

# Mental Health and Well-Being: Exploring Friendship and School Life Through the Reading of Novels (Intermediate)

## Note:

The interest and reading levels listed in this bibliography are those given by the publishers. If the reviewing journals gave a different interest level(s) for a title then this was indicated after the publisher's interest level. I find the interest levels given by the reviewing journals to be more accurate.

The summaries, which are also from the publishers, are to give you a quick overview of each title. Note that some of the titles fit the theme loosely and others more tightly. The titles also range from "light-hearted" to more serious in nature.

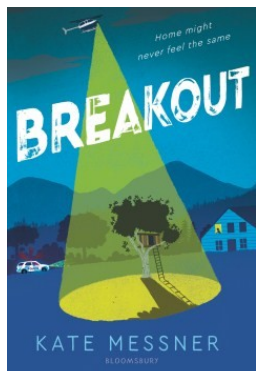
If a student needs the support of a digital copy, talk with your Learning Support Teacher, as ARC-BC is able to "rush" order digital titles they don't currently have in their collection. A very small number of the titles may also be available in an audiobook format, accessible through searching in Destiny. Your Teacher-Librarian can help you check for this.

If the LRC has 10+ copies of a title this was listed beside the title to provide you with the further flexibility of bringing in some titles to be used in a lit circle format.

*Joan Pearce, December 2020*

# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

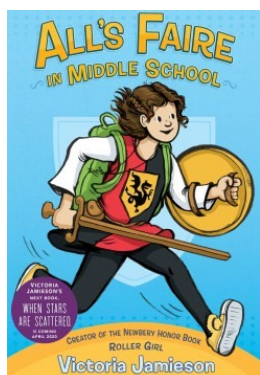
Compiled by Joan Pearce



## **Breakout** \*LRC has 24

by Kate Messner, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.4)

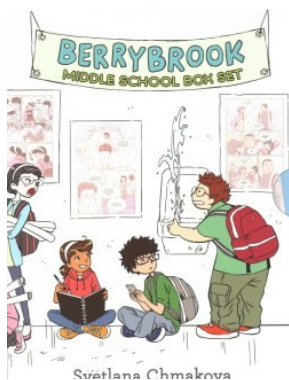
"Told in a unique format of letters, poetry, comics, and journals Kate Messner's new novel tells an important coming-of-age story against the intrigue of a real-life prison break." - Pub.



## **All's Faire in Middle School**

by Victoria Jamieson, c2017 (IL: 5-8, RL: 3.6)  
(graphic novel)

"Homeschooled by Renaissance Fair enthusiasts, eleven-year-old Imogene has a hard time fitting in when her wish to enroll in public school is granted." - Follett



## **Series: Berrybrook Middle School**

by Svetlana Chmakova, c2015-2019 (IL: 5-8, RL: 2.8-3.1) (graphic novels)

"Follow the Awkward tales of the students at Berrybrook Middle School as they Bravely face their everyday lives...even when they have a Crush!" - Pub.

### Titles:

*Awkward*

*Brave*

*Crush*



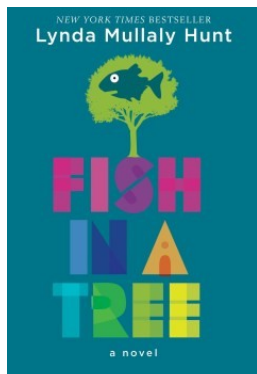
## **Real Friends** \*LRC has 12

by Shannon Hale, c2017 (IL: 3-6, RL: 3.7)  
(graphic novel)

"Newbery Honor author Shannon Hale and New York Times bestselling illustrator LeUyen Pham join forces in this graphic memoir about how hard it is to find your real friends--and why it's worth the journey." - Pub.

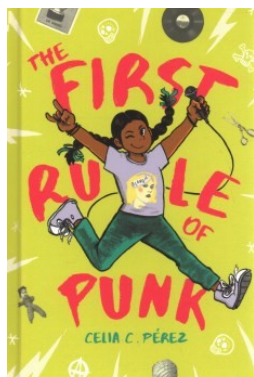
# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

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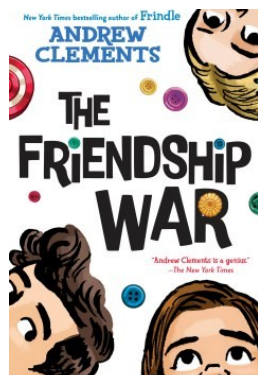
**Fish In a Tree** \*LRC has 24  
by Lynda Mullaly Hunt, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.2)

"Sixth-grader Ally excels at covering the fact that she cannot read, but at her seventh school in as many years she is challenged to admit she needs help."  
- Follett



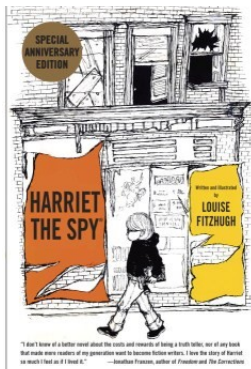
**The First Rule of Punk** \*LRC has 12  
by Celia C. Pérez, c2019 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.5)

"Twelve-year-old Maria Luisa O'Neill-Morales (who really prefers to be called Malu) reluctantly moves with her Mexican-American mother to Chicago and starts seventh grade with a bang--violating the dress code with her punk rock aesthetic and spurning the middle school's most popular girl in favor of starting a band with a group of like-minded weirdos." - Follett



**The Friendship War**  
by Andrew Clements, c2019 (IL: 3-6, RL: 5.2)

"When Grace takes boxes of old buttons from a building her grandfather bought, she starts a fad at school that draws her closer to one friend, but further from another." - Pub.



**Harriet the Spy**  
by Louise Fitzhugh, c1964 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.5)

"Using her keen observation skills, 11-year-old Harriet M. Welsch writes down in her notebook what she considers the truth about everyone in and around her New York City neighborhood. When she loses track of her notebook, it ends up in the wrong hands, and before she can stop them, her friends read the sometimes awful things she's observed and written about each of them. How can Harriet find a way to keep her integrity and also put her life and her friendships back together?" - Pub.

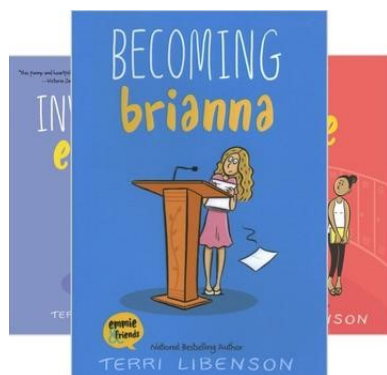
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## **Best Friends**

by Shannon Hale, c2019 (IL: 3-6, RL: 4.6) (graphic novel)  
"Sixth grade is supposed to be perfect. Shannon's got a sure spot in the in-crowd called The Group, and her best friend is their leader. Jen, the most popular girl in school. But the rules are always changing, and Shannon has to scramble to keep up. She never knows which TV shows are cool, what songs to listen to, and which boys she's allowed to talk to. Who makes these rules, anyway? And does Shannon have to follow them? - Follett



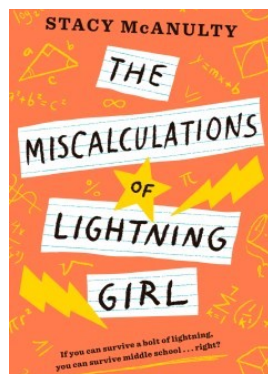
## **Series: Emmie & Friends**

by Terri Libenson, c2017-2019 (IL: 3-6, 5-8)  
(graphic novels)

"All the crushes, humiliations, boredom, and drama of middle school are compressed into one surprising day in this extraordinary novel. Perfect for fans of Raina Telmeier and Jennifer L. Holm." - Pub.

### Titles:

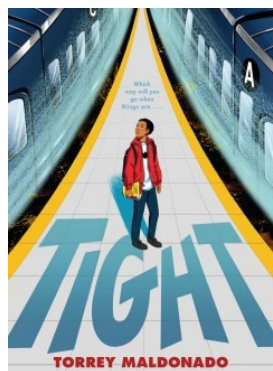
*Invisible Emmie* (RL: 4.2)    *Just Jaime* (RL: 4.6)  
*Positively Izzy* (RL: 3.8)    *Becoming Breanna*



## **The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl** \*LRC has 12

by Stacy McAnulty, c2018 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 3.7)

"A lightning strike made Lucy, twelve, a math genius but, after years of homeschooling, her grandmother enrolls her in middle school and she learns that life is more than numbers." - Follett



## **Tight**

by Torrey Maldonado, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.8)

"After his quick-tempered father gets in a fight and is sent back to jail, sixth-grader Bryan, known for being quiet and thoughtful, snaps and follows new friend Mike into trouble." - Follett



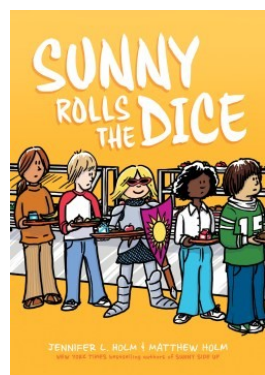
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**The Next Great Paulie Fink** \*LRC has 36  
by Ali Benjamin, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.9)

"Led by new student Caitlyn, seventh-graders at a tiny rural school in Vermont create a reality-show inspired competition to determine who will replace the school's legendary class clown, Paulie Fink." - Follett



**Sunny Rolls the Dice**  
by Jennifer L. Holm, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 3.7)  
(graphic novel)

"Sunny's just made it to middle school . . . and it's making her life very confusing. All her best friend Deb wants to talk about is fashion, boys, makeup, boys, and being cool. Sunny's not against any of these things, but she also doesn't understand why suddenly everything revolves around them. She's much more comfortable when she's in her basement, playing Dungeons & Dragons with a bunch of new friends. Because when you're sword fighting and spider-slaying, it's hard to worry about..." - Follett



**Wonder** \*LRC has 33  
by R. J. Palacio, c2012, 2017 (IL: 3.6, 4-7; RL: 5.1)

"Ten-year-old Auggie Pullman, who was born with extreme facial abnormalities and was not expected to survive, goes from being home-schooled to entering fifth grade at a private middle school in Manhattan, which entails enduring the taunts and fear of his classmates as he struggles to be seen as just another student." - Follett

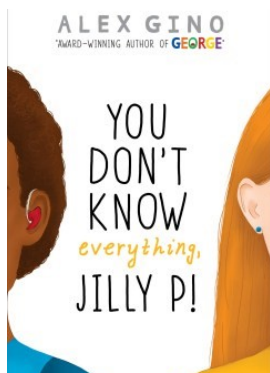


**Hurricane Child**  
by Kacyn Callender, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 5.3)

"Born on Water Island in the Virgin Islands during a hurricane, which is considered bad luck, twelve-year-old Caroline falls in love with another girl--and together they set out in a hurricane to find Caroline's missing mother." - Follett

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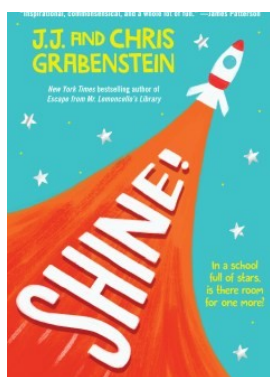
Compiled by Joan Pearce



## **You Don't Know Everything, Jilly P!**

by Alex Gino, c2018 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.3)

"...when Jilly's sister, Emma, is born deaf, she realizes...the world is going to treat Jilly, who is white and hearing, differently from Emma, just as it will treat them both differently from their Black cousins. A big fantasy reader, Jilly makes a connection online with another fantasy fan, Derek, who is a Deaf, Black ASL user. She goes to Derek for help with Emma but doesn't always know the best way or time to ask for it. As she and Derek meet in person, have some really fun conversations, and become friends, Jilly makes some mistakes...but comes to understand that it's up to her..." - *Foll.*



## **Shine!**

by J.J. Grabenstein, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 4.7)

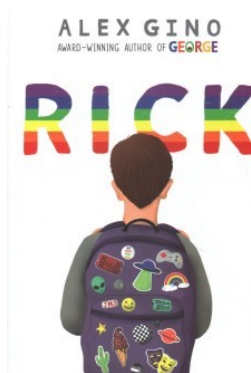
"Who do you want to be?" asks Mr. Van Deusen. "And not when you grow up. Right here, right now." Shine on! might be the catchphrase of twelve-year-old Piper's hero--astronaut, astronomer, and television host Nellie Dumont Frisse--but Piper knows the truth: some people are born to shine, and she's just not one of them. That fact has never been clearer than now, since her dad's new job has landed them both at Chumley Prep, a posh private school where everyone seems to be the best at something and where Piper definitely doesn't fit in." - *Pub.*



## **Dear Sweet Pea**

by Julie Murphy, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-8; RL: 5.5)

"Thirteen-year-old Patricia, widely known as Sweet Pea, navigates her parents' unconventional divorce and finds herself in the unlikely role of her town's advice columnist." - *Follett*



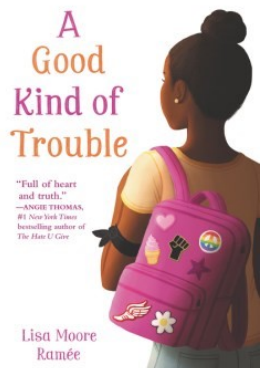
## **Rick**

by Alex Gino, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 3-7)

"Eleven-year-old Rick Ramsey has generally gone along with everybody, just not making waves, even though he is increasingly uncomfortable with his father's jokes about girls, and his best friend's explicit talk about sex; but now in middle school he discovers the Rainbow Spectrum club, where kids of many genders and identities can express themselves—and maybe among them he can find new friends and discover his own identity, which may just be to opt out of sex altogether." - *Follett*

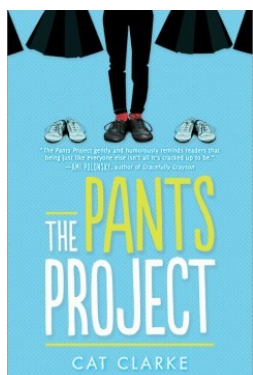
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## A Good Kind of Trouble

by Lisa Moore Ramee, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-8; RL: 4.5)  
"Twelve-year-old Shayla is allergic to trouble. All she wants to do is to follow the rules. (Oh, and she'd also like to make it through seventh grade with her best friendships intact, learn to run track, and have a cute boy see past her giant forehead.) But in junior high, it's like all the rules have changed. Now she's suddenly questioning who her best friends are and some people at school are saying she's not black enough. Wait, what? Shay's sister, Hana, is involved in Black Lives Matter, but Shay doesn't think that's for her. After experiencing a powerful protest, though, Shay decides some rules are worth breaking."



## The Pants Project \*LRC has 12

by Cat Clarke, c2017 (IL: 5-8, 4-6; RL: 4.7)

"Eleven-year-old Liv fights to change the middle school dress code requiring girls to wear a skirt and, along the way, finds the courage to tell his moms he is meant to be a boy." - Follett



## Ungifted \*LRC has 24

by Gordon Korman, c2012 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.2)

"When Donovan Curtis pulls a major prank at his middle school, he thinks he's finally gone too far. But thanks to a mix-up by one of the administrators, instead of getting in trouble, Donovan is sent to the Academy of Scholastic Distinction, a special program for gifted and talented students ... But as the students and teachers of ASD grow to realize that Donovan may not be good at math or science (or just about anything), he shows that his gifts may be exactly what the ASD students never knew they needed." - Pub.



## The Unteachables \*LRC has 12

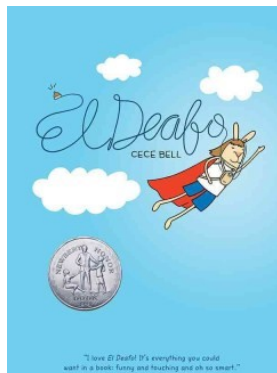
by Gordon Korman c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 5.1)

"The Unteachables' never thought they'd find a teacher who had a worse attitude than they did. And Mr. Kermit never thought he would actually care about teaching again. Over the course of a school year, though, room 117 will experience mayhem, destruction-and maybe even a shot at redemption" - Follett



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## El Deafo \*LRC has 12

by Cece Bell, c2014 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 3.3)

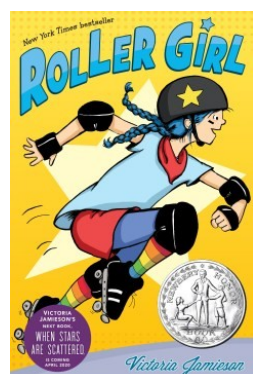
"Going to school and making new friends can be tough. But going to school and making new friends while wearing a bulky hearing aid strapped to your chest? That requires superpowers. In this funny, poignant graphic novel memoir, author/illustrator Cece Bell chronicles her hearing loss at a young age and her subsequent experiences with the Phonic Ear, a very powerful—and very awkward—hearing aid." - Pub.



## The New Kid \*LRC has 36

by Jerry Craft, c2019 (IL: 5-8, 4-7; RL: 3.6)  
(graphic novel)

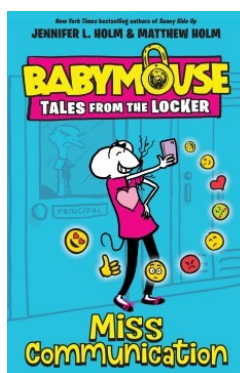
"Seventh grader Jordan Banks loves nothing more than drawing cartoons about his life. But instead of sending him to the art school of his dreams, his parents enroll him in a prestigious private school known for its academics, where Jordan is one of the few kids of color in his entire grade. As he makes the daily trip from his Washington Heights apartment to the upscale Riverdale Academy Day School, Jordan soon finds himself torn between two worlds—and not really fitting into either one." - Follett



## Roller Girl \*LRC has 12

by Victoria Jamieson, c2015 (IL: 5-8, 4-8; RL: 3.1)  
(graphic novel)

"For most of her twelve years, Astrid has done everything with her best friend Nicole. But after Astrid falls in love with roller derby and signs up for derby camp, Nicole decides to go to dance camp instead. And so begins the most difficult summer of Astrid's life as she struggles to keep up with the older girls at camp, hang on to the friend she feels slipping away, and cautiously embark on a new friendship." - Pub.



## Miss Communication (Series: Babymouse: Tales From the Locker)

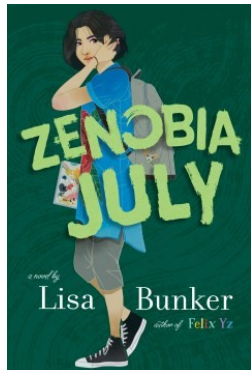
by Jennifer Holm, c2018 (IL: 3-6, RL: 5.7) \*graphic novel

"Everyone at middle school has a cell phone. Babymouse just has to get one, too. But having a phone is a lot of work! Building up a following on SoFamous, learning text lingo, keeping up with all the important koala videos... Babymouse is ready to tear her whiskers out. Why does it suddenly feel like she has no friends? Somehow, Babymouse needs to figure out how to stop worrying and love her smartphone..." - Pub.



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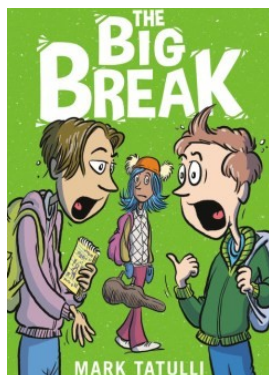
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## Zenobia July

by Lisa Bunker, c2019 (IL: 5-8, RL 5.8)

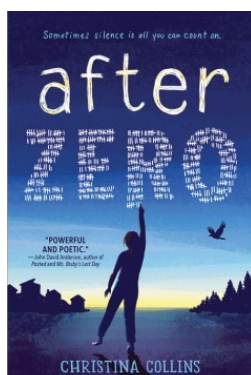
"A bold, heartfelt story about a trans girl solving a cyber mystery and coming into her own. Zenobia July is starting a new life. She used to live in Arizona with her father; now she's in Maine with her aunts. She used to spend most of her time behind a computer screen, improving her impressive coding and hacking skills; now she's coming out of her shell and discovering a community of friends at Monarch Middle School. People used to tell her she was a boy; now she's able to live openly as the girl she always knew she was." - Pub.



## The Big Break

by Mark Tatulli, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 3-7)  
(graphic novel)

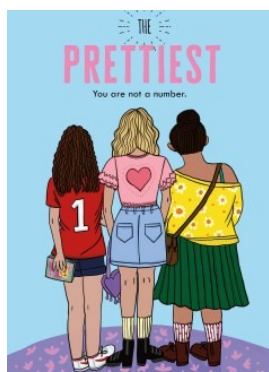
"Russ's friendship with Andrew disintegrates when Russ gets a girlfriend, leaving the video they are making without an ending, but a close encounter with the legendary Jersey Devil brings them back together." - Follett



## After Zero

by Christina Collins, c2018 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.5)

"When Elise leaves homeschooling for public school, she copes by speaking as little as possible, but soon her silence becomes an impediment to friendship and to dealing with family secrets." - Follett



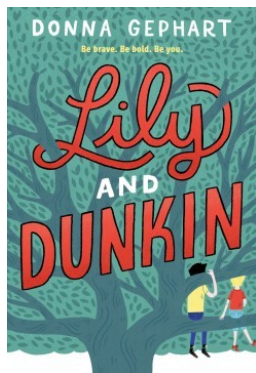
## The Prettiest

by Brigit Young, c2020 (IL: 3-6; 4-8)

"When a list appears online ranking the top fifty prettiest girls in the eighth grade, everything turns upside down. Eve Hoffman, ranked number one, can't ignore how everyone is suddenly talking about her looks. Sophie, the most popular girl in school, feels lower than ever when she's bullied for being ranked number two. Nessa Flores-Brady didn't even make the list, but she doesn't care—or does she? The three girls band together to find out who made the list but their journey doesn't lead them where they expect." - Follett

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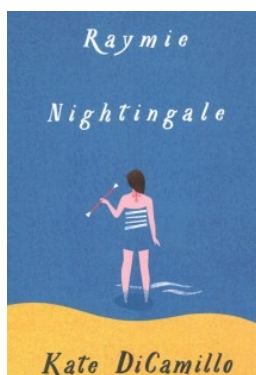
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## Lily and Dunkin

by Donna Gephart, c2016 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.3)

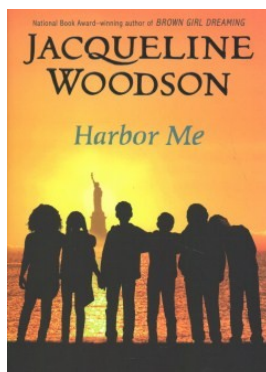
"Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you're in the eighth-grade. Norbert Dorfman, nicknamed Dunkin Dorfman, is bipolar and has just moved from the New Jersey town he's called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change." - Follett



## Raymie Nightingale

by Kate DiCamillo, c2018 (IL: 5-8, 4-7)

"Hoping that if she wins a local beauty pageant her father will come home, Raymie practices twirling a baton and performing good deeds as she is drawn into an unlikely friendship with a drama queen and a saboteur." - Follett



## Harbor Me \*LRC has 12

by Jacqueline Woodson, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.1)

"It all starts when six kids have to meet for a weekly chat--by themselves, with no adults to listen in. There, in the room they soon dub the ARTT Room (short for "A Room to Talk"), they discover it's safe to talk about what's bothering them--everything from Esteban's father's deportation and Haley's father's incarceration to Amari's fears of racial profiling and Ashton's adjustment to his changing family fortunes. When the six are together, they can express the feelings and fears they have to hide from the rest of the world. And together, they can grow braver..." - Pub.



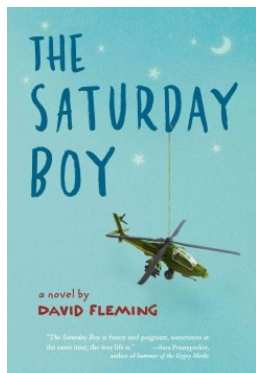
## 12 before 13

by Lisa Greenwald, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.1)

"Inspired by the success of their first birthday bucket list, Ari and her BFF Kaylan set twelve new goals for the next school year. And number one is "keep our friendship strong." But after a life-changing summer at camp, Ari feels torn between Kaylan and her camp friends. And as she faces down everything from boys to bat mitzvahs, Ari needs to figure out how to be her best self--before her friends come together at her thirteenth birthday party." - Pub.

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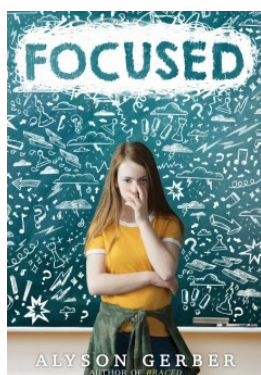
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## The Saturday Boy

by David Fleming, c2013 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.6)

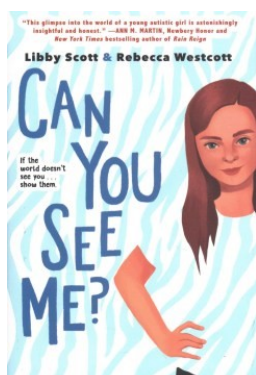
"Every school day seems to bring more trouble to eleven-year-old Derek, whose former best friend bullies him, while at home he deals with the long absence of his father, a Blackhawk helicopter pilot, and his mother's sudden moodiness." - Follett



## Focused

by Alyson Gerber, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 5-8; RL: 4.6)

"Twelve-year-old Clea wants to do her homework, follow instructions, pay attention in school, and play chess on the school team, but somehow she cannot focus on whatever is in front of her, and the other kids at school are starting to notice and make fun of her; when her worried parents take her to be tested she finds out that she has ADHD (only without the hyperactivity) - and with help from the psychiatrist who seems to really understand her she is determined to learn how to focus" - Follett



## Can You See Me?

by Libby Scott, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.6)

"Eleven-year-old Tally is starting sixth grade at Kingswood Academy and she really wants to fit in, which means somehow hiding her autism, hypersensitivity to touch, and true self, and trying to act "normal" like her former best friend, Layla, who is distancing herself from Tally and her fourteen-year-old sister, Nell, who is always angry with Tally for being different; but as she records her thoughts and anxieties in her coping diary, Tally begins to wonder--what is "normal" anyway?"



## Five Things About Ava Andrews

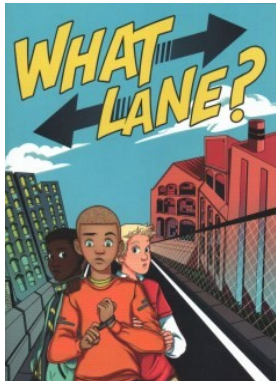
by Margaret Dilloway, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 4-7)

"Eleven-year-old Ava Andrews has a Technicolor interior with a gray shell. On the inside, she bubbles with ideas and plans. On the outside, everyone except her best friend, Zelia, thinks she doesn't talk or, worse, is stuck-up. What nobody knows is that Ava has invisible disabilities: anxiety and a heart condition. Ava hopes middle school will be a fresh start, but when Zelia moves across the country and Ava's Nana Linda pushes her to speak up about social issues, she withdraws further. So Ava is shocked when ..." - Follett



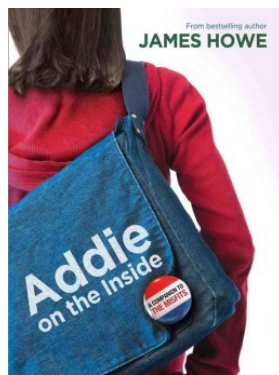
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**What Lane?** by Torrey Maldonado, c2020 (IL: 5-8)

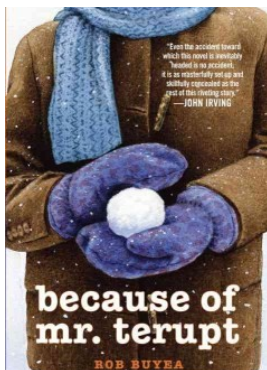
"Biracial sixth-grader Stephen questions the limitations society puts on him after he notices the way strangers treat him when he hangs out with his white friends and learns about the Black Lives Matter movement." - Follett



**Addie on the Inside**

by James Howe, c2011 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.0)

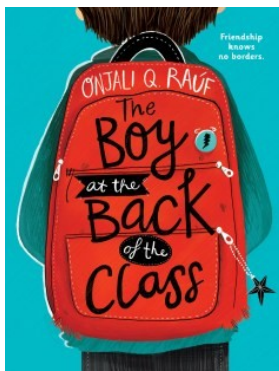
"Outspoken thirteen-year-old Addie Carle learns about love, loss, and staying true to herself as she navigates seventh grade, enjoys a visit from her grandmother, fights with her boyfriend, and endures gossip and meanness from her former best friend." - Follett



**Because of Mr. Terupt** \*LRC has 60

by Rob Buyea, c2010 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 4.1)

"It's the start of fifth grade for seven kids at Snow Hill School ... Only Mr. Terupt, their new and energetic teacher, seems to know how to deal with them all. He makes the classroom a fun place, even if he doesn't let them get away with much...until the snowy winter day when an accident changes everything-and everyone." - Pub.



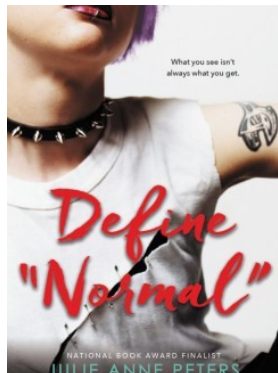
**The Boy at the Back of the Class** \*LRC has 24

by Pippa Curnick, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 5.4)

"When quiet, nine-year-old Ahmet arrives in their classroom, a boy and his friends fail to draw him out but try a new plan after learning he is a Syrian refugee." - Follett

# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

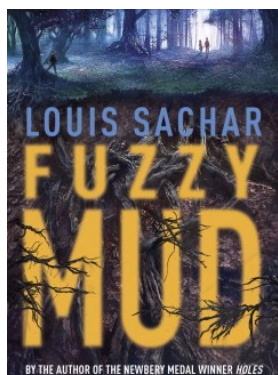
Compiled by Joan Pearce



## **Define Normal** \*LRC has 24

by Julie Anne Peters, c2000 (IL: 6-8, 7-10; RL: 5.3)

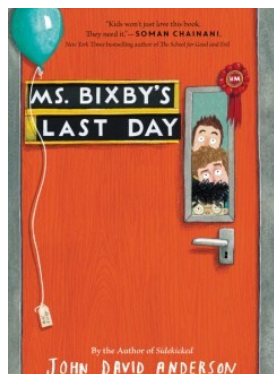
"Overachiever Antonia is eager to participate in the new peer counselling program at school - until she learns the person she's supposed to counsel is Jasmine Luther. Jazz is anything but Antonia's peer. She's a punk, a druggie, a gang hanger. But as their peer counselling sessions progress, Antonia and Jazz discover that they have more in common than they could ever have imagined. When Antonia's life begins to unravel, she finds Jazz may be her only aid." - Pub.



## **Fuzzy Mud**

by Louis Sachar, c2015, (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.0)

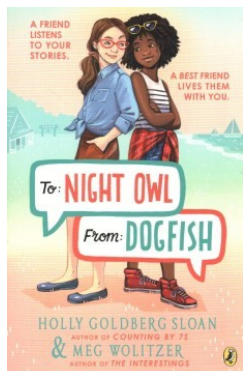
"Two middle-grade kids take a shortcut home from school and discover what looks like fuzzy mud but is actually a substance with the potential to wreak havoc on the entire world" - Follett



## **Ms. Bixby's Last Day** \*LRC has 31

by John David Anderson, c2016 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 5.2)

"Ms. Bixby unexpectedly announces that she is very sick and won't be able to finish the school year, and Topher, Brand and Steve come up with a plan to tell her how much she means to them." - Follett



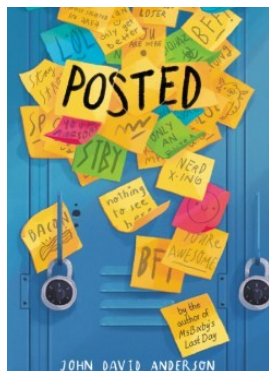
## **To Night Owl from Dogfish**

by Holly Goldberg Sloan, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 5.6)

"Unhappy about being sent to the same summer camp after their fathers start dating, Bett and Avery, eleven, eventually begin scheming to get the couple back together after a break-up. Told entirely through emails." - Follett

# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

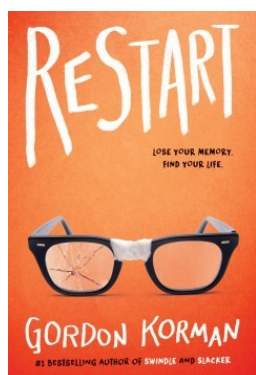
Compiled by Joan Pearce



## **Posted** \*LRC has 24

by John David Anderson, c2018 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.1)

"[A] humorous, poignant, and original contemporary story about bullying, broken friendships, social media, and the failures of communication between kids... When cell phones are banned at Branton Middle School, Frost and his friends Deedee, Wolf, and Bench come up with a new way to communicate: leaving sticky notes for each other all around the school. It catches on, and soon all the kids in school are leaving notes--though for every kind and friendly one, there is a cutting and cruel one as well." - Pub



## **Restart** \*LRC has 24

by Gordon Korman, c2017 (IL: 3-6, 4.7; RL: 5.1)

"Chase does not remember falling off the roof, in fact he does not remember anything about himself, and when he gets back to middle school he begins to learn who he was through the reactions of the other kids--trouble is, he really is not sure he likes the Chase that is being revealed, but can he take the opportunity amnesia has provided and restart his life?" - Follett



## **Farah Rocks Fifth Grade**

by Susan Muaddi Darraj, c2020 (IL: 3-6, RL: 4.8)

"Fifth-grader Farah Hajar and her best friend Allie Liu are hoping to go to the Magnet Academy for their middle school years, instead of Harbortown Elementary/Middle School; but when new girl Dana Denver starts tormenting Farah and her younger brother, Samir, she decides she can not leave Samir to face the bully alone, especially since the adults and even Allie do not seem to be taking the matter seriously --so Farah comes up with a plan, one which involves lying to those closest to her. - Follett



## **Not if I Can Help It**

by Carolyn Mackler, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 5.4)

"Willa lives on the upper West Side of Manhattan with her divorced father and her younger brother and attends fifth grade with her best friend Ruby, and she likes things to be a certain way, because it makes life manageable even with her Sensory Processing Disorder; she certainly does not like surprises, and her father has just thrown her a big one: he has been dating Ruby's mother, and suddenly Willa's life seems to be spiraling out of her control--and part of the trouble is that she cannot even explain why she thinks this is a horrible idea, when everyone else thinks that it is wonderful" - Follett



# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

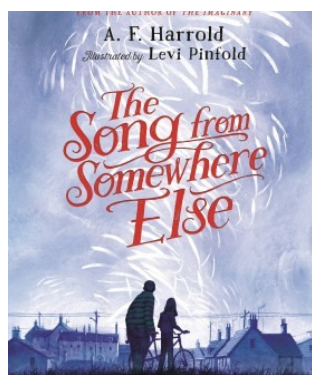
Compiled by Joan Pearce



## The Only Game \*LRC has 12

by Mike Lupica, c2015 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 5.5)

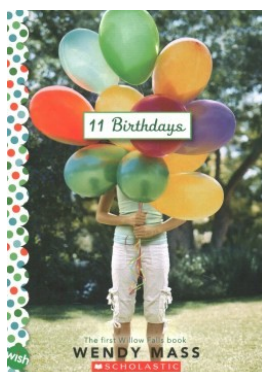
"Sixth grade is supposed to be the year that Jack Callahan leads his team to a record-shattering season and the Little League World Series, but after the death of his brother he loses interest in baseball and only Cassie, star of the girls' softball team, seems to understand." - Follett



## The Song from Somewhere Else \*LRC has 12

by A. F. Harrold, c2017 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 5.3)

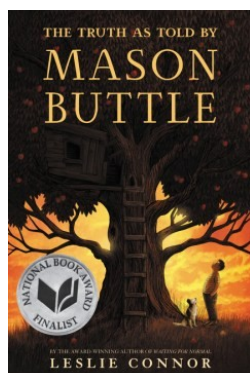
"Saved from bullies by the class misfit, Nick, Frank is drawn to Nick's house by strange music, discovers he has incredible secrets that bring danger, and decides to help him as he helped her." - Follett



## 11 Birthdays

by Wendy Mass, c2009 (IL: 3-6, RL: 4.1)

"After celebrating their first nine same-day birthdays together, Amanda and Leo, having fallen out on their tenth and not speaking to each other for the last year, prepare to celebrate their eleventh birthday separately but peculiar things begin to happen as the day of their birthday begins to repeat itself over and over again." - Follett



## The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle \*LRC has 12

by Leslie Connor, c2018 (IL: 3-6, RL: 2.7)

"Mason Buttle is the biggest, sweatiest kid in his grade, and everyone knows he can barely read or write. Mason's learning disabilities are compounded by grief. Fifteen months ago, Mason's best friend, Benny Kilmartin, turned up dead in the Buttle family's orchard. An investigation drags on, and Mason, honest as the day is long, can't understand why Lieutenant Baird won't believe the story Mason has told about that day..." - Follett

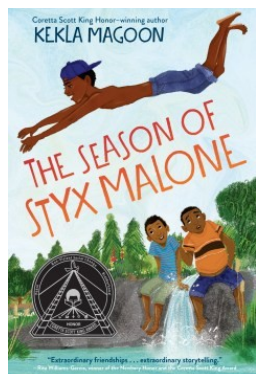
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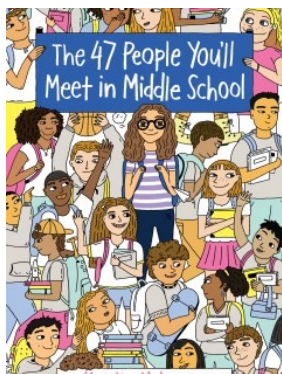
**The Tornado** \*LRC has 12  
by Jake Burt, c2019 (IL: 5-8, 4-7I; RL: 5.9)

"For Bell Kirby, school is about sketching and avoiding a bully who happens to be the principal's son, until new student Daelynn arrives and turns everything upside-down." - Follett



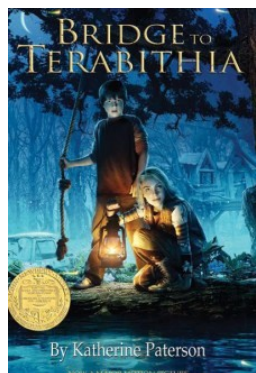
**The Season of Styx Malone** \*LRC has 12  
by Kekla Magoon, c2018 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 3.8)

"Caleb Franklin and his younger brother, Bobby Gene, spend an extraordinary summer their new, older neighbor, Styx Malone, a foster boy from the city." - Follett



**The 47 People You'll Meet in Middle School**  
by Kristin Mahoney, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.7)

"Discover the ins and outs of middle school in this guide from an older sister to her younger sister. From tackling a new building to meeting new people like the assistant principal, the class pet, the Huggers, the renegade, the tomato kid, your old best friend's new best friend, this is a must-read for everyone starting middle school." - Pub.

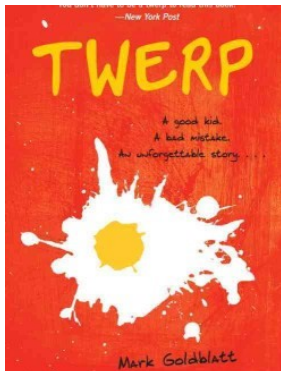


**Bridge to Terabithia** \*LRC has 12  
by Katherine Paterson, c1977 (IL: 5-8, RL: 4.6)

" Jess Aarons, a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia, finds a beloved and unexpected friend in Leslie, the new girl at school, with whom he creates a secret kingdom in the woods and from whom he learns lifelong lessons when tragedy strikes." - Follett

# Mental Health and Well-Being: Friendship and School Life

Compiled by Joan Pearce



## Twerp

by Mark Goldblatt, c2014 (IL: 3-6, 6-8; RL: 4.5)

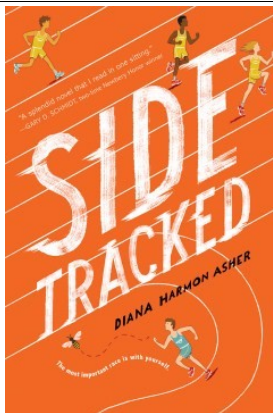
"Julian Twerski isn't a bully. He's just made a big mistake. So when he returns to school after a weeklong suspension, his English teacher offers him a deal: if he keeps a journal and writes about the terrible incident that got him and his friends suspended, he can get out of writing a report on Shakespeare. Julian jumps at the chance. And so begins his account of life in sixth grade--blowing up homemade fireworks, writing a love letter for his best friend (with disastrous results), and worrying whether he's still the fastest kid in school. Lurking in the background, though, is the one story he can't...." - Pub.



## The Secret Language of Girls

by Frances O'Roark Dowell, c2004 (IL: 3-6, 4-6; RL: 4.9)

"Marylin and Kate have been friends since nursery school, but when Marylin becomes a middle school cheerleader and Kate begins to develop other interests, their relationship is put to the test." - Follett



## Sidetracked

by Diana Harmon Asher, c2017 (RL: 3-6, 4.7; IL: 4.4)

"Seventh-grader Joseph Friedman is friendless and puny, with ADD to boot. He spends most of his time avoiding the class bully and hiding out in the Resource Room. But the Resource Room teacher encourages (i.e., practically forces) him to join the school cross country team, and he meets Heather, a new student who's tough and athletic and refuses to be pushed around by anybody." - Pub.



## Strange Birds: a Field Guide to Ruffling Feathers

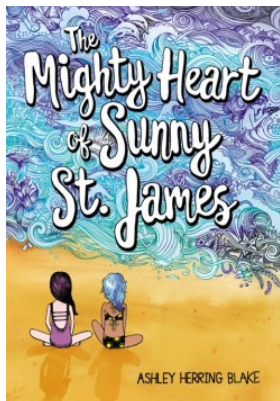
by Celia C. Perez, c2020 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.3)

"After Ofelia, Aster, Cat, and Lane fail to persuade a local girls club to change an outdated tradition, they form an alternative group that shakes up their sleepy Florida town. Includes tips for beginning birders, characteristics of crystals, a cookie recipe, tips for aspiring journalists, directions for creating badges, and facts about the killing of birds for fashion." - Follett



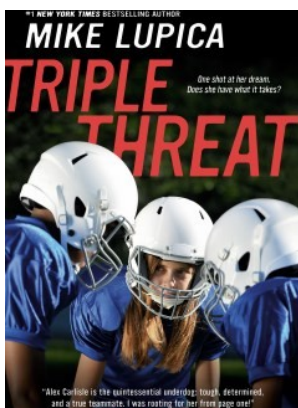
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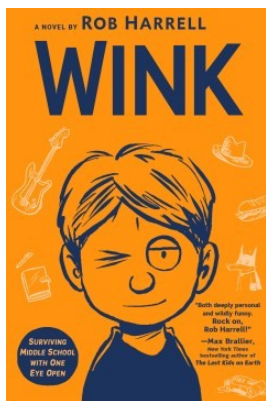
**The Mighty Heart of Sunny St. James**  
by Ashley Herring Blake, c2019 (IL: 3-6, 4-7; RL: 4.3)

"Twelve-year-old Sunny St. James must navigate heart surgery, reconnections with a lost mother, the betrayal of a former best friend, first kisses, and emerging feelings for another girl." - Follett



**Triple Threat**  
by Mike Lupica, c2020 (IL: 5-8, RL: 5.0)

"Twelve-year-old Alex Carlisle loves football almost as much as she loves her father but when she joins the Orville Middle School football team, not all of the boys, or parents, are pleased." - Follett



**Wink: Surviving Middle School With One Eye Open**  
by Rob Harrell, c2020 (IL: 3-6, 4-7)

"Ross Maloy just wants to be a normal seventh grader. He doesn't want to lose his hair, or wear a weird hat, or deal with the disappearing friends who don't know what to say to "the cancer kid." But with his recent diagnosis of a rare eye cancer, blending in is off the table. Based on Rob Harrell's real life experience, and packed with comic panels and spot art, this incredibly personal and poignant novel is an unforgettable, heartbreaking, hilarious, and uplifting story of survival and finding the music, magic, and laughter in life's weirdness." - Pub.



**Squint**  
by Chad Morris, c2018 (IL: 3-6, 5-7; RL: 4.1)

"Flint Minett has keratoconus, an eye disease, but desperately wants to win a comic book art contest so that he and his new friend McKell Panganiban will be better accepted at middle school." - Follett