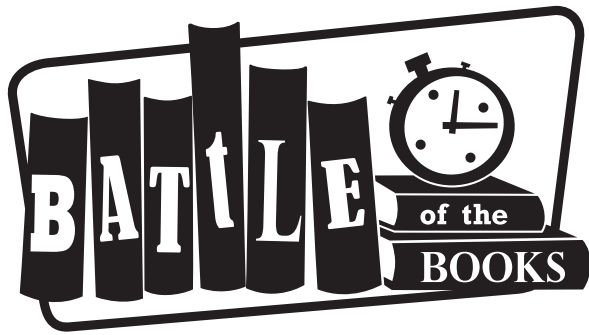
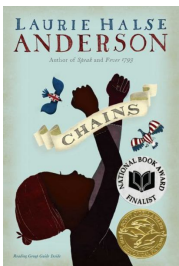


# Battle of the Books 2018-2019



The list is in! This list contains summaries of the books from Amazon.com. If there was a review on Common Sense Media I copied the link. (<https://www.common sense media.org>)

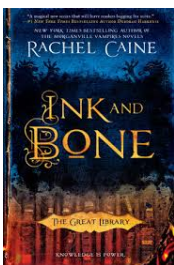
There are a few mature titles on the list. As a parent, you have the right to choose what your child reads. Go through the list and decide what is appropriate for your child.



## Chains, by Laurie Halse Anderson (Historical Fiction)

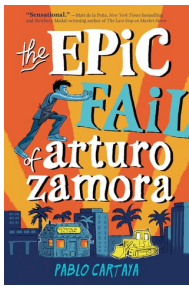
**Amazon Editorial Review:** As the Revolutionary War begins, thirteen-year-old Isabel wages her own fight...for freedom. Promised freedom upon the death of their owner, she and her sister, Ruth, in a cruel twist of fate become the property of a malicious New York City couple, the Locktons, who have no sympathy for the American Revolution and even less for Ruth and Isabel. When Isabel meets Curzon, a slave with ties to the Patriots, he encourages her to spy on her owners, who know details of British plans for invasion. She is reluctant at first, but when the unthinkable happens to Ruth, Isabel realizes her loyalty is available to the bidder who can provide her with freedom. From acclaimed author Laurie Halse Anderson comes this compelling, impeccably researched novel that shows the lengths we can go to cast off our chains, both physical and spiritual.

<https://www.common sense media.org/book-reviews/chains-the-seeds-of-america-trilogy-book-1>



## Ink and Bone, by Rachel Caine (Science Fiction)

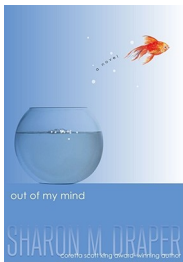
**Amazon Summary:** Ruthless and supremely powerful, the Great Library is now a presence in every major city, governing the flow of knowledge to the masses. Alchemy allows the Library to deliver the content of the greatest works of history instantly—but the personal ownership of books is expressly forbidden. Jess Brightwell believes in the value of the Library, but the majority of his knowledge comes from illegal books obtained by his family. Jess has been sent to be his family's spy, but his loyalties are tested in the final months of his training to enter the Library's service. When his friend inadvertently commits heresy by creating a device that could change the world, Jess discovers that those who control the Great Library believe knowledge is more valuable than any human life—and soon both heretics and books will burn....



## The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora, by Pablo Cartaya (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** A 2018 Pura Belpré Author Honor Book  
Save the restaurant. Save the town. Get the girl. Make Abuela proud. Can thirteen-year-old Arturo Zamora do it all or is he in for a BIG, EPIC FAIL? For Arturo, summertime in Miami means playing basketball until dark, sipping mango smoothies, and keeping cool under banyan trees. And maybe a few shifts as junior lunchtime dishwasher at Abuela's restaurant. Maybe. But this summer also includes Carmen, a poetry enthusiast who moves into Arturo's apartment complex and turns his stomach into a deep fryer. He almost doesn't notice the smarmy land developer who rolls into town and threatens to change it. Arturo refuses to let his family and community go down without a fight, and as he schemes with Carmen, Arturo discovers the power of poetry and protest through untold family stories and the work of José Martí. Funny and poignant, *The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora* is the vibrant story of a family, a striking portrait of a town, and one boy's quest to save both, perfect for fans of Rita Williams-Garcia.

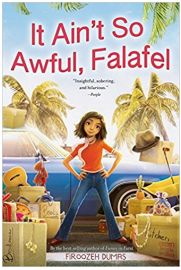
<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/the-epic-fail-of-arturo-zamora>



## Out of my Mind, by Sharon Draper (Realistic Fiction)

**School Library Journal Review:** Born with cerebral palsy, Melody, 10, has never spoken a word. She is a brilliant fifth grader trapped in an uncontrollable body. Her world is enhanced by insight and intellect, but gyped by physical limitations and misunderstandings. She will never sing or dance, talk on the phone, or whisper secrets to her friends. She's not complaining, though; she's planning and fighting the odds. In her court are family, good neighbors, and an attentive student teacher. Pitted against her is the "normal" world: schools with limited resources, cliquish girls, superficial assumptions, and her own disability. Melody's life is tragically complicated. She is mainly placed in the special-ed classroom where education means being babysat in a room with replayed cartoons and nursery tunes. Her supportive family sets her up with a computer. She learns the strength of thumbs as she taps on a special keyboard that finally lets her "talk." When she is transitioned into the regular classroom, Melody's undeniable contribution enables her class to make it to the national quiz team finals. Then something happens that causes her to miss the finals, and she is devastated by her classmates' actions. Kids will benefit from being introduced to Melody and her gutsy, candid, and compelling story. It speaks volumes and reveals the quiet strength and fortitude it takes to overcome disabilities and the misconceptions that go with them.

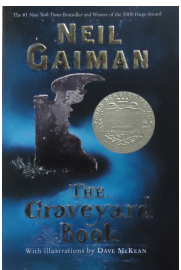
<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/out-of-my-mind>



## It Ain't So Awful Falafel, by Firoozeh Dumas (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** Zomorod (Cindy) Yousefzadeh is the new kid on the block . . . for the fourth time. California's Newport Beach is her family's latest perch, and she's determined to shuck her brainy loner persona and start afresh with a new Brady Bunch name—Cindy. It's the late 1970s, and fitting in becomes more difficult as Iran makes U.S. headlines with protests, revolution, and finally the taking of American hostages. Even puka shell necklaces, pool parties, and flying fish can't distract Cindy from the anti-Iran sentiments that creep way too close to home. A poignant yet lighthearted middle grade debut from the author of the best-selling *Funny in Farsi*.

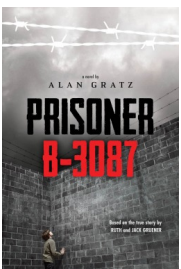
<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/it-aint-so-awful-falafel>



## Graveyard Book, by Neil Gaiman (Thriller)

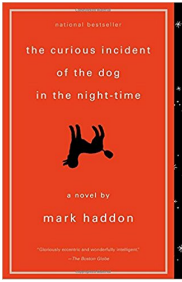
**Amazon Summary:** Bod is an unusual boy who inhabits an unusual place—he's the only living resident of a graveyard. Raised from infancy by the ghosts, werewolves, and other cemetery denizens, Bod has learned the antiquated customs of his guardians' time as well as their ghostly teachings—such as the ability to Fade so mere mortals cannot see him. Can a boy raised by ghosts face the wonders and terrors of the worlds of both the living and the dead? *The Graveyard Book* is the winner of the Newbery Medal, the Carnegie Medal, the Hugo Award for best novel, the Locus Award for Young Adult novel, the American Bookseller Association's "Best Indie Young Adult Buzz Book," a *Horn Book* Honor, and Audio Book of the Year.

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/the-graveyard-book>



## Prisoner B-3087, by Alan Gratz (Historical Fiction)

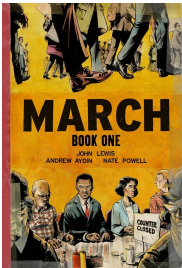
**School Library Journal Review:** Gr 6-10—"If I had known what the next six years of my life were going to be like, I would have eaten more. I wouldn't have complained about brushing my teeth, or taking a bath, or going to bed at eight o'clock every night." Yanek Gruener was 10 years old when the German army invaded Poland in 1939 and trapped his family inside the walls of the Jewish ghetto in Krakow. Over the course of World War II, he saw his parents deported by the Nazis and survived 10 different concentration camps. Through Gratz's spare, persistent prose, the story of the boy's early life unfolds with the urgency and directness necessary for survivor stories. While some liberties have been taken, with the permission of Gruener and his wife, Ruth, also a survivor, the experiences and images come directly from the Grueners' collective memories of the war. An author's note provides further biographical information. A powerful story, well told.



## Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime, by Mark Haddon

(Mystery)

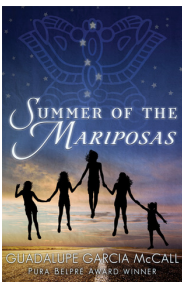
**Amazon Summary:** A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—about a boy with autism who sets out to solve the murder of a neighbor's dog and discovers unexpected truths about himself and the world. Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.



## March, Book 1, by John Lewis (Historical Fiction & Graphic Novel)

**School Library Journal Review:** Beginning with a dream sequence that depicts the police crackdown on the 1965 Selma-Montgomery March, this memoir then cuts to Congressman John Lewis's preparations on the day of President Obama's inauguration. Lewis provides perspective on the occasion, explaining and describing his own religious and desegregationalist origins in Alabama, his early meeting with Dr. King, and his training as a nonviolent protester. The bulk of the narrative centers around the lunch counter sit-ins in 1959 and 1960 and ends on the hopeful note of a public statement by Nashville Mayor West. The narration particularly emphasizes the nonviolent aspect of the movement and the labor involved in maintaining that ideal. This is superb visual storytelling that establishes a convincing, definitive record of a key eyewitness to significant social change, and that leaves readers demanding the second volume.

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/march-book-one>



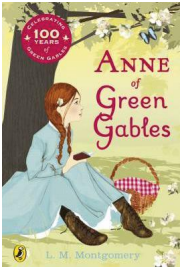
## Summer of the Mariposas, by Guadalupe Garcia McCall

(Realistic Fiction)

Summary from Commonsense Media: The novel is a loose adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey* featuring five Mexican-American sisters, ages 10 to 15, on an epic quest. The girls face danger several times, just like Odysseus, and must vanquish each potential threat to return home to their mother in Texas. Although there is some mild violence, there is no strong language or sex, so it's an educational and entertaining choice for mature middle-grade readers, not just young-adult fans. Readers will learn a great deal about Mexican folklore and legends, as well as many Spanish words and terms. Ultimately, *Summer of the Mariposas* promotes the bond of sisterhood and the love between mother and daughters.

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/summer-of-the-mariposas>

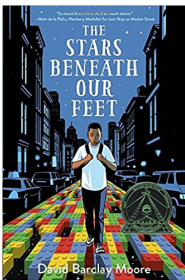




## Anne of Green Gables, by L. M. Montgomery (Classic)

**Amazon Summary:** First published in 1908, “Anne of Green Gables” is Lucy Maud Montgomery's enduring children's classic which chronicles the coming of age of a young orphan girl, from the fictional community of Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia. The story begins with her arrival at the Prince Edward Island farm of Miss Marilla Cuthbert and Mr. Matthew Cuthbert, siblings in their fifties and sixties, who had decided to adopt a young boy to help out on the farm. However, through a misunderstanding, the orphanage sends Anne Shirley instead. While the Cuthbert's are at first determined to return Anne to the orphanage, after a few days they decide instead to keep her. Anne is an imaginative and energetic young girl, who quickly befriends Diana Barry at the local country school, becomes rivals with classmate Gilbert Blythe, who teases her about her red hair, and has unfortunate run-ins with the unpleasant Pye sisters. Set in the close knit farm community of Avonlea, based on the author's real life home on Prince Edward Island,

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/anne-of-green-gables>



## Stars Beneath our Feet, by David Barclay Moore (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** Winner of the Coretta Scott King John Steptoe award for new talent. It's Christmas Eve in Harlem, but twelve-year-old Lolly Rachpaul and his mom aren't celebrating. They're still reeling from his older brother's death in a gang-related shooting just a few months earlier. Then Lolly's mother's girlfriend brings him a gift that will change everything: two enormous bags filled with Legos. Lolly's always loved Legos, and he prides himself on following the kit instructions exactly. Now, faced with a pile of building blocks and no instructions, Lolly must find his own way forward. His path isn't clear—and the pressure to join a “crew,” as his brother did, is always there. When Lolly and his friend are beaten up and robbed, joining a crew almost seems like the safe choice. But building a fantastical Lego city at the community center provides Lolly with an escape—and an unexpected bridge back to the world.

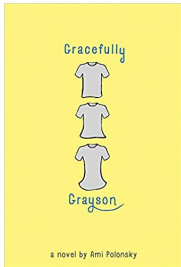


## Akata Witch, by Nnedi Okorafor (Fantasy)

**Amazon Summary:** Sunny Nwazue lives in Nigeria, but she was born in New York City. Her features are West African, but she's albino. She's a terrific athlete, but can't go out into the sun to play soccer. There seems to be no place where she fits in. And then she discovers something amazing—she is a “free agent” with latent magical power. And she has a lot of catching up to do. Soon she's part of a quartet of magic students, studying the visible and invisible, learning to change reality. But as she's finding her footing, Sunny

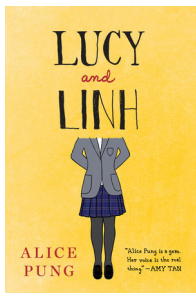
and her friends are asked by the magical authorities to help track down a career criminal who knows magic, too. Will their training be enough to help them combat a threat whose powers greatly outnumber theirs? World Fantasy Award-winning author Nnedi Okorafor blends magic and adventure to create a lush world. Her writing has been called “stunning” by *The New York Times* and her fans include Neil Gaiman, Rick Riordan, John Green, Ursula K. Le Guin, and many more!

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/akata-witch>



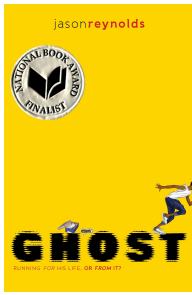
### **Gracefully Grayson, by Ami Polonsky** (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** *What if who you are on the outside doesn't match who you are on the inside?* Grayson Sender has been holding onto a secret for what seems like forever: "he" is a girl on the inside, stuck in the wrong gender's body. The weight of this secret is crushing, but sharing it would mean facing ridicule, scorn, rejection, or worse. Despite the risks, Grayson's true self itches to break free. Will new strength from an unexpected friendship and a caring teacher's wisdom be enough to help Grayson step into the spotlight she was born to inhabit? Debut author Ami Polonsky's moving, beautifully-written novel about identity, self-esteem, and friendship shines with the strength of a young person's spirit and the enduring power of acceptance.



### **Lucy and Linh, by Alice Pung** (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** Lucy is a bit of a pushover, but she's ambitious and smart, and she has just received the opportunity of a lifetime: a scholarship to a prestigious school, and a ticket out of her broken-down suburb. Though she's worried she will stick out like badly cut bangs among the razor-straight students, she is soon welcomed into the Cabinet, the supremely popular trio who wield influence over classmates and teachers alike. Linh is blunt, strong-willed, and fearless—everything Lucy once loved about herself. She is also Lucy's last solid link to her life before private school, but she is growing tired of being eclipsed by the glamour of the Cabinet. As Lucy floats further away from the world she once knew, her connection to Linh—and to her old life—threatens to snap. Sharp and honest, Alice Pung's novel examines what it means to grow into the person you want to be without leaving yourself behind.



## Ghost, by Jason Reynolds (Realistic Fiction)

**Amazon Summary:** A National Book Award Finalist for Young People's Literature. Ghost wants to be the fastest sprinter on his elite middle school track team, but his past is slowing him down in this first electrifying novel in a new series from Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award-winning author Jason Reynolds. Ghost. Lu. Patina. Sunny. Four kids from wildly different backgrounds with personalities that are explosive when they clash. But they are also four kids chosen for an elite middle school track team—a team that could qualify them for the Junior Olympics if they can get their acts together. They all have a lot to lose, but they also have a lot to prove, not only to each other, but to themselves. Running. That's all Ghost (real name Castle Cranshaw) has ever known. But Ghost has been running for the wrong reasons—it all started with running away from his father, who, when Ghost was a very little boy, chased him and his mother through their apartment, then down the street, with a loaded gun, aiming to kill. Since then, Ghost has been the one causing problems—and running away from them—until he meets Coach, an ex-Olympic Medalist who sees something in Ghost: crazy natural talent. If Ghost can stay on track, literally and figuratively, he could be the best sprinter in the city. Can Ghost harness his raw talent for speed, or will his past finally catch up to him?

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/ghost-track-book-1>



## Story Thieves (Book 1), by James Riley (Fantasy)

**Amazon Summary:** Life is boring when you live in the real world, instead of starring in your own book series. Owen knows that better than anyone, what with the real world's homework and chores. But everything changes the day Owen sees the impossible happen—his classmate Bethany climb out of a book in the library. It turns out Bethany's half-fictional and has been searching every book she can find for her missing father, a fictional character. Bethany can't let anyone else learn her secret, so Owen makes her a deal: All she has to do is take him into a book in Owen's favorite Kiel Gnomesfoot series, and he'll never say a word. Besides, visiting the book might help Bethany find her father... Or it might just destroy the Kiel Gnomesfoot series, reveal Bethany's secret to the entire world, and force Owen to live out Kiel Gnomesfoot's final (very final) adventure.

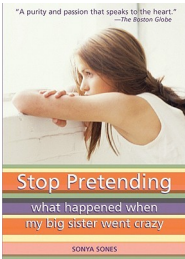
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## Scythe, by Neal Shusterman (Science Fiction)

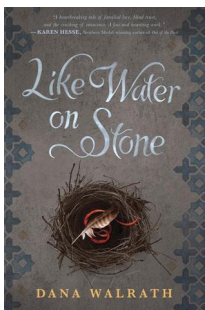
**Amazon Summary:** Two teens must learn the “art of killing” in this Printz Honor-winning book, the first in a chilling new series from Neal Shusterman, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Unwind* dystology. A world with no hunger, no disease, no war, no misery: humanity has conquered all those things, and has even conquered death. Now Scythes are the only ones who can end life—and they are commanded to do so, in order to keep the size of the population under control. Citra and Rowan are chosen to apprentice to a scythe—a role that neither wants. These teens must master the “art” of taking life, knowing that the consequence of failure could mean losing their own. *Scythe* is the first novel of a thrilling new series by National Book Award-winning author Neal Shusterman in which Citra and Rowan learn that a perfect world comes only with a heavy price.

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/book-reviews/scythe-arc-of-a-scythe-book-1>



## Stop Pretending: What Happened When My Big Sister Went Crazy, by Sonya Sones (Realistic Fiction & Told in Verse)

**Amazon Summary:** When her beloved older sister is hospitalized after a sudden mental breakdown, Cookie is left behind to cope with a family torn apart by grief, friends who shun her, and her fear that she, too, might one day lose her mind. Based on award-winning author Sonya Sones's own true story, this novel explores the chilling landscape of mental illness, revealing glimmers of beauty and of hope along the way. Told in a succession of short and powerful poems, it takes us deep into the cyclone of the narrator's emotions: despair, anger, guilt, resentment, and ultimately, acceptance.



## Like Water on Stone, by Dana Walrath (Historical Fiction & Told in Verse)

**Amazon Summary:** "Evocative and hopeful," says Newbery Honor-Winner Rita Williams-Garcia of this intense survival story set during the Armenian genocide of 1915. It is 1914, and the Ottoman Empire is crumbling into violence. Beyond Anatolia, in the Armenian Highlands, Shahen Donabedian dreams of going to New York. Sosi, his twin sister, never wants to leave her home, especially now that she is in love. At first, only Papa, who counts Turks and Kurds among his closest friends, stands in Shahen's way. But when the Ottoman pashas set in motion their plans to eliminate all Armenians, neither twin has a choice. After a horrifying attack leaves them orphaned, they flee into the mountains, carrying their little sister, Mariam. But the children are not alone. An eagle watches over them as they run at night and hide each day, making their way across mountain ridges and rivers red with blood.