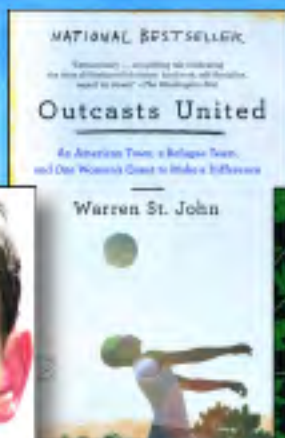
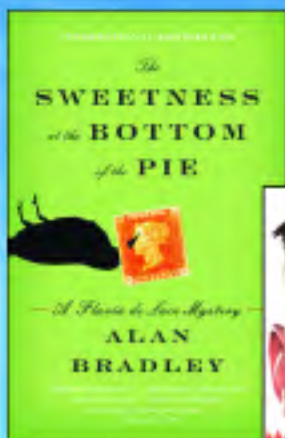

12 BEST BETS

Books for

SUMMER READING

2010–2011



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12 BEST BETS

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Experience America on the eve of the Civil Rights movement . . .
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Dear Educator,

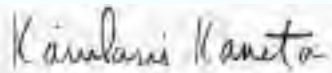
Summer is a time for escape, and what better way is there to access other worlds than through books? With this in mind, Random House is delighted to share with you our **12 Best Bets—Books for Summer Reading**. Based on teacher and student feedback, these books will help to make summer reading an exciting and positive experience for teachers, students, and parents. For each book we've included descriptions arranged by themes, links to reading excerpts, author websites, and helpful teacher testimonies.

Whether it's fiction, popular bestsellers, classics, memoirs, graphic novels, or true stories, there is something here for everyone. And however different these books may be, they all have something in common: a great story powerfully told.

In addition to presenting you with great books, our goal is to also turn summer reading from a solitary experience into a creative and engaging one. Because more and more students have been sharing their ideas about books through blogging, social networking, video essays, and book club discussions, we believe in turning their experiences into something bigger. So we invite you and your students to share your experiences on our blog—**RHI Magazine on the Web** (www.rhimagazine.com). Please e-mail me at the address below for more information about this offer.

So dive in and read about our Best Bets and ask yourself: What will *your* students be reading this summer?

Sincerely,



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Associate Manager, Academic Marketing
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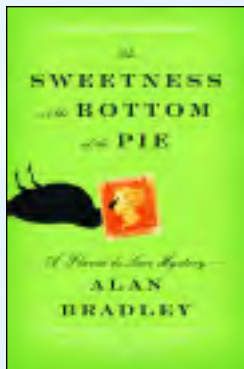
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Meet an aspiring young chemist with a passion for poison

The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie

A Flavia de Luce Mystery by Alan Bradley

First Book in the Series

A YALSA Best Book for Young Adults

In this wickedly brilliant first novel, author Alan Bradley introduces one of the most singular and engaging heroines in recent fiction: eleven-year-old Flavia de Luce. It is the summer of 1950—and a series of inexplicable events has struck Buckshaw, the decaying English mansion that Flavia’s family calls home. A dead bird is found on the doorstep, a postage stamp bizarrely pinned to its beak. Hours later, Flavia finds a man lying in the cucumber patch and watches him as he takes his dying breath. For Flavia, who is both appalled and delighted, life begins in earnest when murder comes to Buckshaw.

“I would recommend this book for a school library collection, as well as for summer reading. The intelligence and independence of the story’s protagonist will certainly keep readers interested, and the unraveling mystery will keep them engaged.” —Jameelah R. Wright, Wahlstrom Academy, East Orange, NJ

“I loved *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*. I have put it in rotation in my 7th grade classroom library and even a few of my higher level readers have enjoyed the book. It’s hard to find a good mystery book to put on the shelves for them to read. My girls seemed to be impressed the most with the female lead solving the case and her knowledge of science. I would definitely recommend this book for summer reading.” —Megan Brown, Scott Middle School, Hammond, IN

Bantam | TR | 978-0-385-34349-7 | 400pp. | \$15.00/NCR | Exam Copy: \$3.00



Reading Level: 7th grade

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/yehs2e7>

Author website: www.flaviadeluce.com/

Next book in the series:

The Weed That Strings the Hangman’s Bag: A Flavia de Luce Mystery

Bantam | HC | 978-0-385-34231-5 | 384pp. | \$24.00/NCR | Exam Copy: \$12.00



Get to know the world’s most famous detective

The Adventures and Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Introduction by John Berendt

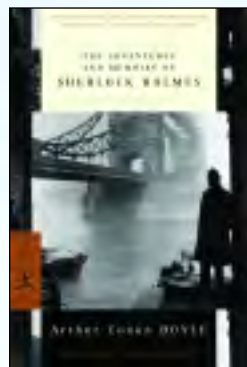
From “A Scandal in Bohemia,” in which Sherlock Holmes is famously outwitted by a woman, the captivating Irene Adler, to “The Five Orange Pips,” in which the master detective is pitted against the Ku Klux Klan, to “The Final Problem,” in which Holmes and his archenemy, Professor Moriarty, face each other in a showdown at the Reichenbach Falls, the stories that appear in *The Adventures and Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* bear witness to the flowering of author Arthur Conan Doyle’s genius. “The plain fact,” the celebrated mystery writer Vincent Starrett asserted, “is that Sherlock Holmes is still a more commanding figure in the world than most of the warriors and statesmen in whose present existence we are invited to believe.”

With a whole new generation discussing Sherlock Holmes thanks to the recent Hollywood blockbuster starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, now is the time to share his original adventures with your students.

Modern Library | TR | 978-0-375-76002-0 | 528pp. | \$12.95/\$19.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Reading Level: 6th grade

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/yeeoy8l>





“An American Dickensian tale with touches of Harry Potterish whimsy. . . .”

—Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

The Good Thief: A Novel

By Hannah Tinti

Winner, ALA ALEX Award

Twelve-year-old Ren is missing his left hand. How it was lost is one of the mysteries that Ren has been trying to solve his entire life—as well as who his parents are, and why he was abandoned as an infant at Saint Anthony’s Orphanage for boys. A young man named Benjamin Nab appears, claiming to be Ren’s long-lost

brother, and the orphanage releases the boy to him. But is Benjamin really who he says he is? As Ren is introduced to a life of hardscrabble adventure filled with outrageous scam artists, grave robbers, and petty thieves, he begins to suspect that Benjamin holds the key not only to his future, but to his past as well.

“Our upper school uses a book club model for one of our summer reading programs. Every teacher selects a book club book so that we have 50+ books, then all 800 students pick one of the books to read for summer reading. *The Good Thief* is one of this year’s selections. I suspect it will be a huge hit!” —Michelle Odell, Lake Highland Preparatory School, Orlando, FL

“*The Good Thief* is a book that deserves comparison to the work of classic authors like Robert Louis Stevenson and Charles Dickens—not only because it’s a remarkable piece of work, but also because it reminded me of what it used to be like, when I was a kid, to be truly engrossed in a book. You lift your head and hours have passed, and you realize that you’ve been utterly drawn into a world that is as vivid and real as your own. A masterful achievement.” —Dan Chaon, author of *Await Your Reply*

“Reminds you why you fell in love with reading in the first place. Tinti’s imaginative powers . . . acquaint us with our own. And that’s a gift to be cherished.”

—Boston Globe

Dial Press Trade Paperback | TR | 978-0-385-33746-5 | 352pp. | \$15.00/\$18.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

e-Book

Reading Level: 7th grade

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/ybohmpf>

Author website: <http://hannahtinti.com>

(check out the book trailers created by students from The Paideia School in Atlanta!)

HORROR

Before There Was *Dracula*, There Was *The Castle in Transylvania* . . .

The Castle in Transylvania

by Jules Verne

Translated by Charlotte Mandell

Before Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, Jules Verne, master of science fiction, wrote this eerie tale of the supernatural set in a forgotten valley in the mountains of Transylvania.

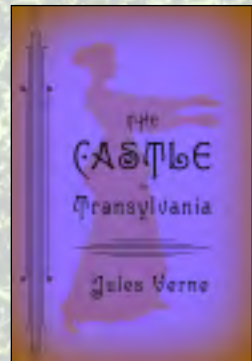
In a tiny village, cut off from the outside world, unnatural events are menacing the populace. Apparitions of vampires and zombies terrorize the townsfolk, and they come to believe that the Devil occupies the abandoned castle looming over their town. A visitor to the region, a young Count, vows to liberate the town from this thrall—pitting his reason against the forces of evil and superstition. Yet he too must confront the limits of reason when he views, in the depths of the castle, his long-dead love. . . .

First published in 1892, this gripping story—a genre-making first—is finally back in print. A lost work written by a master, *The Castle in Transylvania* is a great recommendation that moves beyond the “same old, same old.”

Melville House | TR | 978-1-935554-08-0 | 240pp. | \$14.95/\$17.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Do not order before 7/6/2010.

Reading level: 6th grade





A graphic novel about civil rights . . . with swamp monsters

Bayou
by Jeremy Love

A YALSA Top Ten Great Graphic Novel for Teens

South of the Mason-Dixon Line lies a strange land of gods and monsters; a world parallel to our own, born from centuries of slavery, civil war, and hate.

Lee Wagstaff is the daughter of a black sharecropper in the depression-era town of Charon, Mississippi. When Lily Westmoreland, her white playmate, is snatched by agents of an evil creature known as Bog, Lee’s father is accused of kidnapping. Lee’s only hope is to follow Lily’s trail into this fantastic and frightening alternate world. Along the way she enlists the help of a benevolent, blues singing, swamp monster called Bayou. Together, Lee and Bayou trek across a hauntingly familiar Southern Neverland, confronting creatures both benign and malevolent, in an effort to rescue Lily and save Lee’s father from being lynched.

“A visceral, spooky tale that unsettles more than a conventional novel about the injustices of living under Jim Crow.” — *School Library Journal*

Zuda | TR | 978-1-4012-2382-3 | 160 pp. | \$14.99 | Exam Copy: \$3.00
Reading Level: 10th grade

Also by the author:

Bayou Vol. 2

Zuda | TR | 978-1-4012-2584-1 | 160 pp. | \$14.99 | Exam Copy: \$3.00
Do not order before 6/22/2010.

HISTORICAL FICTION

Discover the legend of the Mongol conqueror in the ALEX Award-winning *Genghis* series

Genghis
Birth of an Empire
by Conn Iggulden

Winner, ALA ALEX Award
A New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age

He was born Temujin, the son of a khan, raised in a clan of hunters migrating across the rugged steppe. Temujin’s young life was shaped by a series of brutal acts: the betrayal of his father by a neighboring tribe and the abandonment of his entire family, cruelly left to die on the harsh plain. But Temujin endured—and from that moment on, he was driven by a singular fury: to survive in the face of death, to kill before being killed, and to conquer enemies who could come without warning from beyond the horizon.

“. . . [B]rilliantly imagined and addictive historical fiction. . . . Building on the fragment of Genghis’s life, Iggulden weaves a spellbinding story of an exotic and ‘unforgiving land’ and the enigmatic young man—charismatic, a brilliant tactician and capable of ‘utter ruthlessness’—who sets out to tame it. This is historical fiction of the first order.” — *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

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Reading Level: 6th grade
Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/yb7vmjo>
Author website: www.conniggulden.com

Also in the series:

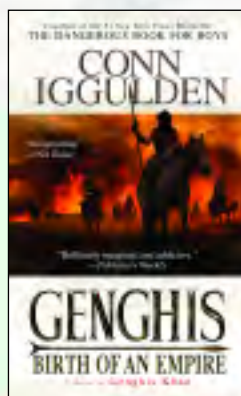
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CONTEMPORARY FICTION

For students who love *To Kill A Mockingbird*



Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands

by Susan Carol McCarthy

A wise and luminous story about a northern family, a southern town, and the senseless murder that sparks an extraordinary act of courage, the book is told from the point of view of a little girl who is witness to the extraordinary turn of events that begins with the lynching of a black man. From the arrival of noteworthy figures such as Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP, and Mr. Hoover's FBI, to the expressed opinions and actions of the everyday town citizen, *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* will give students a solid sense of the events, people, and national mood of this volatile and

chaotic period in American history.

Inspired by real events, *Lay That Trumpet In Our Hands* is a novel that tackles race politics in the pre-Civil Rights South unlike any other book in recent memory.

"Evocative . . . The sincerity of her tale and its simple telling would make the book as interesting to young adult readers as it will be to those who remember or want to learn about the tangled moral questions of the '50s." —*Publishers Weekly*

"The best fiction always bears a strong resemblance to real life. In *Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands*, McCarthy blends fact, memory, imagination and truth with admirable grace." —*The Washington Post*

Bantam | TR | 978-0-553-38103-0 | 288pp. | \$15.00/\$18.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Reading Level: 6th grade

Teacher's Guide available

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/ye5drov>

Author website: www.susancarolmccarthy.com

Also by the author:

True Fires: A Novel

Bantam | TR | 978-0-553-38104-7 | 320pp. | \$15.00/\$17.50 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

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Sweeping up Glass

by Carolyn Wall

Olivia Harker Cross owns a mountain, or thinks she does, in Pope County, Kentucky, a land where wolves—Olivia's wolves—howl in the night. But now someone is killing the wolves of Big Foley Mountain—and Olivia is beginning to realize how much of her own bitter history she's never understood: Her mother's madness, building toward a fiery crescendo. Her daughter's flight to California, leaving her to raise Will'm, her beloved grandson. And most of all, her town's rage, for Olivia has real and dangerous enemies.

Now this proud, lonely woman will face her mother and daughter, her neighbors, and the wolf hunters of Big Foley Mountain. And when she does, she'll ignite a conflict that will embroil an entire community—and change her own life in the most astonishing of ways.

From first page to last, newcomer Carolyn Wall delivers a novel of extraordinary power, insight, and lyricism—at once a haunting mystery, a love story, and a powerful rumination on secrets, bigotry, and devotion.

"Carolyn Wall is a brilliant storyteller and this book is a wonderful read."

—Martha Beck, author of *Steering by Starlight*

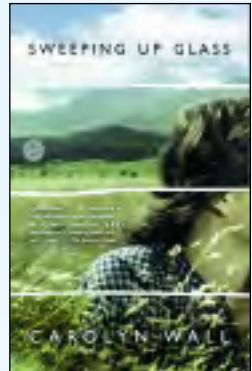
"The suspense is gripping, the danger is very real, and the reader gets caught up in Wall's powerful, moving debut." —*Library Journal* (starred review)

Delta | TR | 978-0-385-34303-9 | 336pp. | \$14.00/\$16.50 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Reading Level: 5th grade

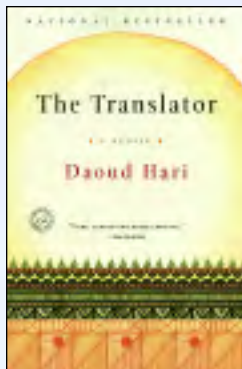
Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/y8lcpjtj>

Author website: www.carolyndwall.com



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A true story of one young man's fight for survival, simply and heroically told

The Translator

by Daoud Hari

In 2003, Daoud Hari, a Zaghawa tribesman, was among the hundreds of thousands of villagers attacked and driven from their homes by Sudanese-government-backed militia groups. Though Hari's village was burned to the ground, his family decimated and dispersed, he himself escaped, eventually finding safety across the border. With his high school knowledge of languages, Hari offered his services as a translator and guide. In doing so, however, he had to return to the heart of darkness—and he has risked his life again and again to help ensure that the story of his people is told while there is still time to save them.

"I chose this book because *The Translator* offers American students a superb opportunity to hear about the realities of the Darfur situation through the voice of an African person. The book is both an excellent primer on the political situation in Darfur and a deeply moving personal story that gives students a sophisticated, yet accessible, view into the Darfur conflict." —Zine Magubane, Associate Professor of Sociology, Boston College

Random House | TR | 978-0-8129-7917-6 | 224pp. | \$13.00/NCR | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Reading Level: 9th grade

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Teacher's Guide available

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/y8e2k33>

For more information, go to: www.thetranslator-book.com

A darkly funny memoir of growing up different

Look Me in the Eye

My Life with Asperger's

by John Elder Robison

Growing up as a young boy, John Elder Robison was a self-described "problem child". As a teenager, his odd habits—which included blurting out non sequiturs, avoiding eye contact, and pulling pranks—earned him the label "social deviant", and made friendships difficult. He eventually dropped out of high school. However, thanks to his intuitive understanding of electronics and machines, he went on to design special effects guitars for the rock band KISS and became an engineer with a major toy and game company. At the same time, he still felt that he didn't fit in with the world around him.

When he was 40 years old, John was finally diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, a high functioning form of autism. That understanding transformed the way he saw himself—and the world. His inspiring life story shows how those who have Asperger's syndrome are capable of having a fulfilling and successful life. Ideal reading for boys.

"I hugely enjoyed reading *Look Me in the Eye*. This book is a wild rollercoaster ride through John Robison's life—from troubled teenage prankster to successful employment in electronics, music, and classic cars. A kindly professor introduced him to electrical engineering, which led to jobs where he found techie soulmates that were like him. A fascinating glimpse into the mind of an engineer which should be on the reading list of anyone who is interested in the human mind."

—Temple Grandin, author of *Thinking in Pictures* and *Animals in Translation*

Three Rivers Press | TR | 978-0-307-39618-1 | 320pp. | \$14.95/\$16.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

Reading Level: 6th grade

e-Book



Teacher's Guide available

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Author website: www.johnrobison.com/

Author blog: <http://jrobison.blogspot.com/>





A funny and profound, memoir about the immigrant experience in America

Funny in Farsi
A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America
 by Firoozeh Dumas

A School Library Journal Best Adult Book for Young Adults

Funny in Farsi chronicles the American journey of Firoozeh Dumas’s wonderfully engaging family which moved from Iran to Southern California in the 1970s, arriving with no firsthand knowledge of this country. Above all, it is an unforgettable story of identity, discovery, and the power of family love.

“Funny with Farsi captured the interest of our entire academic community, particularly our first-year students, because it relates to each reader’s personal stories. Students who are new to campus identify with Dumas’ experiences as the new and different “kid-on-the-block” and the challenges and insights that come with an immigrant and multi-cultural family. In the book and in person, Dumas uses humor to address important issues in a way that reaches people of all generations and backgrounds. Through her stories, Firoozeh Dumas connects with people and inspires us to connect with each other.” —Sheree Meyer and Rod Santos, California State University, Sacramento

Random House | TR | 978-0-8129-6837-8 | 240pp. | \$14.00/\$16.50 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00
 Reading Level: 8th grade

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Teacher’s Guide available

Read an excerpt: <http://tinyurl.com/ycv8yux>

Author website: www.firoozehdumas.com/

Also by the author:

Laughing Without an Accent: Adventures of a Global Citizen

Random House | TR | 978-0-345-49957-8 | 256pp. | \$15.00/\$17.50 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00

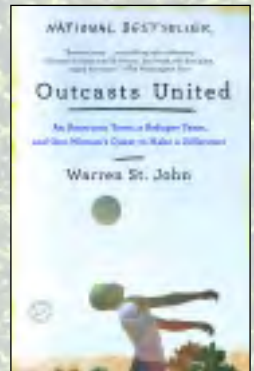
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SPORTS

An underdog soccer team transforms a town

Outcasts United
An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman’s Quest to Make a Difference
 by Warren St. John

Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical Southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s. The town also became home to Luma Mufleh, an American-educated Jordanian woman who founded a youth soccer team to help keep Clarkston’s boys off the streets. These boys named themselves the Fugees—short for refugees.



Outcasts United follows a pivotal season in the life of the Fugees, their families, and their charismatic coach. Theirs is a story about resilience in the face of extraordinary hardship, the power of one person to make a difference and the daunting challenge of creating community in a place where people seem to have so little in common.

“I would HIGHLY recommend this book for use in a first-year seminar or reading program. The response from our students and faculty was incredibly positive, and Warren’s presentation to our students was outstanding.” —Steven P. Giradot, Director, Office of Success Programs, Georgia Institute of Technology

Spiegel & Grau | TR | 978-0-385-52204-5 | 336pp. | \$15.00/\$18.95 Can. | Exam Copy: \$3.00
 Reading Level: 8th grade

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Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Road Trip into the Heart of Fan Mania

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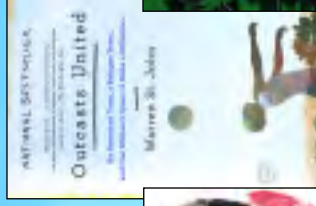
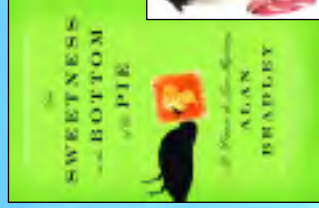
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