickers.</p> <p>This is Connor Grennan's true story of volunteering at an orphanage in Nepal, where he discovers that the children he is caring for are not orphans, but rather, trafficked. The children are snatched from their families and sold to others for their slave labour. If some of these children are abandoned by the people who use them for their labour, they are lucky to end up in one of the country's orphanages. Ignoring the dangers and difficulties of his mission, Grennan decides to take these children out of the orphanage and return them to their families. This involved trekking across gruelling peaks in the freezing cold with a large group of unprepared children, excited by the possibility of returning home. The journey proves fruitful, as many children and families are reunited after often years spent apart.</p>		<p>Youth to Adult</p>
<p><b>Long Way Gone: memoirs of a boy soldier</b></p> <p>Ishmael Beah</p> <p>Vancouver: Douglas &amp; McIntyre, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Sierra Leone</p> <p>Themes: Child Soldiers; Children and War; Children's Rights</p> <p>The author of this book, Ishmael Beah, describes his personal experiences as a non-voluntary child soldier (beginning at the age of 12) in Sierra Leone. After a great deal of violence, cruelty and despair, Ishmeal is released by the army and assigned to a UNICEF rehabilitation center, where he begins to recover from the harshness and traumas of war.</p>	<p>Lexile 920</p>	<p>Ages 9 - 12</p>

<p><b>Lost Riders</b> Elizabeth Laird</p> <p>London: Macmillan Children's Books, 6 Jun 2008</p>	<p>Setting: The Gulf; Pakistan</p> <p>Theme: Child labor and abuse</p> <p>Taken away from their homes to work in an unfamiliar country at the age of 8, Rashid and his little brother Shari have only each other for love and protection. When they forced to work as jockeys in the camel-racing business, the brothers get tragically separated. The boys experience terrible conditions and treatment by their supervisors - but Rashid manages to prove himself an excellent camel-rider and becomes the stable's star jockey. Getting carried away with this new lifestyle, he begins to forget about his past, including his brother.</p>		<p>Young Adult</p>
<p><b>Mahtab's Story</b> Libby Gleeson</p> <p>Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen &amp; Unwin, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan, Pakistan; Australia</p> <p>Themes: Refugee Camps; Migration</p> <p>This is the true story of Mahtab and her family, who make the difficult and dangerous journey from Afghanistan to Pakistan where they stay in a refugee camp waiting for the chance to migrate to Australia and reconnect with her father.</p>	<p>Lexile 920</p>	<p>Ages 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>Making It Home: Real-Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee</b> Beverley Naidoo &amp; Kate Holt</p> <p>London: Puffin, 2004</p>	<p>Setting: Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Congo, Liberia, Sudan, and Burundi</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Refugee Experience</p> <p>This book is a collection of short, non-fiction narratives from the perspective of children aged 6 to 15, fleeing war in Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Congo, Liberia, Sudan, and Burundi, about their experiences as refugees.</p>	<p>Gr. 5 - 8</p>	
<p><b>Monsoon Summer</b> Mitali Perkins</p> <p>New York: Random House, 2006</p>	<p>Setting: India</p> <p>Themes: Poverty; Economic Development</p> <p>Jazz Gardner, uninterested in her Indian heritage, is forced by her mother to spend a summer in India volunteering in an orphanage. Jazz resents being away from her best friend Steve &amp; the business they have been developing. However, she makes friends with Danita and finds pleasure in helping the Indian girl start a business that will allow her to support herself and her orphaned siblings.</p>	<p>Lexile 750</p>	<p>Gr. 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>Motherland</b> Vineeta Vijayraghavan</p>	<p>Setting: India; America</p> <p>Themes: Identity/Belonging</p>	<p>Lexile 980</p>	<p>Ages 14 - 19</p>

<p>New York: Soho Press (2001)</p>	<p>Though fifteen-year-old Maya was born in India, she has grown up with her family in America, and identifies with North American ways of life. When she goes to spend a summer with her grandmother in Southern India, against her wishes, she begins to understand her family's heritage and Indian lifestyle more broadly and meaningfully reacquaints herself with her extended family. In this time, she develops a new, more complex understanding of herself and the meaning of home.</p>		
<p><b>Mud City</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto: Groundwood Books/Douglas &amp; McIntyre, c2003</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan; Pakistan</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Poverty</p> <p>This novel follows Shauzia, is Parvana's friend from Deborah Ellis' earlier novel "The Breadwinner". The narrative begins with Shauzia living in refugee camp in Pakistan, after fleeing from bad conditions in Afghanistan. Though, she is not at all content with existence in the camps, and dreams of escaping the camp and traveling to France, where she hopes she could find a better life away from the daily violence, war and destruction that has surrounded her for years. She eventually manages to succeed in a difficult escape from the camp, but once she does, she is without money, food, shelter or companionship, aside from the company of her dog Jasper. She is set on finding a new future for herself despite the odds.</p>	<p>Lexile 740</p>	<p>Ages 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>My Name is Number 4</b> Ting-xing Ye</p> <p>Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: China</p> <p>Themes: human rights, child labor</p> <p>This is the author's YA memoir of growing up during the Cultural Revolution in China: after the death of her parents when she is 14, she experiences attacks by Red Guards at her school and home, and when she is 16 she is sent to work at a prison farm.</p>	<p>Gr. 8 - 12</p>	
<p><b>One Hen: How One Small Loan Made a Big Difference</b> Katie Smith Milway, ill. Eugenie Fernandes</p> <p>Toronto: Kids Can Press, Ltd., February 1, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Ghana</p> <p>Themes: economic development, basic education</p> <p>Kojo, a young boy from Ghana, has to quit school to help his mother after his father dies. When his mother receives a small loan, Kojo buys a hen. Within a year, he has a flock of 25 and he and his mother are comfortably enough off that he can return to school. A good lesson in the power of even small amounts of aid.</p>	<p>Lexile 810</p>	<p>Gr. 3 - 5</p>
<p><b>Oranges in no</b></p>	<p>Setting: Lebanon</p>		<p>Gr. 7 - 9</p>

<p><b>man's land</b> Elizabeth Laird</p> <p>London: Macmillan Children's Books, 2007, c2006</p>	<p>Themes: Children and War</p> <p>At 10 years old, Ayesha has lost her mom to a bombing, and has been separated from her father who was forced to leave to find work. She lives in the warring, bomb-ravaged Beirut with her grandmother and her two younger siblings. The city is divided by a civil war, and a treacherous no man's land stands in the middle of the two sides. Despite the dangers of entering this area, when Ayesha's Granny falls terribly ill she makes the life-threatening journey across no man's land to find a doctor within the enemy territory, who can help.</p>		
<p><b>Palestine</b> Joe Sacco</p> <p>Seattle, Wash.: Fantagraphics Books, c2001 Books</p>	<p>Setting: Israel; Palestine</p> <p>Themes: War; Ethnic Conflict</p> <p>This graphic novel explores the daily, lived realities of Palestinians living in the unstable and occupied territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in December 1991 and January 1992. The content is based on the author's experiences traveling, as a westerner, through both Israel and Palestine.</p>		Gr. 7 - 9
<p><b>Parvana's Journey</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto: Groundwood Books/Douglas &amp; McIntyre, c2002</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan</p> <p>Themes: Poverty; Women's rights, children &amp; war</p> <p>Parvana's Journey is a narrative that follows from Deborah Ellis' "Breadwinner". In this sequel, we learn of Parvana's experiences while traveling alone across a war-ridden Afghanistan. She faces many desperate and dangerous obstacles, such as homelessness, famine, bombings, and the harshness of Taliban rule, in her attempt to find her surviving family members.</p>	Lexile 640	Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>Persepolis</b> Marjane Satrapi</p> <p>New York: Pantheon, c2003</p>	<p>Setting: Iran</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Women's Rights</p> <p>Based on true events, "Persepolis" tells the story of a girl growing up in Iran during the Islamic Revolution, in a graphic novel format. The narrative is told through black-and-white comic strip images. With all the elements of a coming-to-age tale (confusion, developing a sense of self, seeking independence, forming opinions and a world view), this one is made particularly rich by the backdrop of the cultural, social and political complexities of Iran during this time.</p>	Lexile 380	Gr. 9 - 12

<p><b>Photographer: Into war-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without borders</b> Emmanuel Guibert</p> <p>New York: First Second, 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan</p> <p>Themes: War; Aid Work</p> <p>This true story of a young French photographer, Didier Lefèvre, who documented the work of individuals that traveled to war-torn Afghanistan in 1986 as volunteers for Doctors Without Borders. The multi-media account illustrates both the devastation of war, the strength of innocent civilians and both the bravery and generosity of the doctors.</p>		Gr. 7 - 9
<p><b>Red Scarf Girl: a memoir of the Cultural Revolution</b> Ji-li Jiang</p> <p>New York : HarperTrophy, 2004.</p>	<p>Setting: China</p> <p>Themes: Human Rights, Children’s rights</p> <p>This is the true story of the author, Ji-li Jiang, who led a difficult childhood in China while the Cultural Revolution was taking place. Before the changes started taking place, she describes the happy and comfortable life she enjoyed. When she was twelve-years-old, however, her family was victimized by, or became a target of, the Communist Party which was attempting to change China through the revolution. In the memoir, she discusses the tension between the beliefs and transitions of her family, and that of Communist society (with which she was interested in becoming a part). Both choices held serious consequences for Ji-li, and it proved a difficult time for her and those around her.</p>	Lexile 780	Follett Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>Revolution is Not a Dinner Party</b> Ying Chang Compestine</p> <p>New York: Square Fish, 2009, c2007</p>	<p>Setting: China</p> <p>Themes: Poverty; Oppression; Communist Society</p> <p>This is the story of eight-year-old Ling and her two physician parents who live in Wuhan, China, in 1974. As the Chinese state undergoes changes at the hand of the Communist Party, Ling’s dreamy and idealistic outlook is challenged. Deemed bourgeois, her father is arrested, and she endured terrible bullying at school because of her family’s class background. Ling survives starvation, tormenting, and the over-all Communist invasion of their lives by maintaining a witty, courageous and hopeful attitude until the death of Chairman Mao, when her father could finally return. Readers learn of life during China's Cultural Revolution through this powerful narrative.</p>	Follett 5.2 Lexile 740	
<p><b>Shooting Kabul</b> N. H. Senzai</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan; America</p>	Lexile 800	Gr. 6 - 8

<p>New York: Simon &amp; Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books, 2010</p>	<p>Themes: Children of War, Refugee Experience</p> <p>In the summer Of 2001, 12-year-old Fadi's parents decide to leave Afghanistan illegally. In the crush of departure, Fadi loses his younger sister, Mariam. The rest of the family get to the United States and find life post-9/11 very challenging. Fadi tries to use a photography competition to find his sister in war-torn Afghanistan.</p>		
<p><b>Siberia</b> Ann Halam</p> <p>New York: Random House, 2006</p>	<p>Setting: Siberia</p> <p>Themes: Human Rights, Refugee Experience, Environment</p> <p>Sloe's father disappears and she and her mother are sent to a prison camp in the desolate north. When Sloe is sent to a prison school her mother disappears. At 13 Sloe escapes, taking with her a gift from her mother: 5 seeds for new species with instructions on how to bring them to life. The afterword discusses the importance of seed banks.</p>	<p>Gr. 4 - 7</p>	
<p><b>Slum Girl Dreaming: Rubina's journey to the stars</b> Rubina Ali</p> <p>Random House Children's Books. 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Mumbai, India</p> <p>Themes: Poverty; Cultural Difference</p> <p>This is the autobiography of Rubina Ali, a 9 year old girl from Mumbai, India, who was chosen from over 500 "slum children" to play a leading part in the Oscar-winning film "Slumdog Millionaire". In her own words, she captures the experience of living as a slum child in an area of the world that is incredibly impoverished but, in light of this, it is also an incredibly resourceful, often co-operative and vibrant place. She also captures sudden the shift from this life to a life of stardom and back again. We learn how her outlook and daily life has changed and her wishes for the future.</p>		<p>Ages 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>Spilled Water</b> Sally Grindley</p> <p>Bloomsbury Publishing PLC; New edition (6 Jun 2005)</p>	<p>Setting: China</p> <p>Themes: Children's rights, Child Labor</p> <p>After reading an article in the newspaper, the author of this book was inspired to write a narrative to tell the story in a different way. This story in the paper, which she writes about, tells us of the struggles of a young girl, who is sold into slavery. Lu Si-yan is only eleven years old when her uncle brings her to the market sells her to an unkind couple looking to gain an unpaid laborer. When she eventually escapes, her situation only worsens: she is made to work in a factory under inexcusably terrible conditions. She manages to develop friendships at the factory, and she maintains hope that soon she will be reunited with her mother and brother.</p>		<p>Reviews: Ages 9+</p>



<p><b>The Arrival</b> Shaun Tan</p> <p>New York: Scholastic, 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Fictional</p> <p>Themes: Refugee Experience, Migrant Experience</p> <p>A man leaves his family in a menacing environment to seek better opportunities. Once in the strange new land, he is helped by other migrants who share their stories. Ultimately he is able to bring his family to the new land, and his daughter offers help to a new refugee.</p>	<p>Gr. 4 - 7</p>	
<p><b>The Bite of the Mango</b></p> <p>Mariatu Kamara with Susan McClelland</p> <p>Buffalo, N.Y: Annick Press, c2008</p>	<p>Setting: Sierra Leone</p> <p>Themes: Children and War</p> <p>This is based on the true story of Mariatu Kamara, who is from a rural village in Sierra Leone, where she once lived a calm and peaceful life with her family and friends. Rumors of rebel attacks were no more than a distant worry. Her reality changed when she was attacked and tortured by rebel forces on her way to a neighboring village. Without cause, she was cut off both of her hands, and she witnessed similarly senseless brutality all around her during this time. During this brutal act of senseless violence they cut off both her hands. Readers learn how Mariatu survived this cruelty and ended up escaping to North America.</p>	<p>Lexile 800</p>	<p>Ages 14+</p>
<p><b>The Clay Marble</b> Winifong Ho</p> <p>Singapore: Marshall Cavendish, 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Cambodia; Thailand</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Refugee Camps</p> <p>The Clay Marble tells the story of children and families living in Cambodia during the late 1970's, when communist group (the Khmer Rouge) controlled the nation. Readers learn that this was a time of great suffering for Cambodians, as the Khmer Rouge forced people into dire living conditions and treated them with great brutality. Dara, the main character, her mother and brother must eventually flee Cambodia and seek protection in a Thai refugee settlement. Here, Dara gets separated from her family and must develop friendships and a positive outlook while in the camps.</p>	<p>Follett 6.8</p> <p>Lexile 860</p>	<p>Gr. 6 - 8</p>
<p><b>The Decision: The Story of Kumar, a Young Gurung Boy</b> Joanne Stephenson</p> <p>Varanasi, India: Pilgrims Publishing, 2002</p>	<p>Setting: Nepal</p> <p>Themes: Nomadic Lifestyle</p> <p>This is the story of a young boy from Nepal, who is developing a sense of independence as he enters manhood. In moving from his familiar settings to experience new scenes and cultures, he struggles with incorporating these experiences and lessons into his traditional ways of life and</p>		<p>Ages 12+</p>

	his set of values.		
<p><b>The Garbage King</b> Elizabeth Laird</p> <p>London: Macmillan Children's, 2003</p>	<p>Setting: Ethiopia</p> <p>Theme: Child Trafficking; Poverty</p> <p>This is based on a true story of Mamo, a young boy growing up in Ethiopia. When Mamo's mother dies, he is left to survive alone in the shanties of Addis Ababa. He is abducted by a child-trafficker, who sells children as unpaid workers or slaves to interested buyers, and is sold to a harsh and unkind farmer. When he escapes back to the city, he befriends a runaway with a very different background: Dani is educated and wealthy, but has left because of his cruel father. Together, Mamo and Dani join a gang of homeless street boys who learn to defend and provide for one another.</p>		Ages 10+
<p><b>The other side of truth</b> Beverley Naidoo</p> <p>London: Puffin Books, c2000 London: HarperTrophy, c2000</p>	<p>Setting: Nigeria; England</p> <p>Theme: Refugees, Human Rights</p> <p>Following the tragic murder of their mother, young Sade and her little brother are smuggled out of Nigeria. The two siblings find themselves abandoned in London, England, when their relative fails to collect them at the airport as agreed. They must learn to survive in the new, unfamiliar and at times frightening city surroundings of London, and all the while they are wondering what has become of their journalist father who remains in Nigeria doing very dangerous work.</p>	Lexile 710	Reviews: Gr. 6 - 10 Ages 10+
<p><b>The Secret Keeper</b> Mitali Perkins</p> <p>New York: Random House, 2009</p>	<p>Setting: America; India</p> <p>Theme: Gender Equity</p> <p>Asha's father finds a job in America and leaves his two daughters and wife with his brother's family to wait until he can bring them to join him. The women struggle under patriarchal authority. Asha forms a secret relationship with the boy next door and is faced with a difficult choice when her father contacts the family to come to America.</p>	Gr. 7 - 9	
<p><b>The Shepherd's Grand-daughter</b> Anne Laurel Carter</p> <p>Toronto: Groundwood, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Palestine</p> <p>Themes: human rights, economic survival, children of war</p> <p>Amani has always wanted to be a shepherd like her grandfather, but her family lives on land near Hebron that is threatened by Jewish settlements. Some of her family want to respond militantly. However Amani makes friends</p>	Gr. 8 - 12	

	with an American boy visiting his Jewish relatives, and she is more concerned with the well being of her flock and her land.		
<p><b>The Suitcase Stories: Refugee Children Reclaim their Identities</b> Glynis Clacherty</p> <p>Lansdowne, SA: Double Storey, 2006.</p>	<p>Setting: South Africa</p> <p>Themes: Refugee Experience, Children's Rights</p> <p>Clacherty became involved with a group of refugee children in South Africa and developed an original project to help them process their trauma: she gave each a suitcase on which to paint his/her story. The book features photos of the suitcases as well as the children's stories.</p>	Gr. 6 - 8	
<p><b>The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain</b> Peter Sis</p> <p>New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2007</p>	<p>Setting: Prague</p> <p>Themes: Human Rights</p> <p>Picturebook memoir of childhood and teen years spent growing up and pushing against the restrictions of life under Communist rule in Prague, including the repression of the Prague Spring. Eventually, the narrator escapes to the West.</p>	Gr. 4 - 7	
<p><b>This Child, Every Child: a book about the world's children</b> David J. Smith Illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong</p> <p>Toronto: Kids Can Press, c2011 CitizenKid series</p>	<p>Setting: Global</p> <p>Themes: Children's rights</p> <p>This book takes a look at the different lifestyles, or quality of life, experienced by children in countries all over the world. In addition to identifying what can be considered as basic needs (clean air and water, adequate food, health care, and education), the book discusses whether or not children from these different regions are having these needs met. This unfolds, in part, through stories shared by individual children about their lives.</p>	Follett 5.5	Follett Gr. 3 - 6
<p><b>Three Cups of Tea</b> (Young Adult Version) Greg Mortenson</p> <p>PUFFIN Hardcover 2009 ISBN 0-142-41412-3</p> <p>PUFFIN Paperback 2009 ISBN 978-0-14-241412-5</p> <p>PUFFIN Audio 2009 ISBN 978-0143144465</p>	<p>Setting: Pakistan; Middle East</p> <p>Themes: Children's Rights; Education; Poverty; Aid Work</p> <p>While climbing one of the most challenging peaks in the world in 1993, Greg Mortenson became lost and fell ill. When the generous people of Korphe, a small Pakistani village where he sought refuge, took him in and cared for him, he promised to build a school for the community in thanks. Since seeing this promise through, Mortenson has created the Central Asia Institute, which has now provided school resources and education to over 25,000 children. Making the story accessible to Young Adults, Mortenson's 12-year-old daughter tells of her experiences with these projects and the interesting cultural exchanges that have taken place.</p>	<p>Follett 5.6</p> <p>Lexile 910</p>	

<p><b>Three Wishes</b> Deborah Ellis</p> <p>Toronto: Douglas &amp; McIntyre; Groundwood Books, c2004</p>	<p>Setting: Israel; Palestine</p> <p>Themes: Children and War</p> <p>This is a collection of narratives from young people between the ages of 8 and 18, living within Israel and Palestine. The accounts detail the toll of war on their personal lives. While Israeli students must spend a part of their youth completing their compulsory service with the military, Palestinian youth are often forced into participating in political conflict by their families and communities who are suffering in overcrowded and unsafe settlements. The reader is introduced to each story with a brief historical or personal background to help contextualize its content. In addition to explaining the traumas, despair and heartache of a life lived in conflict, the young people also tell readers about their three wishes for the future.</p>	<p>Follett 5.2</p> <p>Lexile 800</p>	<p>Gr. 6 - 8</p>
<p><b>Throwaway Daughter</b> Ting-xing Ye</p> <p>Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2004</p>	<p>Setting: China; Canada</p> <p>Themes: gender inequity, children's rights</p> <p>After watching the Tiananmen massacre on television, Canadian teen Grace Dong-mei Parker wants to learn more about her Chinese heritage. She discovers that she is one of many girl babies abandoned in China by families who want a male child under the one-child limit established by the government. With her adoptive parents Grace travels to China to learn her history.</p>	<p>Gr. 8 - 12</p>	
<p><b>Thunder over Kandahar</b> Sharon E. McKay</p> <p>Toronto: Annick, 2010</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan; London, England</p> <p>Themes: Human Rights, Educational Rights, Gender Equity, Refugee Experience</p> <p>Friends Tamanna and Yasmine are thrilled to be getting a school in their Afghan village; however, when the Taliban destroys the school and Tamanna is threatened with an arranged marriage, the girls decide to flee for better opportunities. They are separated but reunited some years later in London, where they find both wish to return home to Afghanistan.</p>	<p>Gr. 8 - 12</p>	
<p><b>Torn Pages</b> Sally Grindley</p> <p>Bloomsbury London 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Africa</p> <p>Themes: AIDS; Poverty</p> <p>AIDS has affected the lives of Liddy and her brother Joe, who have lost both of their parents to the disease. Being orphaned in their small African community, the siblings</p>		<p>Ages 7 - 9</p>

	<p>struggle together to take care of their little sister. They rarely have the money for a proper meal, let alone the free time and funds for attending school. While they watch the rest of their village suffer with the AIDS problem, and their grandmother makes life even more difficult on them, they read the handwritten journal their mother left for them in order to maintain hope in such a dire situation.</p>		
<p><b>Trash</b> Andy Mulligan</p> <p>Oxford: David Fickling Books, c2010</p>	<p>Setting: Fictional City</p> <p>Theme: Poverty</p> <p>Unlike most Y.A. Realistic fiction in this bibliography, this novel is set in a city and time of the author's own creation. Within this futuristic dystopia, a group of fourteen-year-old boys survive on selling the garbage they collect from the outskirts of the city. One of the boys eventually finds something special and mysterious. Though this object empowers and excites the boys, being very sought after by the government, it also endangers them. They must use their creativity and co-operation to secure the object, which might improve their situation.</p>	Lexile 850	Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>Under a Red Sky: Memoir of a Childhood in Communist Romania</b> Haya Leah Molnar</p> <p>New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 2010</p>	<p>Setting: Romania</p> <p>Themes: Human Rights, Emigrant Experience</p> <p>Only child Eva lives with loving and protective parents and grandparents in post-World War II Bucharest. At age 8 she discovers she is Jewish as her parents apply to emigrate to Israel. The memoir follows Eva's attempts to piece together her heritage and her family's struggle to leave Communist Romania.</p>	Gr. 4 - 7	
<p><b>Under the Persimmon Tree</b> Suzanne Fisher Staples</p> <p>UK: Francis Foster Books, 2005</p> <p>Farrar, Straus, Giroux New York</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan; Pakistan</p> <p>Themes: Children and War</p> <p>Najmah, an Afghani girl, has survived the most atrocious violence and cruelty at the hands of the Taliban regime. Not only has the Taliban taken her father and brother, but they have also killed her mother and baby brother during an Afghan War bombing raid (taking place in October 2001). On the search for her father, Najmah is forced to travel across the dangerous border to Peshawar, Pakistan. In these travels, Najmah meets an American woman, Nusrat, who is running a schoolhouse for needy refugee children. Najmah and Nusrat develop a companionship and an understanding of one another's hardships. The reader gets a glimpse into life in a refugee camp.</p>	Lexile 1010	Gr. 9 - 12

<p><b>Voices in the Fields: Children of migrant farm workers tell their stories</b> S. Beth Atkin</p> <p>USA: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, April 1 2000</p> <p>Graphic novel</p>	<p>Setting: Mexico; America</p> <p>Themes: Migrant Labor; Poverty; Migration</p> <p>This multimedia book explores the experiences of Mexican-American migrant farm workers and their families. Their stories are told through photographs, poems, and interviews with nine children who share their hardships and hopes. Readers learn of some migrant's realities: why they migrate, the difficult precarious nature of living in America without status, the cultural and social alienation involved, the longing for home or familiarity, and the difficult living/working conditions experienced.</p>		<p>Ages 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>Wanting Mor</b> Rukhsana Khan</p> <p>Toronto, ON: Groundwood/House of Anansi, 2009</p>	<p>Setting: Afghanistan</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; Women's/Children's Rights</p> <p>The nuanced tale about a young girl, Jameela, making her way in patriarchal Afghan society, finds those who are willing to bend the rules, and figures out how to use the strict societal norms to her advantage. The story, which is based on actual events in the early 2000s, begins with Jameela's discovery that her ill mother (Mor) has passed away in the night. Shortly after, she and her father move to Kabul, where he marries a widow who badly mistreats Jameela. When conflict arises over Jameela, and she is claimed to have brought shame to the family, her father decides to abandon her in Kabul. Here, she is eventually placed in an orphanage, and as an end to her terrible luck, she is able to both attend school and have her deformed lip corrected with a special surgery. The story's compelling first person narrative is matter-of-fact and laced with Pushto vocabulary, which can be translated using the book's helpful glossary.</p>		<p>Gr. 5 - 8 Ages 9 - 12</p>
<p><b>War Brothers</b> Sharon Mckay</p> <p>Toronto, ON: Puffin Canada, 2008</p>	<p>Setting: Uganda</p> <p>Themes: Children and War; AIDS</p> <p>This is the story of three young boys who are made homeless by terrible loss and poverty, domestic violence or orphaned by AIDS. Coming from different backgrounds Jacob, Oteka, and Hannah meet under awful conditions, when they all end up getting manipulated by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, and join their forces. While serving as child soldiers for the army, they are forced to march across treacherous terrain with scarcely enough food and water to survive. Out of desperation, the boys develop an escape plan and they must rely on their</p>		<p>Gr. 5 - 7</p>

	friendship and courage to break free of their dire circumstances.		
<p><b>Where Streets Had a Name</b> Randa Abdel Fattah</p> <p>New York: Scholastic, 2010</p>	<p>Setting: Palestine; Israel</p> <p>Themes: Children of War, Human Rights</p> <p>13-year-old Hayaat believes soil from her ancestral home in Jerusalem will heal her ailing grandmother, but the family now lives on the wrong side of the border that divides the West Bank. She undertakes a quest with her best friend Samy on a curfew-free day as they negotiate the various barriers and checkpoints.</p>	Lexile 740	Gr. 6 - 8
<p><b>Yatandu</b> Gloria Whelan; Peter Sylvada (Illustrator)</p> <p>Chelsea, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, c2007.</p>	<p>Themes: Child Labor, Children's Rights, Women's Rights</p> <p>This picturebook introduces us to Yatandou, a young girl living in a Mali village. Though she is only eight, she spends her days completing a number of tasks that keep the community running. However, she would prefer to be playing with her pet goat than sitting with the women of the community pounding millet kernels for supper.</p>	Lexile 680	Reviews: Ages 8 - 12