Citation:

Annotation:
For 5th grader Liam, being the big brother to two sisters, one with Down syndrome and one who is a mad scientist, is tough. Add to that, divorced parents and a dog who has bladder issues, and 5th grade just might be the most interesting year of Liam’s life.

Booktalk:
Liam is anxious about his 5th grade year at school. Fitting in is hard enough, but caring for his two younger sisters is making things difficult. His sister Dakota, is all nerd and creates science experiments that make their landlord grumpy. His sister Izzy, loves everyone which makes things more complicated. Their dog Cupcake, is the heart that keeps Liam and his family sane, but Cupcake keeps peeing on their apartment floor. Cupcake’s bladder issues, coupled with Dakota’s loud experiments keep their apartment lease is peril. Liam’s mom and dad seem to be too busy living separate lives to help with Cupcake’s troubles. Can Liam and his sisters quickly raise enough money to pay for Cupcake’s vet bills before they lose their apartment?

Readalikes:
Pie in the Sky by Remy Lai
Because of Winn Dixie by Kate DiCamillo

Other Books by the Author:
Al Capone Does My Shirts
Chasing Secrets
Orphan Eleven
Notes from a Liar and Her Dog
No Passengers Beyond This Point

Author’s Website:
https://www.gennifercholdenko.com/

Reviews:
Publishers Weekly, 10-22-2018
Kirkus Reviews, 10-15-2018
Citation:

Annotation:
Emma has been homeschooled and will now start public school in the fifth grade. Her father is a game ranger and they have recently rescued what they thought was a wild rabbit, turned out to be someone’s missing pet. More than anything she wants a best friend. She learns about friendship.

Booktalk:
Emma’s and her Game Ranger dad rescued a rabbit from being trapped in a fence. They originally thought it would be a wild rabbit but, it turned out to be a domesticated rabbit. (someone’s pet) Emma is beginning the 5th grade in a public school as she had been homeschooled. She really wants a best friend. She was paired up on a project with Jack, “Two truths and a lie”. Jack is loud and easy to distract and she is afraid everyone will think she is different like Jack. Jack and Emma bond over the rescued rabbit and become fast friends.

Read Alikes:
All’s Faire in Middle School by Victoria Jamieson
World According to Humphrey

Other Books by the Author:
Rules
Touchblue
Half a Chance
A handful of Stars
Hot Rod Hamster

Author’s Website:
Cynthialord.com

Reviews:
Booklist February 2019
Kirkus January 2019
Publisher’s Weekly December 2018.
School Library Journal March 2019
Citation:

Annotation:
Coyote Sunrise wasn’t given this name at birth. Her father gave it to her when he stopped letting her call him dad. After experiencing tragedy, they climb aboard an old school bus and travel the U.S. attempting to leave their sorrow behind.

Book Talk:
Coyote and her father, Rodeo, have been traveling the U.S. in a school bus which was converted to include a small kitchen, casual seating, and at the back of the bus is a curtained bedroom just for Coyote. They make friends and help others with their struggles, while keeping in touch with Coyote’s beloved grandmother throughout their journey. Coyote longs for the comforts of her old home, but things will never be the same and she wonders if her dad will ever be able to face the loss they have experienced. Read The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise by Dan Gemeinhart to find out what finally takes Coyote and Rodeo home again.

Read Alikes:
Love Aubrey by: Suzanne LaFleur
Because of Mr. Terupt by: Rob Buyea
One for the Murphys by: Linda Mullaly Hunt

Other Books by the Author:

Author’s Website:

Reviews:
Booklist December 2018
Kirkus December 2018
Horn Book 2019 Fall
Citation:

Annotation:
Lety is an English language learner who loves animals and volunteering at her local shelter. When she is chosen to write profiles to help the animals be adopted, she is both thrilled and intimidated because it takes her longer to write in English. When a boy decides to challenge her to a profile-writing contest, Lety knows that she is at a disadvantage. However, she is not one to back down from a challenge. Especially if winning the contest will help her in her goal to adopt her favorite shelter dog, Spike.

Booktalk:
Lety Munoz loves animals and volunteering at her local animal shelter. She dreams of one day adopting her favorite shelter dog, Spike. Even though English is her second language, she dreams of being a writer and is excited to be asked to write profiles for the animals to help them get adopted. Until fellow volunteer Hunter challenges her to a writing contest. Hunter is an advanced reader and Lety is still struggling with vocabulary. Can Lety win the contest, adopt Spike and find a home in Texas while still honoring her Mexican heritage?

Read Alikes:
*Each Tiny Spark* by Pablo Cartaya
*The Moon Within* by Aida Salazar

Other Books by the Author:
*Gaby. Lost and Found*
*Me, Frida, and the Secret of the Peacock Ring*
*Allie, First and Last*

Author’s website:
Annotation:
After years of being home schooled, Emma starts fifth grade at a public school and struggles with the challenges of being new and being paired with Jack, a boy who does not seem to fit in with anyone, on a school project.

Read Alikes:
How to Steal a Dog by Barbara O'Connor
Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Other Books by the Author:
Rules
A Handful of Stars
Half a Chance

Reviews:
Publisher's Weekly 12/24/2018
Kirkus Reviews Dec. 5, 2018
School Library Journal Mar 01, 2019

Author's Website:
http://www.cynthialord.com/
Citation:

Annotation: How was a beautiful park created in a bustling city? Follow the creation of Central Park through a citywide contest in this beautifully illustrated picture book.

Booktalk: Ever wonder why a large park is in the middle of New York City? Who decided to plant trees, build ponds and paths through a busy city? Read *A Green Place to Be: The Creation of Central Park* to find out why a green space was built in this growing city. This picture book is full of beautiful illustrations, biographies and fun facts.

Read Alikes:
*Manhattan: Mapping the Story of an Island*
*New York, New York*

Other Books by the Author:
None

Reviews:
*Publisher's Weekly* Jan. 7, 2019
*Kirkus Reviews* Jan 15, 2019

Author’s Website:
http://www.ashleyyazdani.com/
**Citation:**

**Annotation:**
Sophie believes the birthmark on her face makes her a monster inside and out. She also identifies monster everywhere she goes. She knows that it is only a matter of time before her mother finds out and leaves her. Sophia strives to find a cure before it’s too late.

**Booktalk:**
Sophia identifies with trolls, goblins, and witches. For as long as she can remember she has felt like a monster. Believing that the blood tumor on her face makes her look and feel like a monster, she carries around the *Big Book of Monsters* and refers to it to identify others around her who are also monsters. When her mother starts dating a veteran who is also disfigured Sophia identifies him as a fellow monster and fears him. Sophia believes that her absent father is her fault and she works tirelessly to find a cure for her monstrous qualities before her mother finds out and also leaves her.

**Readalikes:**
*Wonder*, by R. J. Palacio  
*ReStart*, by Gordon Korman  
*Fish in A Tree*, by Lyndia Mallaly Hunt

**Other Books by the Author:**
The Wish and the Peacock

**Author’s Website:**
[https://wendyswore.com/](https://wendyswore.com/)

**Reviews**
Kirkus  Jan. 15, 2019  
School Library Journal  Feb. 1, 2019
Citation:

Annotation:
Everyone in the town of Endsborough knew that they should never go into the Wild Wood. It was full of dangerous magic. But in the Wild Wood, the magic was fading. Desperate to restore the magic, a goblin named Kull decides to swap a new human baby for a rare changeling, a goblin who can take on the form of any baby. However, Kull is interrupted before he can snatch the human baby, leaving two exact replicas, one human and one goblin, in the crib. The brave mother raises the "twins" for 12 years. Until the day that they receive the summons, a call back to the Wild Wood and a quest to find out the truth about them both.

Booktalks:
Twelve year old boys Cole and Tinn have always carried a not-so-secret secret: one of them is actually a goblin changeling. But they don’t know which one is the goblin. Their mother Annie has raised them as equals, brothers until they receive a mysterious letter, directing the goblin child to the dark Wild Woods in an attempt to save both the magical and human world. Using the crudely drawn map and cryptic letter, Cole and Tinn embark onto a life-changing journey into the mysterious, dangerous Wild Woods.

Read Alikes:
*Dark Lord Clementine* by Sarah Jean Horwitz
*Archimancy (Shadow School #1)* by J.A. White
*Saving Fable* by Scott Reingten

Other Books by the author:
*Jackaby Series*
*The Unready Queen (Oddmire #2)*

Author’s website:
https://www.workman.com/authors/william-ritter

Reviews:
Publisher’s Weekly
Booklist (starred review)
School Library Journal
Citation:

Annotation:
On a sunny August morning in 2016, a baby sea otter was found washed up on the sand at Rialto Beach. Orphaned and sick, Rialto was taken to the Seattle Aquarium where the fight to save him began.

Booktalk:
Orphaned and sick, a baby sea otter, later named Rialto, was found washed up on the sand. Rialto was taken to the Seattle Aquarium, where his dedicated caretakers nursed him back to health and taught him how to be an otter. Soon, the charming Rialto was stealing hearts as he played with toys made of ice, swam in his very own pool, ate tasty clams, and floated on his back.
Learn about the rescue--and how you can help to save this endangered species--in Rescuing Rialto, from the Seattle Times reporter and photographer who chronicled this story as it happened. Just as he captured them, Rialto's sure to steal your heart, too.

Read Alikes:
Koala Hospital by Suzi Eszterhas
Pup 681 by Jean Reidy
Sea Bear by Lindsay Moore

Reviews:
Kirkus  February 2019
School Library Journal  March 2019

Author's Website:
www.lyndavmapes.com
Citation:

Annotation:
Birdie, an avid birdwatcher, is healing from the loss of her father after she and her mother move in with her grandmother. This novel in verse follows Birdie as she copes with her mother beginning to date again, her feelings for and about her friends beginning to date (and break up), and her grandmother falling in love.

Booktalk:
This novel in verse tells the story of sixth-grader Birdie, who is an avid birdwatcher. Birdie’s father was a firefighter who died in the line of duty a few years ago. Birdie and her mom move in with her grandmother, who spends all of her time planning her own funeral. Birdie’s mom and grandmother get a new and fresh take on life as they begin dating and fall in love. Birdie begins feeling left behind as her friends enter the dating world as well.

Read Alikes:
*Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie*, Julie Sternberg
*Umbrella Summer*, Lisa Graff

Other Books by the Author:
*Another Day as Emily
Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch*

Reviews:
*Kirkus* 4/9/2019
*SLJ* 5/1/2019
*PW* 4/2019

Author’s Website:
eileenspinelli.com
Citation:

Annotation:
Life is tough for Iris, she’s the only deaf person at her school and she has trouble communicating. When she finds a whale that has the same dilemma, she is determined to put her superior, electronic building skills to build a device to speak to the whale. Can she make it to meet the whale in person, 3000 miles away, or will life’s challenges get in her way?

Book Talk:
Iris loves old electronics and has a knack for fixing and building things which allows her to stay in her own little world. Being the only deaf person at her school she has a hard time fitting in, but when she hears about a whale who is without his own pod she finally feels a connection. Iris is determined to help Blue 55 and enlists her family and friends to get to him in time to test her communication device. Will she make it or will the moment pass her by?

Readalikes:
*Hello Universe*
*El Deafo*

Other Books By the Author:
*Chained*

Author’s Website:
http://lynnekellybooks.com/wordpress/

Reviews:
*Publisher’s Weekly* – 12/10/18
*Kirkus* – 11/12/18
*School Library Journal* – Winter 2018
Annotation:
Nate and his mother have gathered the courage to flee from their unsafe household and her controlling boyfriend. They arrive to a cottage in the countryside and Nate’s mother goes out to get supplies… and doesn’t return. As Nate is left alone, he becomes desperate and befriends a girl trying to solve a decades-old treasure hunt, and gets more than he bargained for in the process.

Booktalk:
Nate and his mom are running away from her abusive boyfriend. They are hiding in a cottage in the English countryside when his mom goes to get supplies. Time passes and she never returns. Nate meets a mysterious girl who convinces him to help with a decades-old treasure hunt in the ruins of a nearby estate. This suspenseful and action-packed story explores grief, abuse, and imaginary friends in a way that is accessible to younger readers and meaningful to adult and children alike.

Read Alikes:
Small as an Elephant, Jennifer Jacobson
Crenshaw, Katherine Applegate

Other Books by the Author:
The Goldfish Boy
The Day I Was Erased

Reviews:
Kirkus 4/9/2019
SLJ 5/1/2019
PW 4/2019

Author’s Website:
lisathompsonauthor.com
Citation:

Annotation:
3rd Grader Meena has led a colorful life until a medical mystery shakes things up. How will she get through this without her best friend?

Book Talk:
3rd Grader Meena Zee has led a colorful life, but when her best friend stops playing with her at recess and a medical mystery appears, she suddenly feels very gray. Meena with her competitive nature refuses to give in. Maybe she'll discover that the only way to break through the blah is to let her true colors shine.

Read Alikes:
*Roller Girl*, Jamieson, Victoria  
*The Becket List: A Blackberry Farm Story*, Griffin, Adele  
*Junie B. Jones*, Park, Barbara

Other Books by the Author:
*Never Fear, Meena’s Here!*

Reviews:
*Booklist Sept 2018*  
*Kirkus Sept 2018*

Author’s Website:
https://www.karlamanternach.com/
Citation:

Annotation:
When baking enthusiast, Ellie’s, family moves to Oklahoma to help take care of her grandfather with Alzheimer’s disease she is determined to win the annual pie contest. Life with cerebral palsy is difficult in a small town, but Ellie refuses to let anything stand in her way.

Book Talk:
Ellie and her mom make a sudden move from Tennessee to Eufala, Oklahoma to help her Mema take care of Papa who has Alzheimer’s disease. It is hard enough to be the new kid- it’s harder being the new kid in a wheelchair who lives in a trailer park on the wrong side of town. Life with cerebral palsy is difficult in a small town, but Ellie refuses to let anything stand in her way. When she isn’t writing fan letters to her favorite chefs, or hanging out with her new friends, she is practicing new recipes to win the church’s annual pie contest. The only challenge Ellie isn’t sure she can conquer is convincing her mother they should stay.

Read Alikes:
*Superstar*, Davis, Mandy
*Counting by 7s*, Goldberg Sloan, Holly
*Out of My Mind*, Draper, Sharon M.

Other Books by the Author:
NA

Reviews:
*Booklist* Sept 2019
*Kirkus* Sept 2019
*Publishers Weekly* July 2019
*School Library Journal* Sept 2019

Author’s Website:
https://jamie-sumner.com/
Citation:

Annotation:
Christine is struggling to fit into school and find herself when she meets Moon. Moon is completely the opposite of Christine. Moon is confident, impulsive, artistic and gets in trouble at school. She stands out while Christine tries to blend in. When Christine and Moon are forced into a situation where they must spend time together, they find themselves becoming best friends. That is until Moon’s “visions” from the stars come between them. This is a true story of friendship, overcoming adversity, and finding the way to be true to yourself.

Full of twists and turns, this book shows how friendships form and go through authentic ups and downs. Throw in some cultural expectations and a major health crisis and you have a complete novel, artistically presented in graphic novel format. Based on her own life experience, Jen Wang bricks this story to life.

Booktalk:
Christine is finding school to be a bit challenging. Her family is very involved in their Chinese-American community, and her parents are very strict. When Christine’s parents find out that another family, Moon and her mother, are in need of a place to stay, they have them move into their guest apartment. Moon stands out through her impulsiveness, artistic flair, and standing out in their school. Christine and Moon are forced together and find that they have more things in common and soon become friends. They share secrets, nail polish, music groups, and Moon shares that she sees “visions” in the stars. When Moon seems to be becoming more popular, Christine messes up and a rift opens up. Is their friendship strong enough for these two to mend their hurt feelings or are things ruined forever? Read this book to find out.

Readalikes:
Smile by Raina Telgemeier
Best Friends by Shannon Hale
Dirt by Denise Orenstein

Other books by the author:
The Prince and the Dressmaker
In Real Life (co-authored by Cory Doctorow

Author’s Website:
https://www.jenwang.net/

Reviews:
*Publishers Weekly*, starred review July 2019
*Booklist*, starred review July 2019
*Kirkus*, starred review July 2019
*School Library Journal*, starred review Aug 2019
Citation:

Annotation:
Reintgen, Scott. Saving Fable. New York: Crown Books for Young Readers, 2019. 365 p. (Grades 3-7). Indira wants nothing more than to attend Protagonist Preparatory. Her plans do not go as smoothly as she planned. Rather than qualifying for the protagonist track of study, she is placed in the side character track. Indira meets characters from well known books, new best friends, and many quirky support characters in her path to find her place in her own story. It is the evil antagonist who places all of Fable into jeopardy. With the help of her new friends, Max and Phoenix, Indira must find a way to save Fable, find her path, and possibly save the day.

Booktalk:
Indira has a plan for her future and that is to attend the Protagonist Preparatory and be in her own story. Unfortunately, her plans go askew and she is put in the side character track at the school. With chapter headings such as: Collision Course; A Really, Really, Bad Day; and But Seriously…. It Gets Worse; the struggles of Indira are set into motion. Indira, along with her new friends, Phoenix and Max, finds herself in a unique position of being able to save Fable. She has to learn to trust these new friends, and work together to identify the evil protagonist. In the process of Saving Fable, Indira meets some characters such as the Book Marks, who only know the part of the story that they are saving, the retired librarians, who are able to read all day, and so many others. How can one little girl and her friends remove the evil protagonist and save this wonderful land? Read this book to find out!

Readalikes:
The Hero’s Guide to Saving Your Kingdom by Christopher Healy

Other books by the author:
Nyxia series
Ashlords

Author’s Website:
https://itspronouncedrankin.com/

Reviews:
Kirkus, June 2019
School Library Journal, Sept 2019